

Area of Study

Work and the future, Enterprise Education, Social , Personal and Health Education.

Overview

The 15-24 year age group is at the highest risk of accidents at work. Safety and health awareness among this age group is generally under-developed. This Transition Unit helps the student to develop an increased awareness of safety at work and to show greater responsibility in the work place. Student Safety in the Workplace introduces students to the principles of safety and health. It is useful for senior cycle students whose programme of learning includes some form of work experience and those who are actively engaged in part-time or holiday work. The unit is relevant to all students as future members of the work force.

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Related learning

This Transition Unit is linked to the broader curriculum in several ways, including

- All practical Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate subjects where practical safety is central to the learning experience, including Materials Technology Wood, Home Economics, Construction Studies, Technical Graphics, Technology.
- Junior Certificate SPHE as well as the proposed Draft Curriculum Framework for Senior Cycle SPHE
- Junior Certificate Science and Leaving Certificate science subjects (safety in the lab)
- LCVP link modules: Preparation for the world of work and Enterprise education
- Leaving Certificate Applied: vocational specialisms (multiple links)

Outline of the unit

There are eight sections

Sections 1 to 6 are classroom based and supported by the **'Choose Safety'** work book and DVD, available free of charge from the Health and Safety Authority. A further resource is the **'Get Safe – Work Safe'** on-line course available through www.alison.com

Sections 1-6 of 'Choose Safety' are of 20 hours duration.

1. Accidents Happen - exploring hazards in the home and in the work-place; considering workplace health and well-being.
2. Measuring Risk - introducing risk assessment.
3. You've been warned - controlling risk in work. Looking at controls that may be used to reduce or eliminate risk.
4. Not my problem... is it? - learning to take responsibility for safety matters.
5. Who do I tell? - learning to communicate the risk and developing skills for discussing safety matters with peers and with colleagues.
6. It has happened before - consideration of real life cases where lives have been lost or where serious injuries have been suffered. The case studies allow the students to apply the principles learnt earlier in the course. They also serve as final preparation for the realities of work experience.

Sections 7 and 8 are mostly out-of-class activities. Duration - 25 hours.

7. Work Experience - Work experience will focus on applying the principles of workplace safety to a real situation. This may take place in a single block of time or over a period of time. Students will record a reflective diary or choose from other exercises listed below to explore how safety is managed in a real work environment. The diary will become an important element of the student's portfolio of work.
- 7.a Where Work Experience is not a viable option for the school/student an in-depth study and analysis of the school's safety and health management system including interviews with the principal and other key personnel can be carried out.

8. Analysis - Students work alone and in groups to prepare oral and written reports on safety lessons learnt during their week's work experience. This will be presented in class (time allowing) and added to the portfolio of work.

Activities may include:

Each of the following assumes agreement and cooperation by the employer. In all cases the emphasis will be on the positive and on promoting good safety practices.

Safety ambassador

Students are appointed as safety ambassador in the workplace to promote awareness / enquiry of safety matters. This may be expanded to include a badge or other symbol to give the position some recognition. Ideally this would be linked with one or two events in the work placement such as some presentation of a safety award to a worker or group of workers. They must also exercise special care regarding safety matters.

Observations

Students observe and record safety in the work placement including – safety controls currently in place, safety issues arising, safety policies under development including training, possible alternatives to current system of work, long term safety measures. Their observations are reported orally to the class (and to the employer, where possible).

Reflective diary

Students write a daily journal of their experience in their workplace during the work experience placement.

Student Council

Students participating in this transition unit may discuss with the Student Council or similar, ways to promote safety awareness in the school that may be co-ordinated and promoted by the council and by the transition unit students.

Research

Students can design and conduct a survey or a questionnaire on safety matters in the job. Workers and managers can be included in the research.

Interviews

Students may interview individual or groups of workers and managers (or the safety representative) to record their awareness of safety at the workplace. The interview could record on tape, on video or through a webcam or by transcript.

Media

The interviews or research outcomes could be presented as a radio or video documentary or news report.

Presentation

Students record safety matters using non-verbal media such as a photo collage, sketches, models etc.

Awareness campaign

Students design a poster, a TV or radio ad or a web-based promotional campaign to encourage safety awareness. There may be links to the student journal or to the school magazine or school radio station.

Safety day

Students may plan, design and coordinate a safety awareness day for the whole school or for a year group where the key issues of safety, health and welfare are promoted and explained.

Role-play

Students write and act out a key scene based on a safety matter that may arise in the workplace. This may be a short drama, a mime or dance or similar.

Art

A painting, sculpture, model, song, poem or short story based on safety at work.

Guest speaker

A prominent local person or past pupil with practical experience of safety issues may address the class and provide an insight into how safety, health and welfare issues impact on their business, sporting or personal lives.

Breakdown of the unit

This Transition Unit can be taught over the full school year (one period per week) or in shorter blocks to suit the dynamics of the overall TY programme.

In addition to class based work this transition unit also requires one of the following two options:

- One week of the school's work experience programme during which the lessons learnt can be applied to real life situation

OR

- An investigation of the safety and health system in the school or in a neighbouring enterprise. (This may suit those schools or those students unable to participate in a work experience).

Aims

This transition unit aims to

- develop the student's understanding and knowledge of workplace safety, health and welfare issues
- encourage participation by young workers in the design and operation of safe places of work.
- reduce the incidence of accident and injury in the workplace within this high risk age group

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

- identify and categorise hazards
- estimate levels of risk
- plan appropriate control measures
- recognise where responsibilities lie
- discuss the benefits of work/life balance.
- explain the effects of mismanagement of safety
- communicate concerns regarding safety
- make proposals on how safety can be improved
- access safety information on-line and elsewhere
- show an increased consciousness of safety in day to day life

Key skills

How evidenced

information processing

Students will research and assess media reports, court reports and case studies presented in the text. They will tabulate and evaluate data and other facts relating to safety. They will also use the internet as a learning tool via the Authority's 'Get safe – Work safe' e-learning course available on the educational website: www.alison.com.

critical and creative thinking

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communicating

There is a strong emphasis on oral presentations of projects, on interviews and on classroom discussion. The skills involved in discussing safety matters with peers and with superiors are developed in the course.

working with others

Many of the activities involve paired, group work and group discussion. Most involve personal interaction with others including those in authority. The core philosophy of the course centres on the importance of working together to ensure a safe place of work. The week's work experience is a further opportunity to develop the students' interpersonal skills

being personally effective

Successful graduation from the course requires satisfactory completion of most of 70 student activities. Many of these include contact with other students as well as teachers and members of the local business community. Effective organisational skills will be required to design and conduct questionnaires and surveys as well as the completion of a 'major assignment'.

Learning approaches

A wide range of active learning techniques are deployed to stimulate learning. These include e-learning, role plays, research, surveys, paired worked, individual assignments, reflective diary, case study analysis, classroom discussion, brainstorming, poster design, letter writing, interviews, team debates, written and oral reports, peer assessment, web-site searches and analysis of the accompanying DVD.

Assessment approaches

Students' learning is assessed by end-of-unit speed tests, completion of individual and group activities including questionnaires and the completion of a major assignment requiring research and analysis of a safety related matter. All of the student's work will be presented as a portfolio of work and subject to assessment by the teacher.

Formative assessment techniques will include peer assessment and teacher assessment of the student's oral and written reports. The skills developed during the work placement will be assessed by the student, by the employer and by the co-ordinating teacher

Evaluation methods

Completion of the 'Student Safety in the Workplace' Transition Unit may be evaluated by several methods including:

- student interviews or questionnaires on what they enjoyed/found useful, etc. during the learning
- the teachers' own evaluation of what worked/didn't work and what needs to change.

Resources

- The *Choose Safety* work book for students includes over 70 student activities that encourage reflection, analysis and debate on the issues raised.
- The *Get Safe – Work Safe* e-learning courseware provides up to four hours of on-line learning.
- *Health and safety matters for students embarking on work experience, A short guide for teachers*

All the above resources can be downloaded from the Health and Safety Authority website at http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Education/Teacher_Support_and_Resources/

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- *Get safe – Work safe* - learning courseware at www.alison.com. This was developed specifically as a preparation for the world of work for senior cycle students. Individuals can register and participate, or teachers can register groups of learners to the courseware on-line, free of charge and monitor their progress and completion rates on-line, through a learning management system. E-learning can be accessed day or night, is self-paced and does not require teacher supervision.

Each of the above resources is available also in hard copy from the Health and Safety Authority, free of charge by contacting the Education Unit on 01-6147016 or jeanette_lowe@hsa.ie.