

HS43 Young Persons | Standard Operating Procedure

1. Background information

1.1. Introduction/Purpose

1.1.1. This Standard Operating Procedure details the processes and procedures surrounding the employment of young persons at SOAS University of London.

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. Young Person means any person who has not yet reached the age of 18.

1.3. Roles and Responsibilities

1.3.1. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, an employer has a responsibility to ensure that young people employed by them are not exposed to risk due to:

- Lack of experience.
- Being unaware of existing or potential risks and/or lack of maturity.

1.3.2. Under health and safety law, every employer must ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all their employees, irrespective of age. As part of this, there are certain considerations that need to be made for young people.

1.3.3. A specific risk assessment must be carried out prior to any young person starting work.

2. Main Content

2.1. Risk Assessment Process

2.1.1. No young person will be allowed to operate high-risk machinery.

2.1.2. Young people are often exposed to risks to their health and safety when using work equipment as a consequence of their immaturity, lack of experience or awareness of existing or potential risks. Therefore, we will not allow such people to use high-risk woodworking machinery unless they have the necessary maturity and competence which includes having completed appropriate training. However, during the training they may operate high-risk woodworking machinery providing they are adequately supervised.

2.1.3. Adequate supervision should also be provided after training if a young person is not sufficiently mature.

2.1.4. A young worker can only operate machinery when:

- It is necessary for his or her training, and
- She or he is supervised by a competent person; and
- The risk will be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

2.1.5. An employer must consider:

- The layout of the workplace.
- The physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to.
- How they will handle work equipment.
- How the work and processes are organised.
- The extent of health and safety training needed.
- Risks from particular agents, processes and work.

2.2. The Requirements

2.2.1. Everyone involved in the employment of young people needs to understand:

- Young people and the law.
- Risks to young people at work.

2.2.2. Those who employ young people can help them to understand the importance of health and safety at work. It will serve them well not only in their working life, but in their everyday life as well. Sensible health and safety at work is about managing risks rather than expecting them to be eliminated.

2.2.3. Periods of work experience and work-based learning will be the first time that most young people experience the work environment.

- Good preparation and organisation of placements is essential if these opportunities are to be rewarding and safe introductions to the world of work.

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2.3. Work Experience

2.3.1. Work Experience should be taken to include reference to Work Based Learning.

2.3.2. There is a wealth of guidance produced to help those employing young people or involved in work experience.