

Food Hygiene Training

Food safety is the responsibility of everyone involved in catering and all staff must have an appropriate understanding of good food hygiene and food safety hazards. The aim of food hygiene training is to ensure staff have the knowledge required to produce safe food.

It is a legal requirement for all food handlers to be supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene to a level appropriate to their role.

A food handler is any person who handles or prepares food, whether open (unwrapped) or packaged, even if it is not part of their regular duties. This includes individuals that prepare self-catered buffets, those running a full-scale kitchen and even those merely providing tea/coffee and biscuits etc. for guests and visitors.

Everyone involved in handling of food should have a basic understanding of the principal issues of food safety and awareness of allergen control.

The level of food hygiene training required is dependent on the role of the individual and the types of food involved and the hazards presented. Food handlers should also receive training on allergens (for further information refer to Food Safety Information leaflet number 13).

Catering facilities such as tearooms, cafes, canteens etc. can be classified as:

- **Low risk** - providing hot & cold beverages, pre-packaged biscuits, crisps, confectionary etc.
- **Medium risk** - providing pre-packed food such as sandwiches etc.
- **High risk** - providing a full catering service including cooked meals, sandwiches made from scratch and/or hot and cold buffets etc.

The regulations do not require attendance on formal/accredited training courses, although these are useful to ensure that an adequate and verifiable level has been achieved. The appropriate knowledge and competencies can be obtained in a number of ways including on-the job training, in house training, e-learning, attendance at formal training courses and experience. Classroom style training is always recommended over E-learning.

Formal food hygiene training courses

Formal food hygiene training is structured into four levels, each tailored to different roles and responsibilities:

Food Safety Information. Number 4

- Level 1 Award in Food Safety in Catering.

This level is aimed at those people who handle low risk wrapped foods. It provides a basic awareness of food hygiene. It focuses on personal hygiene, avoiding contamination and safe food handling practices.

- Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering.

This level is aimed at those people who prepare and handle open high-risk foods. It covers temperature control, cleaning and preventing foodborne illness. It normally takes one day to complete.

- Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering.

This level is for head chefs, managers, and supervisors with food handling staff responsibilities. This course covers food hygiene in more detail and the principles of HACCP. It normally takes 2-3 days to complete.

- Level 4 Award in Managing Food Safety in Catering.

This level is aimed at senior managers and business owners. It provides greater depth in food hygiene, food poisoning, microbiology, and HACCP based systems. It normally takes 5 days to complete.

It is University Policy that food handlers keep their knowledge up to date with Level 2 food hygiene to be updated at three yearly intervals. Level 3 to be updated every 7 years and Level 4 every 10 years.

It is good practice to have a formal training plan for all food handlers, together with documented training records. Managers of food premises should ensure training records are maintained and up to date.

Food Safety training courses are available online. Going forward the University will be running the Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering.

Further Information

On the Food Standards Agency website www.food.gov.uk

In other leaflets in the food safety information series

From Nick White, Head of University Catering or Jenny Clare, Food Safety Compliance Manager