Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety

This unit is very important for your working day and focuses on the wellbeing of the stylist, clients, colleagues and all other visitors to the salon. It is about how you can help to make your workplace a safe, secure and healthy place for everyone.

You must consider the health and safety of the client every time you carry out a treatment in whichever unit you are being assessed. Whether in the workplace or college/training institution, you have a responsibility to follow health and safety legislation. To help you, the most important aspects of health and safety laws are explained in this unit. If you ignore health and safety procedures when carrying out an assessment or treatment, at best the assessment cannot be competent, at worst your actions could result in injury or damage, for which you may be legally responsible.

What you will learn

- Identify the hazards and evaluate the risks in your workplace G1.1
- Reduce the risks to health and safety in your workplace G1.2

Identify the hazards and evaluate the risks in your workplace G1.1

In this element you will learn about your responsibilities in relation to potential hazards in the salon and how you should deal with them. In some cases you will be able to deal with a hazard yourself, but in others you may need to ask the advice of a more qualified member of staff. In these instances you need to know 'who' to approach. You will also need to know your responsibilities for implementing the health and safety policies used in your salon – if you do not know what they are, how can you make sure you stick to them?

It may be helpful to give you the definition of a hazard and a risk:

**Hazard** = A hazard is something with potential to cause harm (something which may cause harm).

**Risk** = A risk is the likelihood of the hazard’s potential being realised (the risk of the hazard actually happening).

Almost everything may be a hazard, but it may or may not become a risk. For example, a trailing lead from a hairdryer is a hazard. If it is trailing across the passageway of a client, it has a high risk of someone tripping over it: if it is safely out of the path of the client, the risk is much less.

Hairdressing products, such as hydrogen peroxide, stored in the salon are hazards and because they are toxic and flammable may present a high risk. However, if they are kept in a properly designed secure storage area and handled by trained stylists, the risk is much less than if they are left out in a busy workshop for anyone to use – or misuse.

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### What you will learn

- Responsibilities – who does what
- Policies in your workplace
- Identifying risks
- Reporting and dealing with hazards

### Responsibilities – who does what

It is very important to know whom to approach with a salon problem or potential health and safety issue. All salons will have members of staff with different strengths. Some staff will be trained in first aid whilst others may faint at the sight of blood! As a salon trainee, you need to know who to call if your client requires a first aider, how to fill out the accident report book, and where to find the first aider and the accident report book!

### Policies in your workplace

Every salon should have a set of rules and procedures for everyone to follow. These should be common knowledge for the safety and protection of all within the salon. By law, a salon has to:

- display health and safety rules and regulations on the wall in a prominent position
- display the fire evacuation procedures.

The salon owner is legally obliged to put into place the rules covering the health and safety of all employees and clients, and to ensure that safe practice is followed by all staff. The employee must follow these rules.

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**Check it out**

Find out who you would report health and safety issues to in your salon for:

- faulty machinery or equipment
- accidental breakages and spillages
- accidents resulting in injury to a client
- environmental factors.
Professionally, the salon will have certain standards to maintain for insurance cover to be valid. Ensuring effective health and safety in the workplace involves:

- regular training, with staff meetings to update on safety issues
- giving future employees a clear outline at their initial interview as to what is expected of them
- maintaining records of injuries or first aid treatment given
- monitoring and evaluating health and safety arrangements regularly
- providing a written health and safety booklet
- consulting the experts and being knowledgeable – ignorance is not an excuse.

**In the salon**

Shelley has just started work at The Cutting Edge. At her interview she was told she would have to attend health and safety training during the first week of her job as junior stylist. She has just completed her second health and safety induction session with the salon owner and has read the salon’s health and safety booklet. She has also been told her responsibilities under the following:

- the salon’s fire evacuation procedure – including specific action that should be taken as she is responsible for her client’s safety
- the Health and Safety at Work Act – she must ensure her own health and safety and that of anyone who may be affected by her work. This involves:
  - being aware of the potential for accidents and having the foresight to prevent them
  - knowing how to phone the emergency services for assistance
  - understanding how to use the different types of fire extinguishers
  - knowing the whereabouts of the water stopcock (turns off the water supply at the mains) and main electricity switch
  - having some knowledge of first aid
  - not misusing any items provided in the interest of health and safety
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations – where to find the equipment that she has a responsibility to wear when using hairdressing products and chemicals
- the salon’s accident procedures including where to find the accident book and how to complete it fully in the event of an accident occurring
- first aid – she has been instructed on basic first aid skills and has been offered a two-day first aid course, which will lead to her holding a recognised first aid certificate
- Manual Handling Regulations – how to properly lift and handle objects within the salon
- where she can safely store her personal belongings – she will need to have money at work for snacks and lunch and this needs to be placed securely out of the main client area.

- What is your salon’s fire evacuation procedure?
- Who is trained as a first aider in your salon?
- Where is your salon’s first aid kit kept?
Identifying risks

Can you remember what risk means? If not, look back at page 22 for the definition of a risk.

All hairdressers work very hard, long hours, and are often on the go all day. They are in a busy salon environment, with other people present all the time – own clients, other clients, other staff, outside representatives, management, receptionists and cleaners. Whilst these ‘other people’ are in your salon you are responsible for making sure you do not endanger their health and safety.

Reporting and dealing with hazards

Hazards can and do happen, and everyone should be aware of the safety implications. As part of personal responsibility, the stylist needs to be able to recognise when the hazard needs to be dealt with immediately, or when help may be needed, and if it needs to be reported to a supervisor, lecturer, technician or manageress.
It is important to be able to identify hazards before they become risks. Should they become risks it is essential to know how to deal with them.

- **RISK:** Hazards from machinery or equipment (when using or maintaining)
  **How to avoid:** Make sure machinery and equipment are in good working order, electrical equipment is tested for safety every six months and that all staff are adequately trained to use it.
  **When referral may be necessary:** When a hazard is identified, you must make sure all staff are aware of it (each salon will have its own procedure for reporting faulty equipment or machinery). You will need to refer to a manager if the machinery or equipment is vital to the smooth running of the salon as he or she will need to authorise its repair or the purchase of a replacement.

- **RISK:** A spillage
  **How to avoid:** Take care when mixing, pouring and filling.
  **When referral may be necessary:** When spillage material is corrosive or an irritant.

- **RISK:** Slippery floors resulting from staff not following salon rules for tidying salon
  **How to avoid:** Make others aware by blocking the area with a chair to prevent an accident. Sweep up powder spills, mop up spills of liquid, refer to COSHH sheets for correct method (COSHH deals with how to handle, store and dispose of chemicals and products – see Element G1.2).
  **When referral may be necessary:** When acid, grease or polish are spilt.

- **RISK:** Environmental factors
  **How to avoid:** Make sure all staff follow COSHH sheets and manufacturer’s instructions when disposing of chemical products, sharps and infected waste (for example, cut hair infected with head lice).
  **When referral may be necessary:** When staff are not following specific guidelines; when the skin is pierced by used sharps; when infected waste is left causing a hazard to salon staff and clients.

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**Check it out**

- What would you class as a low risk hazard in your salon?
- Find out your salon’s rules for dealing with this type of hazard.
- What would you class as a high risk hazard? Write down how you would deal with this type of hazard and keep it safe in your portfolio of evidence.

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**Reduce the risks to health and safety in your workplace**

This element covers health and safety risks and outlines how to reduce the risks that you may come into contact with in the salon. You need to know how to carry out tasks safely following instructions and workplace requirements. You must also have a good understanding of the health and safety policies within your salon that affect your working day. This includes following manufacturer’s and supplier’s instructions when using products, materials and equipment. You also have to prove your personal presentation and conduct ensures the health and safety of yourself, your clients and colleagues.

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**What you will learn**

- Legal requirements (health and safety legislation)
- Health and safety rules
- Salon/workplace policies
- Rectifying health and safety risks
- Health and safety suggestions
- Personal presentation
- Personal conduct
- Salon security and reducing workplace risks

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Legal requirements (health and safety legislation)

This covers all the Acts of Parliament that relate to a business as set down by our government. These Acts of Parliament are being updated continually to fit into modern society, so you will find that Acts have dates after their title stating when they were updated, for example, the Trades Description Act 1968 (amended 1987). This means that these Acts are the law of the land and to break them or to ignore them is an offence and you will be punished. The consequences may be payment of a fine, closure of the business or imprisonment.

As well as following British law we have to follow European law.

Local government bylaws are the ones decided by the Local Authority and can differ from region to region, for example, London has different local bylaws to Birmingham.

To be fully competent in employment, it is essential that you have a sound knowledge of consumer protection and health and safety legislation. Do not worry too much about the years attached to the laws, concentrate more on the Acts themselves and how they protect both the stylist and the consumer, that is, the client.

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

This requires all employers to provide systems of work that are, as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health.

The employer’s duty is to provide:

- premises – a safe place to work
- systems and equipment
- storage and transport of substances and material
- access to the workplace exits
- good practices in the workplace.

The employer also has a responsibility to other persons not in employment including contractors and self-employed people.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employers’ responsibilities</th>
<th>Shared responsibilities</th>
<th>Employees’ responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Planning safety and security</td>
<td>Safety of the working environment</td>
<td>Correct use of the systems and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information about safety and security</td>
<td>Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers to follow the law</td>
<td>Reporting flaws or gaps within the system or procedure when in use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updating systems and procedures, in workplaces with five or more employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety of individuals being cared for</td>
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Health and safety responsibilities

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Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers to follow the law.

The employee has a responsibility to:

- take care during time at work to avoid personal injury
- assist the employer in meeting requirements under the Health and Safety at Work Act
- not misuse or change anything that has been provided for safety.

The Act allows various regulations to be made, which control the workplace. The Act also covers self-employed persons who work alone, away from the employer’s premises.

In 1992, EU directives updated legislation on health and safety management and widened the existing Acts. These came into being in 1993. There are six main areas:

- provision and use of work equipment
- manual handling operations
- workplace health, safety and welfare
- personal protective equipment at work
- health and safety (display screen equipment)
- management of health and safety at work.

Some of the new provisions of the EU directives are the protection of non-smokers from tobacco smoke, the provision of rest facilities for pregnant and nursing mothers, and safe cleaning of windows.

**Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has drawn attention to skeletal and muscular disorders caused by manual handling and lifting, repetitive strain disorders and unsuitable posture causing low back pain. The regulations require that certain measures be taken to avoid these types of injuries occurring.

1. Think about the lift. Where is the load to be placed? Do you need help? Are handling aids available?
2. Get ready to lift. Stand with your feet apart.
3. Bend the knees. Keep the back straight. Tuck in your chin. Lean slightly forward over the load to get a good grip.
4. Get a good grip on the load and lift smoothly.

**Safe lifting procedures must be observed**

Think of all the situations that may apply in the salon:

- stock unpacking and storage – lifting heavy objects
- moving chairs or cutting stools used in the salon
- adjusting trolley height.

It is worth considering all of these factors when purchasing your equipment, as you then have to work with the consequences!
Heat stress
The HSE draws attention to heat stress at work. The best working temperature in hairdressing salons is between 15.5 and 20°C.

Humidity (the amount of moisture in the air) should be within the range of 30–70 per cent, although this will vary if your salon has a sauna and steam area. They should be in a well-ventilated area away from the main workrooms, whilst still being accessible to clients. There should also be sufficient air exchange and air movement, which must be increased in special circumstances, such as chemical mixing and usage. There are different types of ventilation that may be used within the salon.

Mechanical ventilation: extractor fans, which can be adjusted at various speeds.

Natural ventilation: open windows are fine, but be careful of a draught on the client.

Air-conditioned ventilation: passing air over filters and coolers brings about the desired condition, but of course, this is the most expensive method!

A build-up of fumes, or strong smells from chemical preparations such as perm lotion, bleach and tint, may cause both physical and psychological problems, which affect not only clients but staff, too!

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Psychological effects</th>
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<td>Palpitations</td>
<td>Nervous fatigue, which may result in mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td>being made</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nausea or fainting</td>
<td>Lethargy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The effects of heat stress

Protective clothing and equipment
This covers both equipment and protective clothing provisions to ensure safety for all those in the workplace. The regulations also provide that workplace personnel must have appropriate training in equipment use. Protective clothing ensures cleanliness, freshness, and professionalism. For certain treatments it may be advisable to wear extra disposable coverings. The client’s clothing must also be protected.

Protection against infectious diseases
Caution: It is important to protect against all diseases, which are carried in the blood or tissue fluids. Protective gloves should be worn whenever there is a possibility of blood or tissue fluid being passed from one person to another, i.e. through an open cut or broken skin. Two specific diseases to mention are:

- AIDS
  Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a disease caused by the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV). The virus is transmitted through body tissue. Most people are aware of AIDS because of media coverage. The virus attacks the natural immune system, and therefore carries a strong risk of secondary infection, such as pneumonia, which could be life threatening. As there is no known cure, prevention through protection is vital.

Remember
It is very good practice to investigate what your professional body states about protective clothing. It may make your insurance null and void if you do not follow their directives.

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• Hepatitis variants (A, B and C)

This is an inflammation of the liver. It is caused by a very strong virus also transmitted through blood and tissue fluids. This can survive outside the body and can make a person very ill indeed; it can even be fatal. The most serious form is Hepatitis B and you can be immunised against it by a GP. If a person can prove that he or she needs this protection for employment purposes, there is no cost involved. Most training establishments will recommend this.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2003 (COSHH)

This law requires employers to control exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace. Most of the products used in the salon are perfectly safe, but some products could become hazardous under certain conditions or if used inappropriately. All salons should be aware of how to use and store these products.

Employers are responsible for assessing the risks from hazardous substances and must decide upon an action to reduce those risks. Proper training should be given and employees should always follow safety guidelines and take the precautions identified by the employer.

On the right are the symbols that show types of hazardous substances. COSHH requires that they are found on packaging and containers in health, beauty and hairdressing salons.

Here are some examples of potential hazards:

• highly flammable substances, such as hairspray or alcohol steriliser are hazardous because their fumes will ignite if exposed to a naked flame.
• explosive materials, such as hairspray, air freshener or other pressurised cans will explode with force if placed in heat, such as an open fire, direct sunlight, or even on top of a hot radiator.
• chemicals can cause severe reactions and skin damage. Vomiting, respiratory problems and burning could be the result if chemicals are misused.

COSHH precautions

Employers must, by law, identify, list and assess in writing any substance in the workplace. This applies not only to products used in the salon, but also to products that are used in cleaning, e.g. bleach or polish. These substances must be given a hazard rating, or risk assessment, even if it is zero.

Finally, you should read all the COSHH sheets used in the salon and be safe: abide by what they say, never abuse manufacturer’s instructions, and attend regular staff training for product use – you never know when you might need it!

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

The Electricity at Work Regulations are concerned with general safety of the use of electricity. They cover the use and maintenance of electrical equipment in the salon.

Q: How do the Electricity at Work Regulations affect the use of electrical equipment in the salon?

A: Regulation 4 of the Act states:

‘All electrical equipment must be regularly checked for electrical safety. In a busy salon this may be every six months. The check must be carried out by a
“competent person”, preferably a qualified electrician and is called PAT testing. All checks must be recorded in a book kept for this purpose only.’

Q: Who is a ‘competent person’ and what checks must be done?
A: A ‘competent person’ doesn’t need to be a qualified electrician, but he or she must be capable of attending to basic safety checks. The manufacturer may supply its own technical staff to attend to safety checks, as they will be trained in areas of expertise.

Q: If electrical apparatus is found to be faulty, what action must be taken?
A: The equipment must be withdrawn from service and repaired.

Q: What is the purpose of an electrical safety record book?
A: The safety record book should state the dates, the nature of the repair and who carried it out. It should also contain a list of tests carried out on the equipment under inspection, the results of those tests, and be signed by the competent person who carried them out.

This is essential for insurance purposes for public liability and in case of legal action being taken for accident or negligence.

More and more people are demanding court action for negligence – do not be liable, use these regulations to keep you, your colleagues and your clients both out of danger and out of court!

**Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992**

You are required to use and wear the appropriate protective equipment or clothing during chemical treatments. Protective gloves and aprons are the normal requirements for your protection and your employer should provide these for you.

**Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)**

These regulations cover the recording and reporting of any serious accidents and conditions to the local environmental health officer, whose remit covers hairdressing salons. This officer will investigate the accident and makes sure the salon prevents it from happening again in the future. The officer can also assess the risk factors in each instance.

An accident or death at work must be reported within ten days. If the accident does not require a hospital visit, but the person is absent from work for more than three days, a report needs to be given.

If an employee reports a work-related disease, a report must be sent. Work-related diseases include occupational dermatitis, asthma caused through work, or even hepatitis. Accidents as a result of violence or an attack by another person must be reported.

A dangerous occurrence in which no one was actually injured must also be reported, for example, if the ceiling of the salon collapses overnight.

If you are a mobile hairdresser in someone’s home and you have an accident yourself or injure the client, you must report it.

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Employer’s Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969

Employers and self-employed persons must by law hold employer’s liability insurance. This will reimburse them against any legal liability to pay compensation to employees for bodily injury, illness or disease caused during the course of their employment.

Employers must insure for at least £2 million per claim, but check with your own insurance company. Also follow the recommendations of your professional association.

It is worth remembering the following points:

- A legal claim made against your salon could result in very large financial losses and possibly the sale of the owner’s business or even private home.
- Public prosecution results in a heavy fine for those not having this essential insurance cover.
- Damage to the salon could be so great that the business may never recover.
- Some cases take up to ten years to come to court and with inflation the claim against you could be very much more than your original cover if you only go for the minimum requirements.

Insurance

Professional indemnity insurance

Every single professional hairdresser should have this insurance protection, regardless of how few or how many treatments they carry out.

The best deal for all insurance policies is usually found via your professional body, who will be able to offer the best rates as they negotiate on behalf of members and get a considerable discount.

As an employee you need to check with your employer whether you are covered on the business insurance, or if you need to organise your own cover. A salon owner or employer should include this liability in the public liability policy, so that all employees are protected against claims made by clients.

Indemnity insurance could save you a lot of money

Public liability insurance

This is not compulsory, but it is certainly advisable. It will protect the employer should a member of the public be injured on the premises. This could be something as simple as a roof tile hitting the client on his or her way into the salon. If this results in the client being unable to work for a long period of time, the client can seek legal advice and the salon owner could be sued for compensation.

Data Protection Act 1998

Businesses that use computers or paper-based filing systems to hold personal details about their staff and clients may be required to register with the Data Protection Registrar.

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The Data Protection Registrar will place your business on a public register of data users and issue you with a code of practice, which you must comply with, stating:

- you must keep information secure
- you must ensure information is accurate and relevant to your needs
- you must comply with individuals’ requests for information that you are holding on them, failure to do so means you are contravening the Act.

Contact: Data Protection Registrar, Springfield House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AX. (Tel. 01625 545745)

The information held by an organisation on computer about any one of us can be revealed if requested within 40 days for a fee not greater than £10.00. It is possible to gain compensation through a civil court action if you feel there has been any infringement of rights in which information that was given for a specific purpose has been abused.

**Health and safety rules**

These will encompass all aspects of the Health and Safety at Work Act, plus COSHH and the Electricity at Work Act.

You should be in no doubt about:

- your responsibility
- salon procedures
- treatment safety
- equipment safety
- protection against cross-infection.

Salon procedures for health and safety

Client safety:

- positioning of client
- minimum risk of hazard within the salon
- correct use of equipment and products
- correct use of products
- correct evacuation procedures.

Storage procedures:

- electrical equipment
- chemicals
- valuables
- stock
- money.

Stock regulations:

- COSHH regulations are followed
- first aid procedures in place
- stock rotation
- spillage management
- correct storage and containers.

Your employer or head of the training establishment should have all these standard procedures in place. If you are not instructed within your first few weeks of beginning your new post, then ask!

**Reality check!**

Your own personal details are also covered by this Act. Where are you a client? Where do you think your personal details may be kept? You are probably a patient at a doctor’s practice and if so, your details will be held on record by the surgery.

Remember

Regular training is the key for following salon guidelines.

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Salon/workplace policies

All salons will have their own individual policies in place and it is your responsibility to follow them, so make sure you know what your salon’s policies are. All salons will require employees to follow basic rules, like reading and following manufacturer’s instructions. If this rule is not followed, treatments could go wrong, resulting in loss of clients and the salon’s good reputation. Other salon policies will include:

- **Smoking** – some salons are completely non-smoking zones and clients would need to be informed of this by members of staff (you). You must be fully aware of the rules and enforce them if a client decides to light a cigarette.
- **Eating and drinking areas** – the preparation of food and drinks should not be in the same area as the mixing and preparation of products. This would cause an environmental health and safety issue, as many chemical products in hairdressing are caustic and if accidentally mixed with food or drinks would cause internal medical problems.
- **Drug policies** – remember, only fully qualified, medically trained personnel are allowed to administer drugs or medicines.

Cleaning, sterilising and general care of salon tools and equipment

Sterilisation means the killing of all organisms, for example, bacteria, fungus such as ringworm, and parasites such as head lice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Disinfectants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These are only effective if used correctly. They must be used in the correct concentrations and tools must be left in disinfectants for the correct length of time (read manufacturer’s instructions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boiling water (60° minimum) – for towels and gowns. The hot cycle of a washing machine can be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disinfectant solutions, e.g. barbicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NB Brushes and combs should be washed with hot soapy water before being immersed in the solution for at least 20 minutes (read manufacturer’s instructions).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Sterilising wipes and sprays                  |
| Best for metal objects, e.g. scissors, clippers and razor handles (not blades) – remove loose hairs before spraying or wiping. |

| Ultra-violet radiation cabinet               |
| Suitable for all tools. However, the tools must be turned over to ensure that each side has been exposed to the light for 20–30 minutes. |
| NB Tools must be cleaned before placing in the cabinet. |

| Autoclaves                                  |
| Very efficient method of sterilising, especially for metal tools. However, some plastics cannot withstand the heat (check manufacturer’s instructions). Autoclaves take about 20 minutes to sterilise tools. |

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NVQ2 HAIRDRESSING

Reduce the risks to health and safety in your workplace

Fire policies

Fire Precautions Act 1971

By law all business premises must undertake a fire risk assessment. If five or more people work together as employees, the assessment must be in writing. Employers must also take into account all other persons on the premises, not just employees. This will include clients and visitors to the salon.

There must also be a fire and evacuation procedure. In every period of one year there must be at least one fire drill, which involves everyone. All staff must be fully informed, instructed and trained in what is expected of them. Some employees will have special duties to perform such as checking rooms.

All employees, trainees and temporary workers must co-operate with their employers so far as is necessary to enable the employers to fulfil the duties placed upon them by law. This means that everyone must co-operate fully in training courses and fire drills, even when everyone knows it is only a practice.

Many fire-training exercises are organised with a fire safety officer from the local fire station. Often fire engines will take part in the exercise to test the firefighters’ own attendance time from the station to the premises. Everyone should be made aware of his or her own particular rules for evacuation.

When joining a salon, the new employee should be briefed on all health and safety issues, and especially in fire evacuation procedures. It is standard practice to include the information in a handbook containing all the salon’s policies.

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Look carefully at the following example of a training institution’s evacuation procedure.

**Building evacuation procedures in the event of fire or bomb alert**

The following procedure has been agreed and must be followed. Any staff member who does not comply is committing an infringement of the college disciplinary code. Whenever a fire occurs, the main consideration is to get everybody out of the building safely. Protection of personal or college property is incidental.

**Raising the alarm**

Anyone discovering a fire must immediately raise the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm and report to the controller the fire location.

On hearing the alarm the receptionist will immediately contact the emergency services and then evacuate the building.

In the event of a fire being discovered when the reception is unmanned – the premises officer on duty will contact the emergency services and assume control.

**On hearing the alarm**

All those in senior positions proceed to the control point, normally at a main entrance to the building – where one person must take control of the proceedings.

All other staff: close windows; switch off machinery and lights, and close doors on leaving the room.

Assist less able colleagues, leave the building by the nearest marked route and proceed quickly to the appropriate assembly point. Staff must supervise their class.

Staff evacuating the building must check their locality is clear.

**Assembly points**

Everyone must remain at assembly points well away from buildings and clear of access roads.

Report to control in person or via two-way radios where allocated.

Everyone must remain at assembly points until further instructions.

DO NOT re-enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.
Emergency fire procedures

Fire drill dependent on the working area

- All electrical equipment to be switched off.
- Shut windows.
- Clients to be led by the stylist to a safe area. Wrap wet hair in a towel and take extra towels for warmth and water sprays in case any chemicals are nearing their full development time.
- If possible, take the client’s valuable possessions with her, such as handbag, but only if it does not put the client or stylist in any danger.
- Be aware of the treatment being performed before the evacuation – if the client has chemicals on the hair, keep checking the development of the treatment and dilute the strength of the product using a water spray if necessary. This would need to be at the judgement of the person in charge of the salon – certainly a client having a perm or colour will need constant attention while waiting at the assembly point.

Sensible fire precautions

- Be informed – know what to do and where to go when the evacuation begins.
- Be sensible and do not panic – this will only make the client feel panicky too.
- Make sure that the locations of the fire alarm, fire extinguishers and fire exit are familiar.
- Never ignore smoke or the smell of burning – it is far better to have a false alarm. Better safe than sorry.
- Do not misuse or mistreat electrical appliances that are a potential hazard – always treat electrical appliances with respect.
- Do not ignore manufacturer’s instructions for the storage and use of highly flammable products, which are very common within the salon.
- Do be sensible with naked flames and matches or disposal of cigarette ends – a smouldering tip can burst into flames in minutes.
- Be accountable for clients on the premises – the appointment book should be taken outside as a master check of which clients should be present.
- Do not use a lift for the evacuation – it may be that the fire affects the electrical mechanism and that then becomes another emergency.

Fire-fighting equipment

Fire extinguishers

Only a person specially trained in the use of a fire extinguisher should attempt to use one. Never put yourself or others at risk – personal safety is more important than saving material items that can be replaced.

There are different types of portable fire extinguisher for use on different types of fire – using the wrong one can make the situation worse. The latest extinguishers are coloured red with a zone or panel of colour, which indicates the contents of the extinguisher. On older models the colour of the whole fire extinguisher identifies its use.
Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety

Fire blankets

Fire blankets are made of fire-resistant material. They are particularly useful for wrapping around a person whose clothing is on fire. A fire blanket must be used calmly and with a firm grip. If the blanket is flapped about, it may fan the fire and cause it to flare up, rather than put it out. When putting a blanket on a victim, protect your own hands with the edge of the cloth. Remember to place the blanket, never throw, into the desired position.

Sand

A bucket of sand can be used to soak up liquids, such as chemicals, which are the source of a fire. However, never risk injury. If in doubt, leave the area and phone the emergency services.

First aid

People at work can suffer injuries or fall ill. It does not matter whether the injury or illness is caused by the work they do. It is important that they receive immediate attention and that in serious cases an ambulance is called. First aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extinguisher</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>NOT to be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Electrical fires</strong></td>
<td>Dry powder</td>
<td>Blue marking</td>
<td>For burning liquid, electrical fires and flammable liquids</td>
<td>On flammable metal fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon dioxide</td>
<td>Black marking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Safe on all voltages, used on burning liquid and electrical fires and flammable liquids</td>
<td>On flammable metal fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaporising liquid</td>
<td>Green marking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Safe on all voltages, used on burning liquid and electrical fires and flammable liquids</td>
<td>On flammable metal fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-electrical fires</strong></td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Red marking</td>
<td>For wood, paper, textiles, fabric and similar materials</td>
<td>On burning liquid, electrical or flammable metal fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foam</td>
<td>Cream/yellow markings</td>
<td>On burning liquid fires</td>
<td>On electrical or flammable metal fires</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different types of fire extinguishers

Reality check!

Never lean over a fire. If you cannot control it, leave the room, close the door, proceed to a safe place, then phone the emergency services.

Remember

Hundreds of people die and thousands of people are injured in fires each year, many caused by lack of concentration or carelessness. It is better to prevent a fire starting in the first place, for example, use chemicals safely and maintain electrical appliances.

Even small fires spread very quickly, producing smoke and fumes, which can kill in minutes. If there is any doubt, do not tackle the fire, no matter how small.
The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 set out the essential aspects of first aid that employers have to be responsible for.

As a trainee or student, you must have some basic knowledge of first aid. Unless you hold an up-to-date first aid certificate, you should not treat injuries, but you should know when and how to summon a competent first aider and call for an ambulance if necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>First aid necessary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals entering the eye, e.g. perm lotion or neutraliser</td>
<td>Immediately flush the eye with cool, clean water, then summon a first aider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scissor cut to skin</td>
<td>Give the client a pad to stem the flow of blood. Do not touch the wound, surrounding area or blood without gloves on. If the cut is deep or does not stop bleeding, call for first aid assistance or phone the emergency services for an ambulance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client or colleague falls and is knocked out</td>
<td>Put them in the recovery position and call for medical assistance from a first aider or summon an ambulance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client of colleague faints</td>
<td>Put them in the recovery position and call for medical assistance from a first aider or summon an ambulance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common first aid problems in the salon

It is essential that sufficient first aid personnel and facilities should be available:

- to give immediate assistance to casualties with both common injuries and illnesses and those likely to arise from specific hazards at work
- to summon an ambulance or other professional help.

The number of first aiders and facilities available will depend upon the size of the workforce, the type of workplace hazards and risks, and the history of accidents in the workplace.

There are two legal aspects of first aid that you need to consider:

- Trainees – students undertaking work experience on certain training schemes are given the same status as employees and therefore are the responsibility of the employer.
- The public – when dealing with the public the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations do not require employers to provide first aid for anyone other than their own employees. Employers should make extra provision for the public. Educational institutions need also to include the general public in their assessment of first aid requirements.

First aid kits

The minimum level of first aid equipment is a suitably stocked and properly identified first aid container. An old biscuit tin just will not do! First aid containers should be easily accessible and placed, where possible, near to hand-washing facilities.
The container should protect the items inside from dust and damp and should only be stocked with useful items. Tablets and medication should not be kept in it. There is no compulsory list of what a first aid container should include but here are some suggestions:

- A leaflet giving general guidance on first aid (for example, Health and Safety Executive leaflet Basic advice on first aid at work)
- 20 individually wrapped, sterile, adhesive dressings (assorted sizes) appropriate to the type of work
- 2 sterile eye pads
- 4 individually wrapped, triangular bandages (preferably sterile)
- 6 safety pins
- 6 medium-sized, individually wrapped wound dressings
- 2 large sterile, individually wrapped, unmedicated wound dressings
- Pair of disposable gloves
- Antiseptic cream or liquid
- Eye bath
- Gauze
- Medical wipes
- Pair of tweezers
- Sterile water
- Cotton wool.

The number of first aid containers a salon or establishment has will depend upon the size of the establishment and the total number of employees in that area.

Check it out

- Who is responsible for checking the first aid box in your salon?
- How often is it checked?
- What should you do if you have used something from the box?

Make a note of this information for your portfolio of evidence.
Rectifying health and safety risks

Recording incidents

It is good practice for employers to provide first aiders with a book in which to record incidents that require their attendance. If there are several first aid persons in one establishment, then a central book will be acceptable. If you have to deal with an incident, you should record the following information:

- date, time and place of incident
- name and job of injured/sick person, and contact details
- details of the injury/illness and what first aid was given
- what action was taken immediately afterwards, for example, did the person go home, go to hospital? Was he or she taken in an ambulance?
- name and signature of the first aider or person dealing with the incident.

This record book is not the same as the statutory accident book, although the two might be combined. The information kept can help the employer identify accident trends or patterns and improve on safety risks. It can also be used to judge first aid needs assessments. It may also prove useful for insurance and investigative purposes.

Salon accident/incident report

This form should be filled in by the first aider/staff member responsible for dealing with the accident/incident. It should be completed as soon as possible after the accident/incident.

Accident procedures

Accidents happen, even to the most careful of people. In the event of an accident in the salon, stay calm and follow the salon’s accident procedures.
You should be aware of all possible risks in all aspects of salon life, including:

- preparation of area
- unpacking stock
- clearing up of area
- dealing with stock/equipment/products
- putting stock away/taking stock out of storage.

**Health and safety suggestions**

The salon should provide lockable staff storage, filing cabinets or similar so that personal belongings can be locked away. Handbags and purses are always vulnerable to the opportunist thief, who may come in unnoticed off the street and leave with someone’s valuables. If your salon does not provide somewhere secure for your belongings, you could suggest this at your staff meeting.

Staff should be discouraged from bringing large amounts of cash into work and from wearing expensive jewellery if it has to be removed during treatments and is therefore vulnerable to loss or theft.

Carry out banking of money from the till at different times of the day and do not keep too much money in the till at any one time. Removing large amounts of takings from the salon into a bank or night deposit should be done daily. Avoid taking the same route to the bank at the same time of day. Someone may be watching!

Be aware of suspicious packages left unattended – inform a supervisor and, if necessary, call the emergency services. The salon should have a list of telephone numbers by the phone in case of emergency, such as the local police station, or security guardroom – this will save time when it really counts.

Do not allow yourself to be unprotected – do not leave outside doors open when working in the salon, do not leave the till draw open, do not be naive enough to think that it could not happen to you! If unsure, seek professional advice from the local police station or crime prevention officer for personal safety hints, for staff and clients.

As a professional stylist, do not allow yourself to become a victim – follow your professional guidelines.

**Personal presentation**

Hairdressing is part of the fashion industry and the image you portray should reflect this. However, your personal appearance should always combine safety with professionalism. For example, high-heeled shoes are not only uncomfortable after a day’s standing but also not particularly stable to walk in and open-toed sandals will not protect the toes from damage, spillage or impact injury. Shoes should be smart but essentially comfortable.

- Do not wear dangling jewellery which may be a hazard.
- Avoid stooping and slouching, which will prevent back problems occurring.

Order this book online at www.heinemann.co.uk/snvq2hair
• Hairdressers often have arms and shoulders raised when cutting, perm winding, and setting. This awkward and unnatural posture often leads to hairdressers becoming round shouldered and in old age can lead to a hunched back. It is important to learn to stand with good posture while working to prevent this from occurring.

• Evenly distribute body weight by standing with both feet slightly apart – this will prevent accidents and body damage.

• Always wear the correct protective clothing to shield a uniform.

• Always wear gloves when using chemicals or if there is a possibility of coming into contact with body fluids.

• Always follow the correct disposal regulations for waste materials.

• If a salon provides a uniform as part of a corporate image, wear it with pride!

• Your hair should not interfere with any treatment you carry out to avoid the possibility of cross-infection.

• A high standard of cleanliness will ensure no cross-infection can occur:
  – Wash your hands between clients.
  – Keep your nails tidy.
  – Cover cuts or open wounds.
  – Do not attend work with an infectious disease.
  – Do not spread germs with a cold or flu.

Personal conduct
Good conduct cuts down any risks.

• Do not run or rush around the salon.

• Use equipment properly.

• Follow manufacturer’s instructions at all times.

• Ensure salon and equipment are cleaned thoroughly.

• Always leave equipment ready for use by the next person.

• Do not block fire exits for any reason.

• Do not endanger anyone, even as a joke.

• Behave sensibly.

• Use proper lifting procedures.

• Take responsibility for yourself, machinery and problems such as spillage that may occur – do not expect someone else to clean up after you!

• Always treat your clients with the utmost respect.

Salon security and reducing workplace risks
There are many areas to keep secure in a business. Possible risk areas include:

• the premises
• stock and products
• equipment
• money
• display materials
• personal safety
• clients’ belongings.

Reality check!
When stock is delivered to the salon it is usually left at reception for staff to check that the order is correct and then it is taken to the storage area for unpacking. Often the stock is delivered in large, heavy boxes and therefore great care must be taken by all salon employees who lift the boxes. This means bending your knees before taking the weight of the box, and keeping your back straight to avoid straining back muscles and more serious long-term back problems. See page 28 for correct lifting and handling procedures.

Good personal presentation gives a positive image to the salon
The premises
For insurance and mortgage applications the salon owner must have adequate security measures in place for the salon, and it is worth consulting the local police for guidance. A crime prevention officer will come and survey the premises and give advice regarding the most vulnerable areas and the most common forms of entry by a burglar.

External security
- Deadlock all doors and windows.
- Double-glazed windows are expensive but are more difficult to break into – the older the window and frame, the easier the entry.
- Fit a burglar alarm, if possible, or even fit a dummy box on the wall, which may deter a burglar.
- Closed-circuit television (CCTV) may be available if the premises are in a well-known shopping area.
- If the premises have metal shop-front shutters, use them, as they are probably the most effective deterrent to a burglar.

Internal security
- Internal doors can be locked to prevent an intruder moving from room to room.
- Fire doors and emergency exits should be locked at night and re-opened by the first person in at the start of business every morning.
- Stock and money should be locked away or deposited in the bank so that nothing is visible to entice a burglar.
- Lock expensive equipment away in the stock cupboard.
- Very large businesses employ security firms to patrol their premises at night, but, along with alarmed infra-red beams, these are not affordable for the average small salon owner. If, however, the salon is situated within a shopping centre or business park, night patrols may be included in the lease or purchase agreement or offered for a set fee per year. Costs would need to be considered, but it may save money in the long term.
- The local police station can be contacted and police patrols will regularly check the building as part of their normal evening beat.

Stock and products
This includes both items on display and those in use in the salon. The smaller items may prove most irresistible to the thief as they are small enough for a pocket and are very accessible. Unfortunately, this form of theft costs many businesses a great deal of money, as stock can be expensive to replace and can be a big chunk of the capital outlay of a salon.

Another very sad fact is that the average ‘thief’ may be rather closer to home than is comfortable. Staff may ‘borrow’ an item of stock for home use and think that this behaviour is acceptable. There may be some clients who like the look of a re-sale product on display and ‘forget’ to pay for it!

The stealing of small items is known as pilfering. Shoplifting refers to the taking of larger items. In both cases, the salon suffers financial loss.

Tight precautions are needed to prevent the salon’s stock and products from being stolen.
- Have one person (usually a senior stylist or senior receptionist) in control of the stock and limit keys and access to stock.
- Do a regular stock check – daily for loss of stock and weekly for stock ordering and rotation.

Remember
A light left on in reception may deter a thief – no burglar wants to be seen.

Order this book online at www.heinemann.co.uk/snvq2hair
• Use empty containers for displays, or ask the suppliers if they provide dummy stock (this will also save the product deteriorating while on display).
• Keep displays in locked glass cabinets that can be seen but not touched.
• Try to keep handbags (both staff’s and clients’) away from the stock area, usually reception, to stop products ‘dropping’ into open bags.
• Have one member of staff responsible for topping up the treatment products from wholesale-sized containers.
• Hold regular staff training on security and let the staff know what the losses are and how it may affect them – some companies offer bonus schemes both for reaching targets of sales and minimising pilfering. Heavy losses may affect potential salary increases.

**In the salon**

Sally has recently been given the responsibility of stock control at The Crowning Glory salon. Since taking over the role, she has become suspicious that some members of staff are pilfering retail products as the stock control sheets do not match the stock in the salon. As the role is new to her and she has to work with the rest of the staff who she may be accusing of theft, she is unsure what to do.

• Hold a group discussion on what you think Sally should do to deal with this situation.