



Learner Health, Safety and Welfare: Safe Learner Blueprint

June 2011

Of interest to those funded by the Skills Funding Agency,
as well as key partners

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This blueprint is a template to assist funded organisations in developing safe learners. The Safe Learner Blueprint is the result of extensive research* and consultation to develop a framework to support the Safe Learner Concept.

The Skills Funding Agency has adopted the principles of this Blueprint as the elements are sound practice. A learner is an individual receiving training and support on government-funded programmes. The term includes employees, trainees, clients and pupils or students.

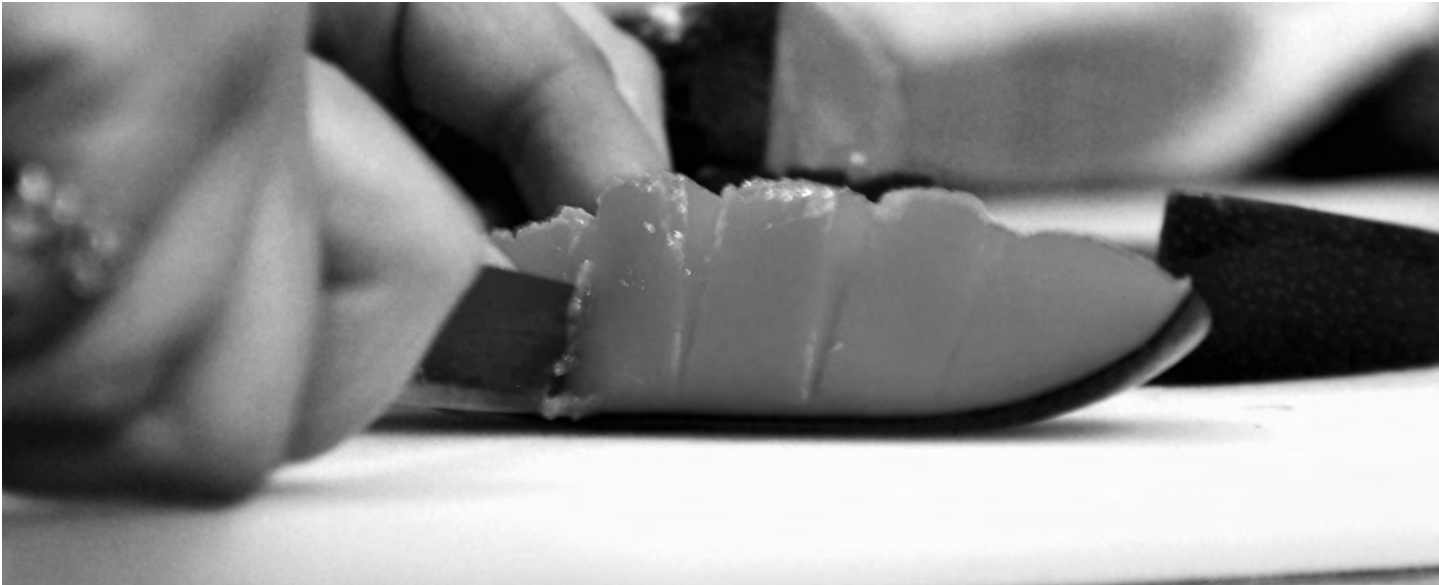


Introduction

The Safe Learner Blueprint has six key elements; Funded organisation, Learning, Working, Tasks, Supervise, Employer.

These key elements are supported by inputs that will contribute to positive outputs. However, it is recognised that one particular way of implementing the Blueprint is not necessarily the correct one. Each organisation will need to customise the blueprint to meet the needs of the learning activities and environment, and any process needs to be proportionate to the risk involved when the learner is learning.

* Research and consultation by the Learning Skills Council (LSC) with Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), ENTO (the national occupational standards body), Institute for Employment Studies (IES), funded organisations, employers and learners.



Inputs

When considering a learner or new employee, the inputs required are:

Environment

This means that the learner should be accommodated in a safe, healthy and supportive learning environment. When they start in their learning environment they should be made to feel welcome (part of the team) and given a mentor / supervisor.

Initial assessment

Before learning commences all learners must have an initial assessment that includes identifying their health, safety and welfare needs and any additional help or support that they may require.

Learning plan

The results of the initial assessment should be used to develop an individual learning plan, which must include the learner's initial and ongoing health, safety and welfare training needs. The detail required will depend on the risks associated with the learning, and any specifics for the learner. Some training of short duration may not require a detailed plan.

Supervision

Supervision levels must be appropriate to the risks identified and the learner's capability, needs and experience.

Information, instruction and training

Once the learning plan is in place, the learner should receive ongoing information, instruction and training to enable him or her to work and learn efficiently and safely.

Reassessment

The learner's understanding and awareness of key health, safety and welfare issues should be assessed and evaluated continually.

The Safe Learner Blueprint

1

Every **funded organisation** has a key role to work closely with the learner and all those involved in the learning activity. Organisations should establish an understanding of their role and their contribution to the Safe Learner Blueprint.

Funded organisations need to ensure the level of competence required by all their staff involved in, or influencing, learning activities. For example, the competence required for assessing and monitoring the learning environment and managing learner incidents.

2

Learning and working must take place in a healthy, safe and supportive environment.

The Skills Funding Agency standards for health, safety and welfare have been designed to assist funded organisations to achieve this.

3

All **tasks** and learning activities need to be performed safely and the associated risks assessed adequately. The funded organisation must discuss and agree the arrangements for risk assessment and controls with all those involved. The learner and their supervisor or tutor need to be informed of these arrangements. The Agency standards for health, safety and welfare highlight some of the key aspects to be considered.

4

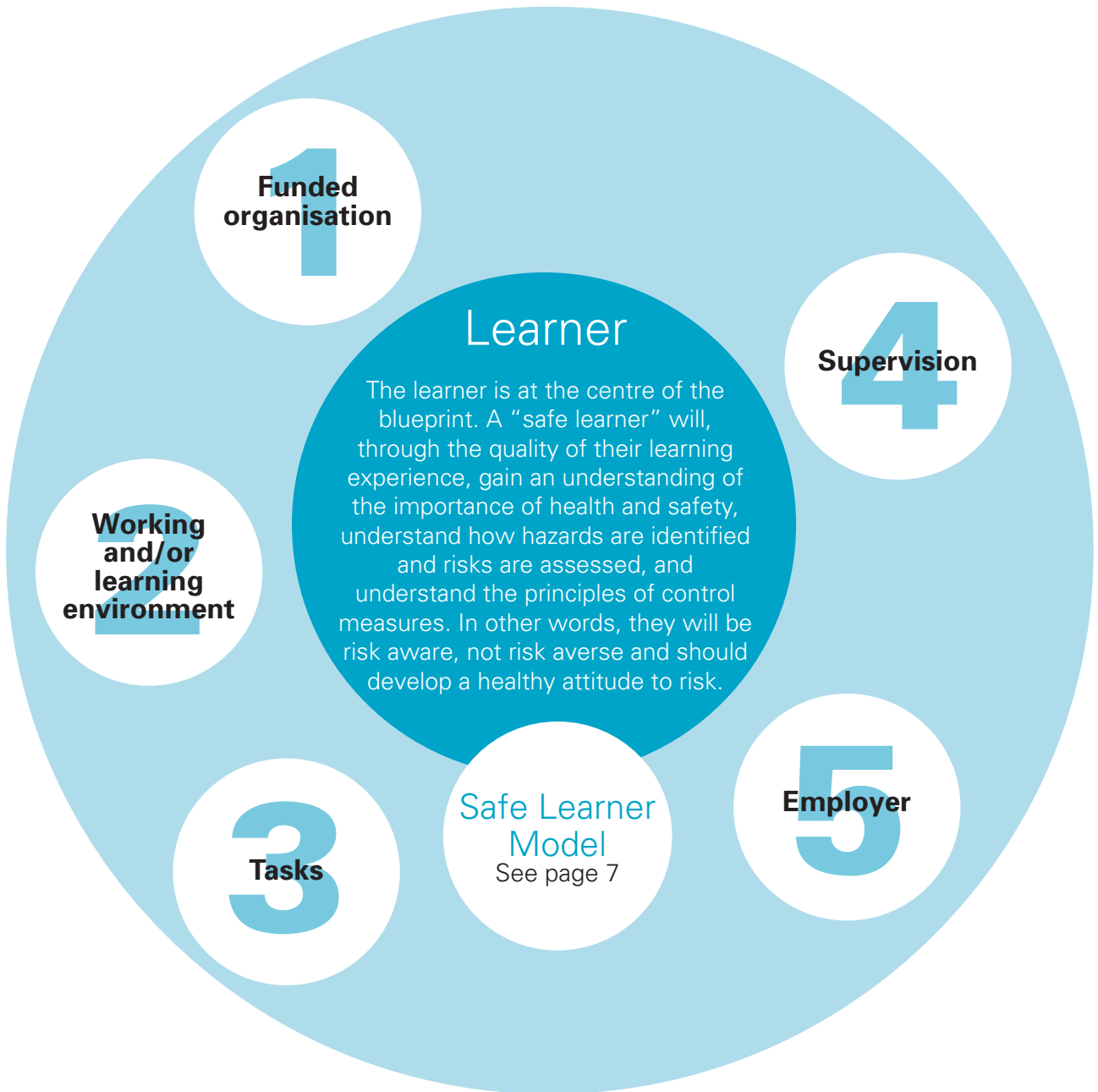
All who **supervise** learners, including tutors, instructors and mentors, have a direct role in the transfer of health and safety knowledge and can influence the behaviour of the learner. In addition, they play an important role in upholding and maintaining standards of health, safety and welfare. Lack of competent supervision has been identified as a key factor when a learner incident occurs, and recent research by the Institute of Educational Studies (IES) has found a strong correlation between poor supervision and learners conducting unsafe behaviours (that is, taking risks).

5

The **employer** has a legal responsibility for health, safety and welfare in the workplace.

Where work-related learning takes place on an employer's premises, the employer must understand how the learner learns, and the importance of supervision when assessing the risks and control measures required.







Outputs

With the required inputs considered to support the learning process, a safe learner will be able to demonstrate:

Hazard awareness

Safe learners will be aware of hazards within their environment, their activities and the work being carried out around them, and their responsibilities to others.

Understanding

Safe learners will understand the concepts of hazard, risk and the measures that are required to control risks.

Confidence

Safe learners will be confident, not only in their ability to learn and work safely, but also to challenge any situation or instruction that could be unsafe to them or other people. Safe learners will know their limitations and when to seek further advice.

Contribution

By developing these skills and knowledge, safe learners will be able to contribute ideas, input into their learning and work, and become more involved in the day-to-day operation of the organisation and their learning activity.

Behaviours

Safe learners will have developed a set of behaviours to enable them to play an active part in the learning process and acquire practical, value-added and transferable skills from their experiences.

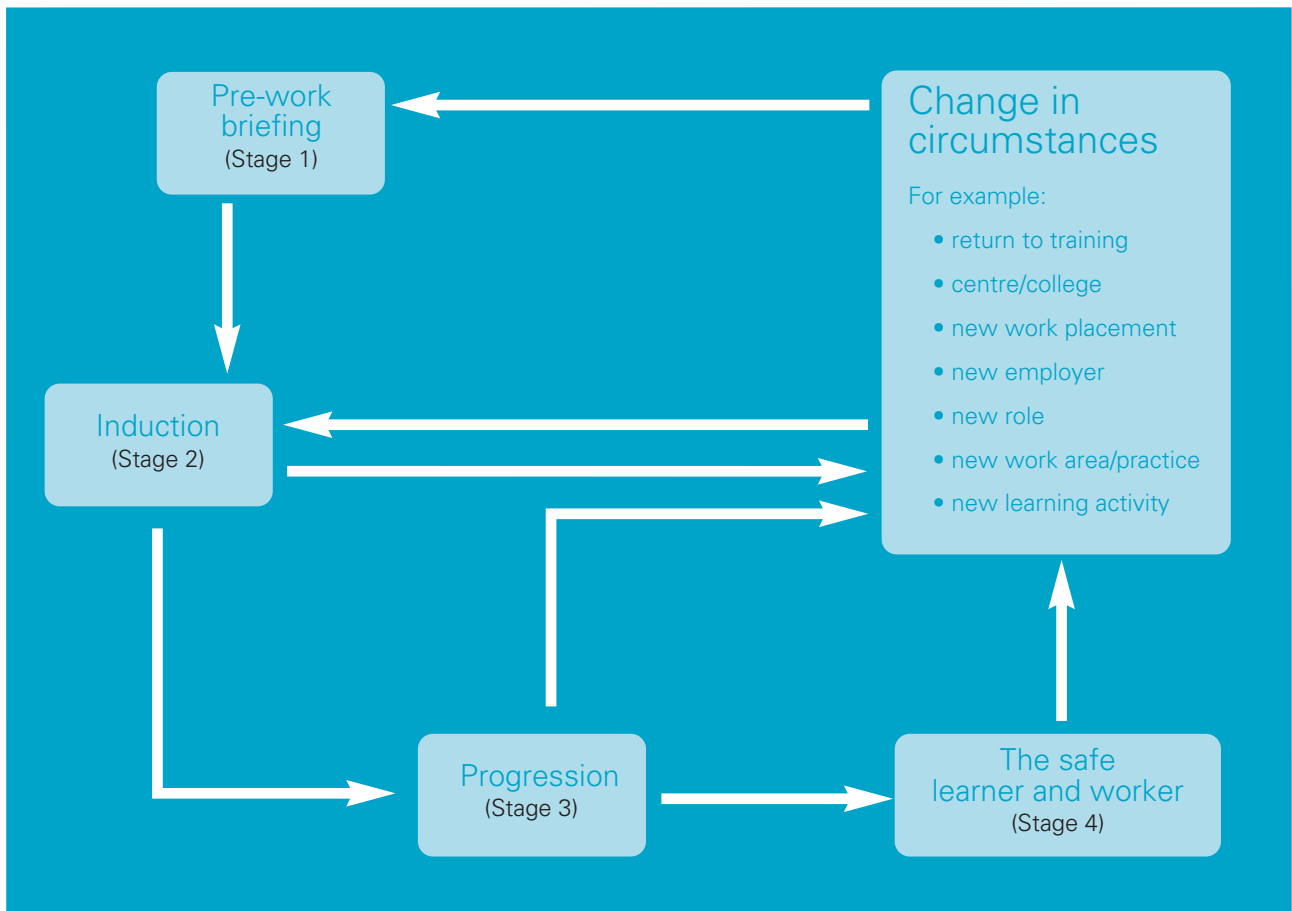
Safe Learner Model

The Safe Learner Model is a part of the Safe Learner Blueprint, which is linked directly to learners and their learning activities. The model has five stages that support the development of learner health, safety and welfare knowledge and understanding (see figure below).

The model shows the relationship and interaction of the stages involved in life long learning so that learners develop safe behaviours as an integral part of learning, and become risk aware rather than risk averse in the workplace.

The model is not intended as a training course. Funded organisations are able to use their existing programmes and cross-reference them to the model to ensure that the programme is effective. It can be used in a number of ways and provides, for example, a structure for developing and reviewing programmes and learning plans. The inputs referred to in the Safe Learner Blueprint will contribute to the application of the model throughout the various stages of learning.

Lifelong health and safety learning (stage 5)





Agency Standards for Health, Safety and Welfare

The standards apply to all Skills Funding Agency funded learning and are particularly relevant when the learning is vocational and takes place for a time with employers. Funded organisations must judge the suitability of health, safety and welfare in the place where learning is conducted. The standards have been provided to assist clarity and consistency in assuring that learners are in safe, healthy and supportive environments.



There are nine core standards:

- 1 A health and safety policy
- 2 Risk-assessment and control measures
- 3 Accidents and incidents, including the provision of first aid
- 4 Effective supervision, training, information and instruction
- 5 Suitable and appropriate equipment and machinery
- 6 Provision and use of necessary personal protective equipment and clothing
- 7 Fire and other foreseeable emergencies
- 8 A safe and healthy working environment
- 9 The management of health and safety

The tenth standard is specific to the learner, the activities they perform and any additional support they require:

- 10 The Skills Funding Agency-funded organisation and/or employer managing the learner, or young person's health, safety and welfare. The Agency Standards document gives more information on requirements.

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Further information is available from:

www.safelearner.info

www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

HSE: www.hse.gov.uk

www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople

HSE guidance documents: HSG 65, HSG 245

IES: www.employment-studies.co.uk

ENTO: www.ento.co.uk

DfE (Department for Education): contact through www.dfes.gov.uk

BIS (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills): contact through www.dfes.gov.uk



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