

# Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard  
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## **Y**oung Workers

UK Health and safety law defines young people as anyone under eighteen years of age. The law on working time defines a young worker as being below 18 years of age and above the minimum school leaving age. The 1994 EU Directive on the Protection of Young People at Work covered a range of safety and employment issues all of which are embedded in various UK regulations.

These regulations are based on the principle that young workers are particularly at risk in the workplace for a variety of reasons, including their general lack of experience, their lack of awareness about occupational risks to their health and safety and their possible immaturity. Facilities managers must be aware of young people in their workplace. These might include apprentices, visitors, or work experience students as well as new employees.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employers to take account of young worker's lack of experience, awareness, immaturity etc. when they assess risks to their health and safety and to carry out a risk assessment before the young person begins work. They must take account of the risk assessment when determining whether or not the young person is prohibited from doing certain work. This does not apply where the young person is over school-leaving age and is doing the work under careful supervision as part of their training and where the risks have been reduced to their lowest practicable level. The employer must inform the parents or guardians of school-age children of the outcome of the risk assessment and the control measures introduced to reduce any risks.

Children below the minimum school leaving age may not be employed in industrial undertakings such as factories, construction sites etc except when on work experience schemes approved by the local authority or the governing body of an independent school. Children under 13 years of age are generally prohibited from any form of employment and local authorities have powers to make bylaws on the types of work, and hours of work, children aged between 13 years and the minimum school leaving age can do.

Students and trainees, including children, on work experience are regarded in health and safety law as employees. Students on work experience placements must be provided with the same health, safety and welfare protection given to other employees. Taking into account that young people are particularly at risk, employers may wish to provide even greater care. Restrictions may apply to the types of work which young people, including pupils below the minimum school leaving age on work experience, are allowed to do.

The Working Time Regulations implemented Articles 6 and 7 of the European Directive on the European Working Time Directive and parts of the Young Workers Directive which relate to the working time of workers who are above the school leaving age but below 18 years of age. They provide basic rights and protections for workers with enhanced rights for adolescent workers including an entitlement for Young Workers to a 30 minutes break in every 4.5 hours.

*The Department for Children, Schools and Families has an extensive range of information available on its website regarding young people at work [www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk)*

*The Health and Safety Executive has a number of pages specifically covering young people at work on their website at [www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople)*