
Skills for Life

Infection Control

Introduction

This workbook is designed for you to improve your communications skills. Whilst you are working through the course book you will also learn about Infection Control.

This workbook, which is designed to assist you in developing your skills further, is based on Unit 1 of the Intermediate Award in Infection Control.

The aim

Working through the **Skills for Life Infection Control** workbook will enable you to progress and use the communication skills that you have gained to take the full award in Infection Control.

You will also find the skills that you have learned useful in other courses of study and your everyday life.

This workbook

This workbook is designed in three main sections:

- ◆ **Section 1:** Personal Hygiene
- ◆ **Section 2:** The Work Environment
- ◆ **Section 3:** Food Hygiene

As you work through the workbook you will see that activities are included to give you the opportunity to practise your communication skills. Those skills are based on the National Standards for Literacy at level 1.

Complete each of the activities to check your current skills and identify those skills which need improving.

When you and your tutor find an area of communications that you can improve on, your tutor will work with you, providing further learning resources for you to use to develop the skills that you need.

Your tutor will also keep a record of your work, so that you can both see what has been accomplished and what work remains to be done.

When you have completed the course, your tutor will arrange for you to take the final formal assessment against the National Standards.



The National Standards for the Level 1 Certificate in Adult Literacy

Speaking and listening At this level adults can	listen and respond to spoken language, including information and narratives, and follow explanations and instructions of varying lengths, adapting response to speaker, medium and context speak to communicate information, ideas and opinions adapting speech and content to take account of the listener(s) and medium engage in discussion with one or more people in familiar and unfamiliar situations, making clear and relevant contributions that respond to what others say and produce a shared understanding about different topics
Reading At this level adults can	read and understand straight forward texts of varying length on a variety of topics accurately and independently
	read and obtain information from different sources
Writing At this level adults can	write to communicate information, ideas and opinions clearly using length, format and style appropriate to purpose and audience

The table above shows you an outline of the skills you need to have to be successful in communicating at level 1. You will have some of those skills, your tutor will monitor and record your progress and guide you towards gaining those skills that you do not already have.



A large part of the standards is about speaking, listening and engaging in discussion, your opportunity to develop or improve those skills will arise when you are working with your tutor at your tutorials and in your workplace.

You will also see that reading, features quite heavily in the standards. You will be developing reading skills as you work through this workbook.

The other skills featured in the standards are addressed directly in the text of the workbook.



Reading Strategies

When reading a piece of text you will take a different approach depending on your reason for reading it.

Skimming:

- ◆ Involves a quick reading of the text, just enough to get a general overview of what the text is about and how it is organised by headings, subheadings and paragraphs
- ◆ Will quickly enable you to decide if you need to read the text in further depth.

Scanning:

- ◆ Used as a follow up after you have already 'skimmed' a text. After skimming you should be able to focus on a paragraph where you may expect to see a particular word or phrase that you are looking for.

The use of the above strategies will speed up your reading, saving you precious time.

Detailed reading:

Having 'skimmed and scanned' the text you may well have to read it in detail to get the most from your learning. When you come to do the tasks in this workbook you will find that a combination of skimming, to find the relevant page, followed by a scan for more detail will help you to find a particular piece of information.

Unfamiliar words

As you read through this workbook you may come across some unfamiliar words. When this happens pick up a dictionary and check the meaning of the word. This will help you build up your vocabulary of words that you know and use.

Using a dictionary will show that often the meaning of a word can vary depending upon the context in which it is used.

Here are some simple examples:

1. This is a major issue
2. He is **a** major shareholder
3. He is **the** major shareholder

In example 1 – **This is a major issue** means we are talking about a singular issue that is 'serious or very important'

In example 2 – **a major shareholder** means he is one of a number of large shareholders but not the only one, again implying importance but not quite in the same way.



In example 3 – just by changing the preceding word from ‘a’ to ‘the’ **major shareholder**. The subject is again the single most important shareholder holding more shares than anyone else.

So if you find a word that you don’t understand you can use the rest of the sentence to help you work out the meaning. If there are pictures, charts, tables etc. they could also help you understand meaning.

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	◆ read and obtain information	Learner workbook
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	◆ speak to communicate	Tutorials and at work
	◆ engage in discussion	Tutorials and at work
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Look at the contents list, you will see that you will get plenty of opportunity to practice and develop your reading, speaking and listening and writing skills when using your workbook or attending tutorials.

Make the most of those opportunities!

Section 1: Personal Hygiene

In this section you will learn about:

- ◆ Why personal hygiene is important in your workplace
- ◆ Your responsibilities in respect of personal hygiene
- ◆ Risks and precautions relating to dress and appearance
- ◆ How to wash your hands properly and why this is important
- ◆ When your own or family illness could pose a risk at work

Personal Hygiene

Do you remember when you were a child, your parents telling you to wash behind your ears? Wash the back of your neck? Brush your teeth? Wash your hands before meals? Wash your hands after going to the toilet?

They were just teaching you about personal hygiene.



And every time, did you ask "Why?" And they told you it was something to do with dirt and spreading germs. And they were right! (As parents often are.)

So, the question now is, **"Do you know everything about personal hygiene that you ever need to know?"**

If you think the answer to this is "No" then read on...

If you think the answer is "Yes" read on anyway, you might be surprised!



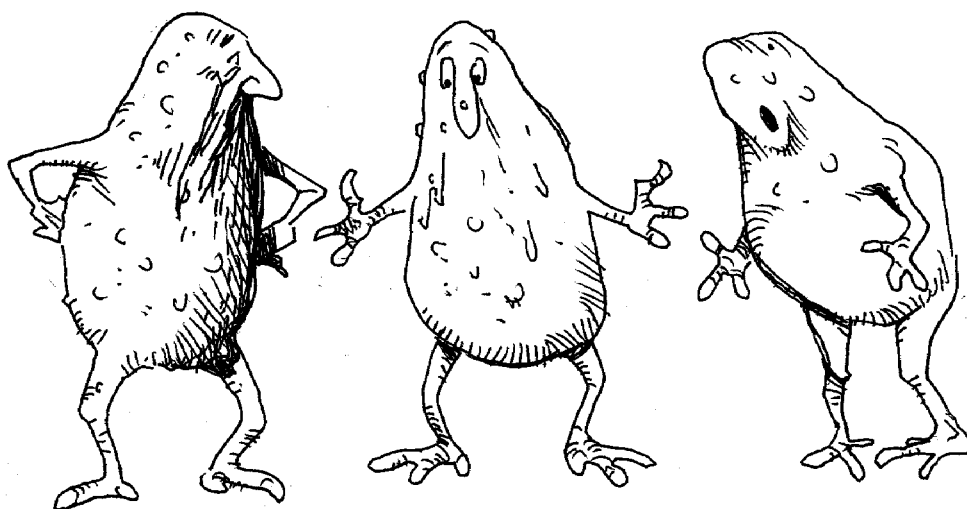
Do I need to know about personal hygiene at work?

Of course! We're talking here about more than just keeping clean (and not starting to smell!). You are taking this course because your workplace is one place where **it is important to prevent the spread of infection**. High standards of personal hygiene are one way of minimising the risks.

The basic principles of personal hygiene are still important – showering or bathing each day, keeping hair, nails and teeth clean, washing your hands after using the toilet **and** before handling food, wearing clean clothes. But there are also some more specific rules about dress and hygiene that should be applied in your workplace.

We are not alone!

Your skin, mouth, digestive system and all sorts of other parts of your body have **billions** of micro-organisms living on or in them. These also get onto the clothes you wear. The good news is most of these are harmless and some are thought to be beneficial. Scientists refer to these as the '**normal flora**' of the human body.



Needless to say, it's not the 'normal flora' we are concerned about. The micro-organisms we are concerned with are the ones that cause **infections** and **disease**. Unfortunately, if the conditions of the body are favourable for the friendly micro-organisms, it stands to reason that it will attract a good number of unfriendly ones too. Scientists call these ones '**pathogenic**' micro-organisms (or just '**pathogens**').

What does it mean?

Normal flora: the billions of micro-organisms that normally live on or in the human body.

Pathogenic: causing disease or capable of causing disease.



Do they bother you?



Most of the time, if you're generally fit and healthy, the unfriendly micro-organisms won't bother you much. But, if you're not careful, they might bother other people! Even if you don't become ill yourself from contact with pathogenic micro-organisms, you can introduce them to other people or places where they can start to cause trouble. Some people – the elderly, the very young and the sick – are particularly at risk from pathogenic micro-organisms. So you need to **make sure that you don't add to the risk**.

Where might you pick them up from? Other infected clients, toilets, sluices, used equipment, dirty surfaces, body waste and fluids (urine, blood, faeces, vomit, saliva etc), other people generally, the air you breathe...

So now you know they exist, you need to know how to get rid of them.

What are your responsibilities?

You have a responsibility not to put your clients at risk and part of this means **taking care of your own personal hygiene**. This includes a good level of basic hygiene – making sure that you, your hair and clothes are always clean and are washed regularly. It also includes any requirements or responsibilities identified by your employer.

Now turn the page and complete your first task.



Task 1 Planning for written communicationWt/L1.1
Wi/L1.4

Write on this page to tell your tutor about you and your work, it will help them to know about you and the things that you do at work.

It will also help you and your tutor to identify what skills in written communication you have, and what skills you need to develop further in this area of communications.

Include:

- ◆ how long you have worked there
- ◆ what work you do
- ◆ what you do when you are not at work
- ◆ where you work
- ◆ why you want to learn about infection control
- ◆ your employer's name
- ◆ your name.

Once you have decided what you need to include, plan your writing by placing the information in a logical order. You may write this down as a rough plan before you start, or do it in your head if you find it easier.

When you have completed this task, continue to work through the book. If you wait to see your tutor each time you complete a task you could be studying for a long time!



Present all of the work that you have completed each time you meet with your tutor who will discuss the work with you and help you plan the next step that you need to take.



Task 1 Planning for written communicationWt/L1.1
Wi/L1.4**Purpose and audience**

Before you write a communication, you need to consider who it is for and what its purpose is.

Are you writing to:

- ◆ friends to persuade them to meet you after work,
- ◆ a workmate leaving an instruction from the supervisor,
- ◆ your senior manager providing important information?

Purpose of communication

Read the following statement and tell me what the purpose of the communication is by ticking one of the boxes provided.

People most at risk from infections are the elderly, the very young and the sick.

Instruct Narrate Inform Persuade **Audience (who is it for)**

Read the statement below and tell me who it was written for by ticking the correct answer(s).

Follow company procedure when entering or leaving a 'clean' area.

Friend Parent Workmate Manager 

I haven't got a thing to wear!

What you wear for work is important. You need **comfortable** clothing that you can easily move around in but it shouldn't be too loose-fitting. Avoid anything with frills or long tie belts, for example. Loose clothing or parts of clothing can more easily come into contact with clients or **contaminated** equipment, substances or surfaces.

What does it mean?

Contaminated: polluted, tainted or infected

This means you could pick up pathogenic micro-organisms and carry them to other areas or people.

Some workplaces will require you to wear a uniform. These are useful because they have been designed specially for the purpose and are easy to keep clean and safe to wear.

It's no good wearing the right clothes, though, unless you keep them clean.

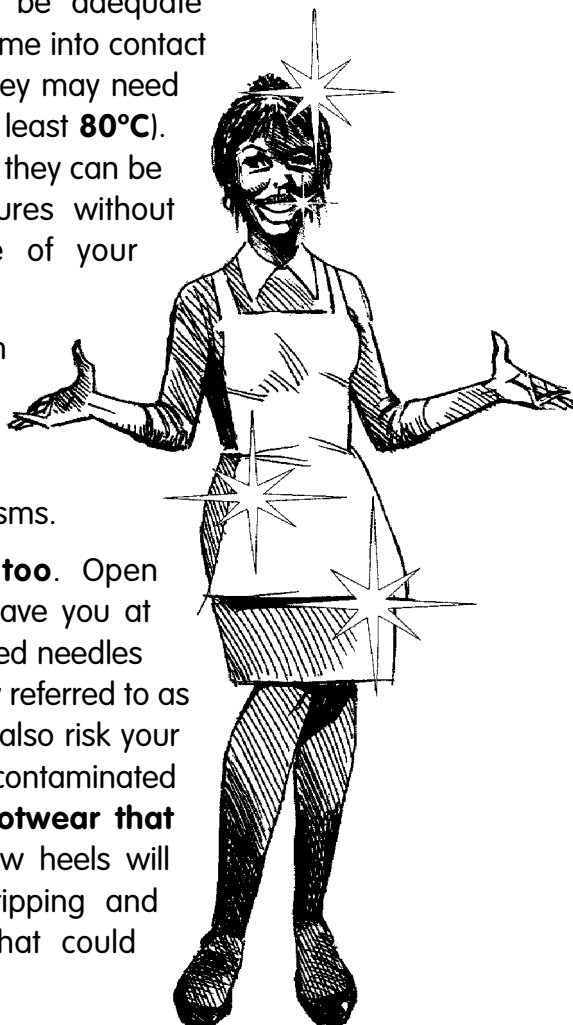


Dirty clothes will harbour micro-organisms that may cause infection.

Machine washing will generally be adequate unless you know that you have come into contact with **pathogens** in which case they may need washing at high temperatures (at least **80°C**). One advantage of uniforms is that they can be washed at very high temperatures without being ruined (not always true of your favourite shirt!).

Always make sure your uniform or work clothing is in good condition. Tears or frayed edges will not only look untidy but can also pick up dirt and micro-organisms.

Your **footwear is important too**. Open footwear such as sandals can leave you at risk of injury and infection from used needles or other sharp instruments (usually referred to as 'sharps') if they are dropped. You also risk your skin coming into contact with contaminated substances if they are spilled. **Footwear that covers the feet is best** and low heels will prevent you from slipping or tripping and spilling or dropping anything that could cause infection.



Cover up

Sometimes you will need to wear **protective clothing**. This is usually in situations that involve bodily contact or contact with body wastes or fluids. Some of these might be routine situations such as:

- ◆ helping a client to wash or shower
- ◆ assisting clients in going to the toilet or using a bedpan
- ◆ helping clients to eat.

In addition, you might be involved in situations where you help in carrying out clinical or medical procedures such as changing dressings on wounds, or helping to give a client an injection.

What should I wear?

Protective clothing for routine situations such as those above will probably include:

- ◆ **Gloves:** to protect your hands from contact with body fluids or equipment that might be contaminated and to prevent you transferring micro-organisms that may be on your hands to others.
- ◆ **Plastic aprons:** to prevent your clothes being splashed with contaminated substances such as dirty water or body waste.



Other protective clothing you could wear includes:

- ◆ **A gown:** if you are likely to get very messy – this also protects your clothes if they are likely to be splashed in places an apron would not cover.
- ◆ **Hats:** if the hair is likely to become contaminated.
- ◆ **Masks:** protect the nose and mouth – if it is possible – as contaminated substances could be splashed onto the face or inhaled.
- ◆ **Goggles:** if there is a risk of substances splashing in the eyes.



These last three items are usually only necessary where there are specific infection risks.