

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

In general terms, these Regulations require that equipment provided for use at work is:

- Suitable for the intended use
- Safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and in certain circumstances, inspected to ensure this remains the case
- Used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training
- Accompanied by suitable safety measures, such as protective devices, markings, warnings.

Any equipment which is used by an employee at work is covered, for example hammers, knives, ladders, drilling machines, power presses, circular saws, photocopiers, lifting equipment (including lifts), dumper trucks and motor vehicles.

This legislation does not generally preclude young adults from using work equipment but emphasis the need to ensure adequate training, instruction and supervision.

Young adults need training most when they start a job. They need to be trained to do the work without putting themselves and other people at risk. Young workers will be facing unfamiliar risks from the job they will be doing and from their surroundings and are therefore likely to need more supervision than adults.

The regulations also contain strengthened guidance relating to young adults in associated Approved Codes of Practice, for example in dealing with power presses and woodworking. Those under the age of 18 should not be allowed to use such equipment unless they have the necessary maturity and competence. This includes having successfully completed appropriate training. However, they may operate such equipment during training providing they are adequately supervised. They should also be supervised after training if considered insufficiently mature.

Mechanical Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations

These regulations state that those under the age of 18 should not be allowed to use high-risk lifting machinery, such as fork lift trucks, unless they have the necessary maturity and competence. This includes having successfully completed appropriate training. However, they may operate such equipment during training providing they are adequately supervised. They should also be supervised after training if considered insufficiently mature.

Carriage of Dangerous Explosives and Goods Regulations

These regulations prohibit anyone under 18 from:

- using or being employed as a driver or attendant of any vehicle for the carriage of explosives
- being responsible for the security of the explosives concerned
- entering such a vehicle except in the presence of and under the supervision of someone at least 18 years old
- being employed to supervise the unloading of petrol from a road tanker at a petrol filling station

Further information

- HSE Infoline on 08701 545500 and booklet Young People at Work – A Guide for Employers (HSG165) from HSE Books on 01787 881165 www.hsebooks.co.uk