Food Hygiene Manual

Candidate

Company

Date

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the importance of food safety measures when providing food and drink for individuals
- Understand how to maintain hygiene when handling food and drink
- Know how to meet safety requirements when preparing and serving food and drink for individuals
- Understand how to meet safety requirements when clearing away food and drink
- Know how to store food and drink safely
- Know how to access additional advice or support about food safety

Complementary Manuals

- Health and Safety
- Infection Control
- Risk Assessment
- Diet and Nutrition
- Malnutrition

Unit One

The Importance of Hygiene and Safety

Poor standards of hygiene and safety can put anyone at risk; when you are providing meals for people who may be at increased danger from infection it is particularly important to take extra care.

If your standards of cleanliness are poor, and food and drink are not stored and handled appropriately, the following factors can increase people's likelihood of becoming seriously ill (the effects of food poisoning can also be fatal):

- Extreme youth
- Old age
- Pregnancy
- Existing illness / infection
- Physical frailty

Your clients (and potentially you) are also placed at increased risk of food poisoning by communal living arrangements; mass catering and sharing of facilities make the spread of infection more likely.

If working practices and kitchen areas are unsafe both staff and clients may be placed at risk of accidental injury. Common hazards include boiling liquids, slippery floors, hot equipment, knives and cleaning chemicals. Accidents involving any of these could lead to serious injury, time off work, investigation and possibly legal action.

The purpose of this manual is to help you to recognise the potential dangers involved in catering for others and to understand how you can handle food properly in a safe environment thus reducing the likelihood of illness and accidents.

Legislation

Everyone involved in cooking for, serving and supporting clients to eat food should be aware of hygiene and safety issues and the law. You can be prosecuted if your negligence or poor practice causes illness or injury but this can be avoided if you follow simple rules for the safe handling of food and take action to maintain a safe working environment.

The Food Safety Act 1990

This Act covers all areas of food production at every stage from growing / breeding to packaging, displaying, preparing, cooking and serving. Anyone working with food

has a duty to comply with this legislation and the penalties for not doing so can include a fine of up to £20,000 and possibly a jail sentence as well.

The Food Hygiene Regulations 2006

These regulations set out hygiene and safety principles that must be complied with and give Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) powers of inspection and enforcement.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

Employers and employees have legal duties to ensure that working environments and practices are safe. Employers must develop policies and procedures; provide safety equipment and give employees adequate information and training to work safely.

You must make sure that you take care of your own health and safety and that of your colleagues, clients etc. You should co-operate with your employer to ensure that you are working safely.

The W.H.O – World Health Organisation

The W.H.O. issue guidance on promoting good health across the world. Their recommendations have no legal standing but they are a well respected source of thoroughly researched information.

The 10 rules they have for safe food practice are:

1. Choose foods processed safely.
2. Cook food thoroughly.
3. Eat cooked foods immediately.
4. Store cooked foods carefully.
5. Reheat cooked foods thoroughly and only once.
6. Avoid contact between raw and cooked foods.
7. Wash hands thoroughly.
8. Keep all work surfaces clean.
9. Protect food from insects / rodents and other animals.
10. Use safe water.

Enforcement

Local authorities employ Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) to ensure the maintenance of standards in local food suppliers. They can provide advice on the law and good practice and they have powers to carry out inspections and take action against employers and employees when they find evidence of poor or illegal practices.

EHOs can enter premises at any reasonable time to carry out inspections. As long as they can provide proof of identification you must let them in and support them by answering questions and allowing them to carry out their work unhindered.
They have the power to:

- Inspect food to see if it is safe
- Take samples of foods for examination
- Take photographs
- Ask questions
- Seize or detain foods (if unfit for human consumption, it may be placed before a magistrate to be condemned)
- Commence prosecutions for infringement of the Food Safety Act 1990, and other food hygiene regulations

Inspections can be worrying for employers and employees alike; no one likes to feel that they are being judged but it's important to remember that Environmental Health Officers are not trying to close people down. Unless your kitchen is so dirty or your practices so poor that they put people at immediate risk EHOs will probably just give you advice on any improvements to be made.

If your inspector believes that certain improvements need to be made within a set time limit they may issue you with an improvement notice; more serious risks to health may be dealt with by prohibition notices or orders which prevent you from operating until improvements are made.

Unit One
Questions

1. Give two reasons why one of your clients may be at increased risk of food poisoning.

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   2……

2. Who are employed to carry out inspections of food premises?

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3. What might an inspector do if they find that the kitchen is dirty and that there are no cleaning rotas in place?

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4. Why might an inspector take samples of food away with them?

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5. Which legislation gives inspectors power to enforce hygiene laws?

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Unit Two

Food Poisoning and Food Borne Illnesses

Illness caused by food consumption occurs either because something in the food causes poisoning; because the food is being used as a 'carrier' for an illness or because the person eating the food develops an allergic reaction to it.

Most food poisoning and food-borne illnesses are caused by bacteria so we will look at them first, but there are several other organisms and substances which may contaminate foods.

Signs and Symptoms

Many of the signs and symptoms associated with food poisoning / food borne illness are the result of the body's reaction to eating something harmful. Therefore, common reactions include vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach cramps, a rise in temperature and sweating. In general symptoms occur between 8 and 36 hours after eating, and last for 24 to 48 hours. However, this varies from person to person and depends on the cause of the illness and the amount of harmful organism or substance which has been ingested.

Variations include:

- Some contaminants can cause a response as soon as an hour after eating
- 'At risk' individuals may be made seriously ill or be killed by prolonged vomiting / diarrhoea
- Some symptoms may be life threatening e.g. kidney damage or failure
- There are types of bacteria and viruses which can cause prolonged illness lasting weeks or (in the case of botulism) months

Bacteria

Some interesting facts:

- Bacteria are not visible to the naked eye. This means that you can be surrounded by thousands of them without being aware of their presence.
- 90% of germs on hands are found under the nails
- You have between 2 and 10 million bacteria between your fingertips and your elbow
- There could be as many germs under a wedding ring as there are people in Europe
- Oxygen is not a necessity for bacterial growth, some types (anaerobes) can breed well without it.
- It would take about a million bacteria clustered together to form a spot the size of a full stop
- Your body contains more bacterial cells than human ones

Bacteria are tiny living organisms; although we commonly refer to them as ‘germs’ and associate them with dirt, illness and rotting food they are a vital element of life on earth. Bacteria perform many functions which are necessary for our health and the health of the world around us.

‘Good’ bacteria, properly know as commensal bacteria outnumber the ‘bad’ (pathogenic) bacteria but because we can’t see them we lack awareness of their role in our lives. We can never, and would never want to, get rid of bacteria altogether. No cleaning product is 100% effective, and none can tell the difference between good and bad bacteria. What we have to do to be hygienic is to clean thoroughly and regularly and ensure that foods are cared for in such a way that harmful bacteria do not get the chance to reach dangerous levels.

Bacterial Growth

Bacteria breed by dividing into two; this means that in the right conditions they can generate large numbers very quickly. They have four requirements for reproduction:

Warmth – bacteria breed best at around 37˚c but can breed successfully anywhere between 5˚c and 63˚c; this temperature range is known as the danger zone

Food – bacteria are not particularly choosy but they are happiest with high protein, moist foods such as meat, fish and dairy products. Soups, stews and stocks can form a particularly good breeding ground

Moisture – like all living organisms bacteria require water to thrive, they can exist without it but they do so in a dormant form and are unable to do anything until they come into contact with water again

Time – given the right conditions bacteria divide every 20 minutes so 1 bacterium becomes over 2 million in 7 hours (bacteria do die so they do not carry on doubling unchecked forever)

Control Measures

By knowing what bacteria need to breed we can develop methods of controlling their multiplication; in unit 4 we will look at how bacteria are spread and ways of preventing this. Below are some ways in which reproduction can be slowed down or stopped.

Refrigeration / freezing – bacteria do not breed at cold temperatures but they survive even in a freezer. Keeping food under 5˚c restricts breeding opportunities but the bacteria will become active again as soon as the temperature of the environment goes up.

Cooking – cooking food is an effective control measure because bacteria will actually die at hot temperatures. The hotter the food gets, the more bacteria will be

killed. When you are cooking fresh foods a temperature of around 75ºc is generally sufficient, if you are reheating foods a temperature of around 82ºc is required.

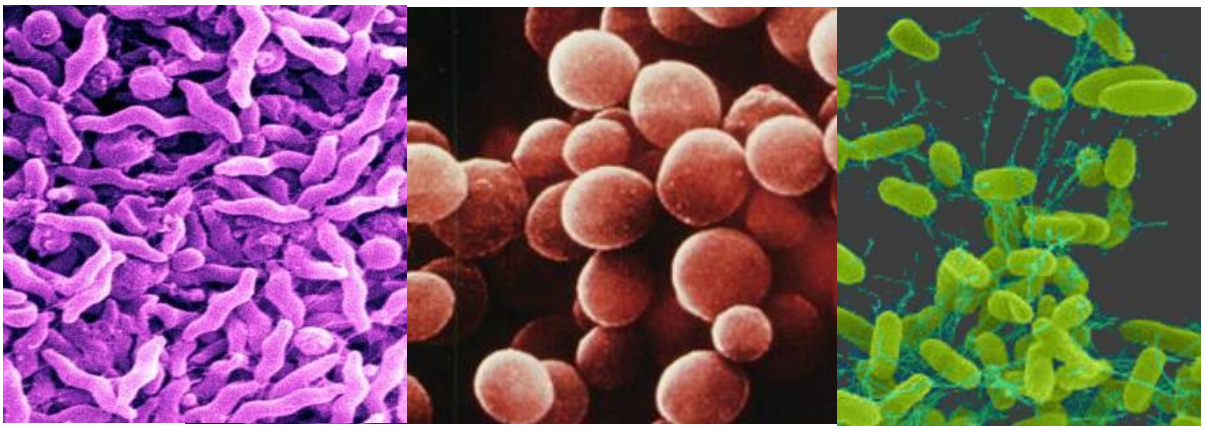
There are some types of bacteria which can protect themselves from heat and are able to survive long periods of time in boiling water; for this reason follow these rules:

- Never reheat foods more than once
- Make sure foods are heated evenly throughout
- If not serving hot foods immediately either keep warm (above 63ºc) or cool quickly and refrigerate or freeze

Acid / alkaline foods and cleaning materials – bacteria like a ph neutral environment; substances like vinegar, lemon juice and baking soda limit multiplication and will even kill some bacteria

Sugar and salt – both sugar and salt can be used to preserve foods because they absorb moisture so it is unavailable for bacteria to use

Some Types of Bacteria



***Campylobacter* –** one of the most common causes of food-borne illness, campylobacter is associated with poultry and contaminated water

***Salmonella* –** found in the guts of animals and humans, notoriously associated with eggs. Salmonella becomes poisonous if given chance to breed

***Staphylococcus Aureus* –** mainly carried on the human body particularly around the nose and throat. Easily passed on by coughing, sneezing and touching

***Listeria* –** carried by soft cheeses, patés and other chilled goods. Listeria can be seriously harmful to vulnerable individuals; for this reason pregnant women are advised to avoid certain foods and the department of health targeted publicity about good hygiene at the elderly

Clostridium Perfringens **–** this bacteria is particularly good at protecting itself from heat and is regularly identified as the cause of food poisoning outbreaks in hospitals and other care settings where foods are reheated in large quantities

Other Types of Contamination

Viruses and Moulds

Viruses and moulds are from the same family as bacteria, but they have significant differences. Viruses are smaller and need to be in living tissue to survive so they are commonly transferred on hands contaminated with faecal matter. Moulds are larger and may be clearly visible on food.

Many people dismiss moulds as unattractive but harmless, but like bacteria there are 'good' and 'bad' types. Penicillin is developed from mould and the veins in blue cheeses are edible forms; however, moulds are also believed to cause lung cancers as well as serious food poisoning outbreaks.

> In 2004 in Kenya 125 people died and over 200 more became ill after eating mouldy maize.

Chemicals

Although less than 1% of illnesses caused by food are the result of chemical contamination it is possible for this to occur in various different ways and have serious effects.

Water supplies may be polluted by manufacturing or farming practices; pesticides are sprayed on crops; and cleaning solutions may be used in areas where food is stored and prepared. If you notice anything unusual about your tap water contact your provider for advice; to reduce the likelihood of harm from pesticides wash fruit and vegetables before preparing them; only use appropriate cleaning materials in the kitchen and food storage areas and make sure foods are covered when cleaning is carried out.

Natural Foods

Some foods are poisonous and should not be eaten unless they can be prepared and cooked in a way which makes them safe; examples include:

- Red kidney beans must be soaked for a long time before cooking (if they are tinned they are safe)
- Certain types of mushroom / berries may be fatally poisonous if eaten
- Rhubarb leaves contain oxalic acid, they must be removed along with an inch of stalk

- Certain types of / parts of fish and shellfish e.g. ‘dead man’s fingers’ in crab
- If you do not know how to prepare a food safely, or if you have any doubt as to the identity of a plant or fungus, do not take a chance.

Physical Contamination

If hygiene and safety practices in kitchens are poor then there is a risk that food may become contaminated by soil, dust, hairs, pieces of glass, insects or anything else that can be carried in by food, people or animals or that could be the result of an accident e.g. breaking a dish.

The likelihood of physical contamination occurring can be reduced by using the methods shown in unit three for preventing cross contamination.

Allergies

Food allergies are becoming more common with symptoms ranging from harmless rashes to life threatening anaphylactic shock. Because the reactions can be so severe it’s important for you to be aware of any allergies your clients may have and to treat foods in such a way that allergens are not spread from one food to another.

To protect individuals with allergies you must:

- Be aware of clients’ allergies, their causes, symptoms and treatment
- Keep foods separate
- Retain food labels and know what’s in prepared foods
- Use separate utensils for different foods

Unit Two
Questions

1. Give two common symptoms of food poisoning.

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   2……..……

2. At what temperature do bacteria breed best?

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3. What will happen to bacteria when food is cooked?

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4. Give an example of a way in which you might limit bacterial multiplication.

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5. Suggest one thing you might need to do to protect the wellbeing of a client with a peanut allergy.

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Unit Three

Cross Contamination

Cross contamination is the process by which bacteria, viruses and moulds are spread. In unit 2 we looked at ways of limiting the ability of bacteria to multiply; good food hygiene depends on doing this whilst also preventing the spread of contaminants between foods and from people, pets etc.

There are two types of cross contamination, direct and indirect.

Direct cross contamination – this occurs when two foods are touching, or one food drips on another. If raw foods are stored above cooked foods the risks of cross contamination are high and bacteria may get the chance to breed on foods which are ready for serving to clients.

Indirect cross contamination – this describes the transfer of bacteria between foods by means of a vehicle; most commonly a pair of hands but it could be a knife, chopping board, tea towel, pet or clothing, in fact anything that can touch one food and then come into contact with another.

Some facts about your hands:

- Hands are the single most likely cause of cross contamination
- Damp hands spread a thousand times more germs than dry ones
- The number of germs on your hands doubles when you use the toilet
- Soap and water are more effective at killing germs than antibacterial hand sanitizers

Hand Washing

The most important thing you can do to prevent cross contamination is to wash your hands. This should be done using the technique below at the following times:

- When starting work
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose
- After handling raw food
- Before handling cooked foods
- After touching your hair, nose, spots etc
- After having a break
- After smoking a cigarette
- After washing up
- After handling rubbish
- Before serving food
- Before providing assistance in the dining room

- At regular intervals
- When you finish work

Good hand washing technique

- Use soap and warm running water
- Roll up sleeves and point hands down to avoid water running up arms
- Wet hands, apply soap and rub hands together ensuring that you give attention to all areas including between the fingers and around the thumbs
- Spend about 20 seconds doing this
- Rinse hands under the tap
- Dry thoroughly using paper towels
- Dispose of paper towel in a pedal bin

(No other method of hand drying will be as effective at reducing bacteria and preventing their spread)
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Personal Hygiene

Maintaining good cleanliness is an important way of reducing the risks of cross contamination.

To make it easier to keep your hands clean your nails should be kept short and, if you prepare food, they should be unpainted as varnish chippings can contaminate food. You should not wear jewellery, with the exception of a wedding ring, as it harbours bacteria and you may not notice if an earring or gemstone fell into food.

When you are ill you have a legal duty to inform your manager if you don't you may be fined under the provisions of the Food Safety Act 1990.

You must wear suitable clothing to work with food that will reduce the likelihood of cross infection. Your employer may provide protective clothing and equipment to protect the food from you and you from the food.

The following are possible solutions:

- Overalls
- Aprons
- Hats and hairnets
- Non-slip shoes
- Disposable gloves
- Rubber gloves

Use the space below to write down what you wear when handling food and why you wear it.

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Ten tips for preventing cross contamination

1. Have a separate, easily accessible, sink for hand washing
2. Store raw and cooked foods separately (raw below cooked)
3. Clean as you go
4. Keep all foods covered
5. Do not let rubbish build up
6. Use colour-coded equipment
7. Ensure good pest control
8. Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly
9. Avoid handling foods – use clean utensils whenever possible
10. Keep pets out of food areas

Unit Three
Questions

1. What is the most common vehicle for cross contamination?

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   ……....

2. Why do you think it is important to rinse your hands under warm running water after washing them?

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   ……....

3. Why should you put an apron over your clothes when you enter the kitchen?

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4. Why must you tell your manager if you are suffering from sickness or diarrhoea?

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5. Why do you need to store raw and cooked foods separately?

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Unit Four

Hygienic Working Areas

An important part of your work role is to help maintain the hygiene and safety of all areas where foods are stored, prepared or eaten. To do this you must know your responsibilities and good practice for cleaning, pest control and waste disposal.

Cleaning

All equipment, work surfaces, floors, cupboards, walls, crockery, cutlery and appliances must be cleaned appropriately, regularly and thoroughly. To ensure that this is done these rules should be followed:

- Work areas, equipment and tools should be made of easily washable materials
- Layout, design and installation should allow access to all areas
- The kitchen / storeroom layout should be planned to keep processes involving raw and cooked foods separate
- There should be a cleaning rota in place (see below)
- You should get used to cleaning things as soon as you have finished using them

Cleaning Rotas

In your workplace there should be a person who has overall responsibility for the kitchen and other food areas. This person will probably be a senior member of staff and will carry out risk assessments and develop policies and procedures for safe and hygienic catering.

This responsible person should have created a comprehensive cleaning rota that will ensure that the risks associated with dirt and spillages are kept to a minimum.

Find your kitchen rota and use the space below to summarise the kind of information it gives you.

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Cleaning materials and substances will have been chosen for their effectiveness and suitability for use around food. You and your colleagues should have adequate training and information to use chemicals safely. If personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and aprons are provided you will be expected to use them to protect yourself from harm; prolonged use of even mild detergents and disinfectants can lead to skin irritation and other health problems.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)

Your employer is responsible for ensuring that you, your colleagues, clients, visitors and others are protected from the risks associated with hazardous substances. Your employer should have given you information and training about hazardous substances; provided you with P.P.E. where necessary and given you safe working procedures to follow. Control measures for safe handling of hazardous substances should include:

- Appropriate P.P.E. to be available at all times
- Keep substances in original, labelled, containers
- Have locked storage for cleaning materials and medications
- Spillages must be dealt with immediately
- Staff should be encouraged to report symptoms of ill health, problems with procedures, damage to packaging / P.P.E. etc
- There must be appropriate first aid information and provision

Effective Cleaning

The way you clean utensils, equipment, work surfaces and the materials you use should ensure that dirt and grease are removed, and bacteria are reduced. This may require different cleaning products to be used; detergents such as soap deal with grease while disinfectants (including hot water) kill bacteria.

Cloths, mops etc. may be colour coded for use in different places and will ideally be disposable so that dirt and bacteria end up in the bin.

There are five main steps to cleaning:

1. Remove loose dirt – scrape plates, sweep floors, brush work surfaces
2. De grease and wash with detergent and cloth
3. Rinse
4. Disinfect (Rinse if its chemical disinfectant)
5. Dry

Pests

Pests of all types present an on going problem for anyone working with food. Rats, mice, cockroaches, flies, ants, birds, household pets and anything else with fur or feathers can contaminate food with bacteria, viruses, droppings, urine and even body parts. I am sure that you have heard more than one story of a dead mouse turning up in packaged food or of diners spotting unwelcome guests while eating out.

It may be necessary to get professional help to plan pest control; certainly if you become aware that you have a problem you should immediately get an expert in to deal with it. Generally prevention is better than cure and a pest control company will be able to give you advice and support to stop pests becoming a problem.

Signs that pests are on the premises include:

- Droppings
- Chewed packaging
- Paw prints
- Nests
- Smells (mouse urine in particular has a strong odour)
- Black, greasy marks on skirting boards
- Visible holes in wall
- Shed fur / skin

Ways to prevent / control pests

- Store food in robust / sealed containers or at least 45 centimetres off the ground
- Dispose of food waste in sealed bins and regularly remove to a bin at a suitable distance from the premises
- Keep outside bins in a covered area or make sure they have well fitting lids and do not allow them to overflow
- Keep waste packaging to a minimum
- Clean all areas regularly, rodents like unused dark corners
- Block any holes and spaces around pipes – mice only need a gap the size of their skull to crawl through
- Keep all foods covered
- Install an ‘insectocutor’ to kill flies
- Fit windows with fly screens and keep doors closed as much as possible

If pests are attracted to bins and waste outside premises they will soon start to look for ways to get inside.

Rubbish

A build up of waste in your workplace will be both a fire hazard and an attraction for pests. It’s important that food and packaging are disposed of in suitable containers; are removed from the premises as soon as possible; and are collected regularly.

Unit Four
Questions

1. Give three examples of information that you should find in a cleaning rota

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   2……

   3……

2. Why might cleaning materials be colour coded?

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3. Suggest two ways in which you could control pests.

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   2……
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4. Why might you need to wear gloves when handling cleaning chemicals?

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5. Why is it important to keep rubbish to a minimum?

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Unit Five

Storing & Preserving Food

An important part of kitchen management is food preservation and good stock control. You must have systems in place to make sure that food is stored in a way that reduces the likelihood of spoilage; this is not only a legal requirement it also makes good economic sense as it reduces waste.

When food is delivered to the premises it must be checked and stored as quickly as possible; this is particularly important if it is chilled or frozen. When checking goods look for any signs of damage or spoilage and ensure that frozen foods have not been allowed to start thawing. Whoever is responsible for food management has a duty to make sure that delivery companies are reputable and that their vehicles are clean and appropriate for transporting food.

Date marks:

Use By – legal requirement, food may be harmful

or

Best Before – guidance, food may be safe, quality may deteriorate

Perishable foods that 'go off' quickly, must be stored in either the fridge or the freezer to prevent bacterial growth. Foods that are perishable include meats, cheese, milk, butter, fish and prepared dishes such as casseroles or stews.

Ten tips for using a fridge

1. Keep the temperature between 1^{o}c & 5^{o}c
2. Keep raw foods below cooked foods or, if possible, in a separate refrigerator
3. Cover foods to protect from drips and hands
4. Check food daily for signs of spoilage
5. Date mark ***ALL*** foods
6. Clean the fridge regularly
7. Cool foods before putting them in the fridge
8. Keep salad and vegetables in the appropriate drawers to avoid soil and other debris contaminating foods
9. Empty the contents of cans in to air tight containers
10. Keep the door closed

Ten tips for using a freezer

1. Wrap foods to protect them
2. Store similar foods together
3. Date mark ***All*** foods
4. Thoroughly defrost foods on trays in the fridge
5. Do not refreeze foods
6. Defrost and clean the freezer regularly
7. Prepare food for cooking before you freeze it
8. Rotate stock
9. Keep temperature at -18^{o}c or below
10. Remember bacteria that go in the freezer, come out alive

Cooling Foods Quickly

- Portion food in separate containers
- Add ice cubes made from drinkable water
- Put the food in a cool room

Less perishable foods (dried goods, such as rice and pasta; tinned foods; cereals) will be kept in a suitable storage area. They must be kept off the floor; or in a suitable pest proof container; in a dry, cool cupboard or room.

Stocks should be checked weekly for signs of damage, deterioration or pests. When less perishable foods are used they become perishable e.g. when you open a tin or cook rice; any leftovers must be refrigerated or frozen in suitable containers.

Temperature Checks

Your kitchen equipment should include temperature probes for ensuring that suitable temperatures are reached when cooking and that equipment such as fridges and freezers are working properly. Temperature checks must be done regularly and the results should be recorded. If the temperatures are outside safe limits you should know what action to take; for example you may have a similar form to the one below:

Fridge temperature monitoring chart. Please check at times indicated, record readings and initial. **If temperature is outside 0ºc to 5ºc range report to manager immediately.**			
9am	1pm	5pm	9pm
3ºc LR	2ºc LR	2ºc JC	4ºc JC
2ºc LR	6ºc Reported LR	3ºc LR	3ºc LR

Storing Cooked Foods

It is best if when you have cooked food it is served and eaten immediately; however, this will not always be possible and you will need to know how to deal with cooked food safely. You have three options:

1. Keep the food warm
2. Cool and refrigerate
3. Cool and freeze

If you are keeping the food warm it must be kept in a suitable appliance at a temperature above 63ºc. The quality of the food will deteriorate with time so this is only suitable for a couple of hours.

When you are reheating foods you must ensure that they reach a temperature of 85ºc throughout; any leftovers should be disposed of as foods should not be reheated more than once.

Unit Five
Questions

1. What is the purpose of stock rotation?

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2. Why must deliveries be checked and stored as quickly as possible?

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3. Give three examples of perishable foods

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   2……

   3……

4. If you wanted to freeze a meal you had made what would you need to do to it?

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5. What type of date mark tells you when food is likely to be past its best?

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Unit Six

Safety

Kitchens are high-risk areas due to the presence of heat and sharp objects; there will also be hazards in dining rooms, store rooms and other preparation areas.

Avoiding Slips, Trips and Falls

As floors in food areas need to be easy to clean they are generally smooth surfaces which may become slippery when wet. High risk places for slips include the areas in front of hobs which may become greasy and the floors around sinks and dishwashers which are likely to become wet. Care must be taken to ensure that floors are kept clean and dry at all times so spillages must be dealt with immediately and full cleaning should be carried out at times when the kitchen is not in general use and in such a way that the floor dries quickly.

The Health and Safety Executive website (www.hse.gov.uk) includes many horror stories of injuries caused by slippery kitchen floors including employees suffering life changing head injuries and several people who have been seriously burnt slipping in such a way that their arms have ended up in deep fat fryers. Consider your own work role and the chances of you slipping while carrying pans of boiling water or sharp kitchen knives.

Trips and falls become more likely if packaging and loose items are left lying around or if flooring is not properly maintained; everyone who works in the kitchen should be aware of the potential dangers and should clean as they go and keep their eyes open for potential hazards.

Serving Food

Food should be served as soon as possible after being prepared or cooked to minimise the risk of contamination and bacterial growth. There should be a designated area where food is plated prior to serving where only food that is ready to be eaten is placed. Care should be taken to ensure that returned plates and any other waste food are not put down where they might be mistaken for food to be served.

Before serving food you must wash your hands and you could put on an apron to reduce the possibility of dirt and debris from your clothes contaminating the food. Avoid touching the plate or physically handling any of the food on it and only carry as many items as you can safely handle. If you have to open doors you will need to be able to do so safely without putting things down. If you are finding it difficult to carry items either do more trips or use a suitable vehicle such as a tray or trolley.

Take extra care when carrying plates of hot food or drinks such as coffee or tea. If serving people food on hot plates make sure they are aware that there is a risk of burns and do not give scalding meals or drinks to people who lack competence to wait until they have cooled appropriately.

If possible serving dishes should be used to allow clients full control over what goes on their plates; studies have shown that this reduces waste and helps to make clients feel more involved with the food they are eating. With a bit of support, training and unobtrusive supervision many clients will be able to help prepare and cook their own meals; properly planned client involvement can be extremely beneficial to individuals' sense of wellbeing, allowing them to maintain a level of independence and self worth.

Clearing Tables and Disposing of Waste

Tables should be cleared promptly after meals have been eaten in a way which ensures safety while maintaining respect and dignity for clients i.e. normal rules of polite table manners should apply; no one should feel rushed by eagerness to clear used crockery and cutlery.

When clearing do not attempt to carry more items than you can safely manage or you will increase the risk of spillage and breakages. If you do drop plates, glasses or food ensure that you immediately wipe up or sweep up the debris and dispose of any foods that may have been contaminated.

Ideally, clients should be involved in this process and encouraged to clear their own plates and dispose of waste appropriately. There could be suitable bins and containers placed in the dining area for this purpose. Clients must not be forced to carry out this activity but should be allowed to if it makes them feel involved and useful.

There should be separate bins for different types of waste and everyone should be aware of their purpose. Waste food has to be kept away from food preparation areas and may be collected separately from other rubbish. There must be written procedures in place for disposing of hazardous items such as broken glass and hot oil.

Knives

Everyone using knives must be competent to do so without putting themselves or others at risk. Knives should be stored in blocks or by other means which prevent people coming into contact with their points or blades; you should never try to catch a falling knife; never leave a knife in a sink or place a knife pointing upwards on a draining board or in a dishwasher basket.

Electricity, Heat and Other Dangers

Electricity can cause shock, fires, burns and death. It is a major hazard in almost all workplaces and the fatality rate from injuries is high. It is, therefore, essential that electrical systems and equipment are designed, constructed, maintained and used by competent people. Nobody should be working on your electrical systems who is not adequately trained and qualified. Anyone using electrical equipment should have adequate information and training to use it safely.

Reducing risks:

- All equipment should be properly installed and maintained – your employer should check qualifications and references of people they contract to carry out work
- Regular tests should be carried out on all equipment, sockets etc
- Disconnect equipment when it's not being used
- Take extra precautions when electricity and water are used together e.g. in dishwashers
- Use the right equipment for the task being carried out
- Provide information, training and supervision

You must visually check electrical equipment before you use it and look out for signs of damage to sockets and wiring. If you notice problems like breaks in wires or charring on plug sockets, or if you smell burning, immediately prevent people using the equipment and report the defect to an appropriate person. It is essential that the problem is dealt with as soon as possible so you should report it verbally but follow this up with a written record of your concerns.

Dealing with an Emergency

A person who has received an electric shock may not be breathing and their heart may have stopped pumping blood effectively. Their skin may be burned or it may look pale or bluish.

If high voltage electricity was involved do not approach the casualty, call the emergency services immediately.

Action plan:

- Make the area safe – switch off the electricity supply, if this is not possible separate the casualty from the source of electricity only if you can do so without risk to yourself. Stand on dry insulating material and use a non conductive implement (e.g. a wooden broom handle) to push the casualty and the source apart.

- If you are qualified and competent in first aid follow your training, assess the casualty and alert the emergency services. If you are not trained get help, call the emergency services and provide assistance.
- Prevent other people (e.g. clients) from putting themselves in danger.

Safe Storage

We have already discussed the role storage areas and systems play in reducing the likelihood of cross contamination; it is also important to consider the possible accidents that may occur if goods are improperly stored.

Examples:

- Tins and packages stored on high shelves or stacked in an unstable manner may fall and cause head injuries or employees may be tempted to over stretch or climb on shelving to reach less accessible items. Provide step ladders or other suitable means of access and avoid storing heavy items above shoulder height
- Cleaning materials and other chemicals; any pet foods and any inedible items that may be mistaken for foodstuffs must have separate storage. In recent years there have been several examples of carers accidentally mistaking substances such as dishwasher detergents for squash and giving them to clients as drinks with serious, and occasionally fatal, results.
- Oils stored near ovens or hobs may be heated to dangerous temperatures making fires more likely
- Paperwork, tea towels, curtains etc. must be kept well away from sources of ignition such as gas hobs and other naked flames.
- Excess packaging may obstruct exits, provide fuel for fires or allow pests to nest
- Untidy storage areas are moiré difficult to keep clean and make stock rotation harder

Helping Clients to Eat

Preparation:

- Tie your hair back, wash your hands and sit down by your client
- Make sure the food looks attractive and is at the right temperature i.e. cool enough to eat but hot enough to be palatable; nobody wants tepid mush
- Encourage your client to relax – if their throat feels tight ask them to yawn, do not make them feel rushed
- Ensure good posture – client should be sitting upright with head erect to aid swallowing and digestion
- Ensure that their head and shoulders are well supported and that they are comfortable
- Encourage co-operation and only feed the client when they are fully alert

- Ensure that their mouth is clean and that their dentures are correctly fitted
- Position yourself where the client can see you and the food, tell the client what they are eating

Eating:

- Let the client participate as much as possible by allowing them to hold the utensil if they can (with your help)
- It may help to use a teaspoon and feed small amounts at a time
- Talk to the client but discourage them from talking while they are actually eating
- Do not rush – allow the client to feel that they have as much time as they need. If you are under pressure to get on with other tasks do not communicate this to your client through signs of impatience
- Avoid mixing liquids and solids in the same mouthful as this will increase the risk of aspiration (food / fluids getting into the lungs)

After eating:

- If the client is able to swallow liquids ask them to rinse their mouth with a small amount of water and cough to ensure their throat is clear.
- Leave the client sitting upright for 30 minutes to aid digestion

First Aid

It is essential that a first aid kit is kept in an easily accessible place within food preparation areas. Ideally the kit should be kept near your hand-washing sink to avoid cross contamination when dealing with wounds. The kitchen first aid kit will include coloured (usually blue), waterproof plasters. These are to be used by anyone preparing food with a sore, break in the skin, cut or abrasion; they are coloured so they are easy to spot if they fall into food, and waterproof so that hand washing is still possible.

Unit Six
Questions

1. Give three examples of accidents which may occur in food rooms.

   1. ……
      ……

   2. ……
      ……

   3. ……
      ……

2. Suggest a way in which <u>you</u> could reduce the risk of each of the above accidents occurring.

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   ……

3. Why should plasters used by food handlers be brightly coloured?

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   ……

4. Who is responsible for safety in the kitchen and food rooms?

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   ……
   ……

5. Give 2 reasons why cleaning chemicals should have their own storage area.

   1. ……
      ……

   2. ……
      ……