



ORDER UP:

IT'S COMPLIANCE TIME

Trading compliance may not be the most exciting aspect of the business, but it is undoubtedly one of the most critical. At NCASS we look to provide you with the tools and resources needed to guarantee success in this area.

Two key benefits that facilitate this are your risk assessments which form an essential part of your Safety Management System and the comprehensive range of online training available to you. These help to ensure you have the necessary tools and knowledge to trade safely and confidently, and demonstrate best practice.

For mobile traders, event organisers require traders to submit evidence of training, compliance, and risk assessments as part of any applications so it essential to ensure everything is up to date and in order.

Basically, if you have aspirations to trade at events, you need to have your compliance in line. It's no good having the best baguettes in the business if you can't get a pitch! Firstly, focusing on risk assessments, it is extremely important to note that all food businesses have a legal responsibility to carry out risk assessments. AKA: You need to have them in place.



UNDERTAKING THE RISK ASSESSMENTS

We are aware that risk assessments can be intimidating and difficult to compose, so we have gone to efforts to simplify the process as much as possible.

In terms of how to go about producing them, we have provided clear instructions on how to complete the process both within the SMS folder and on the members dashboard.

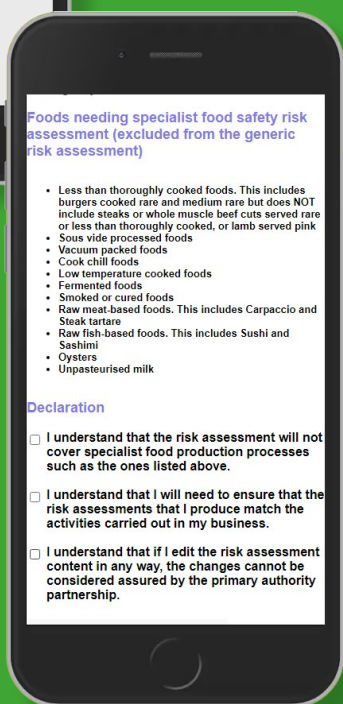
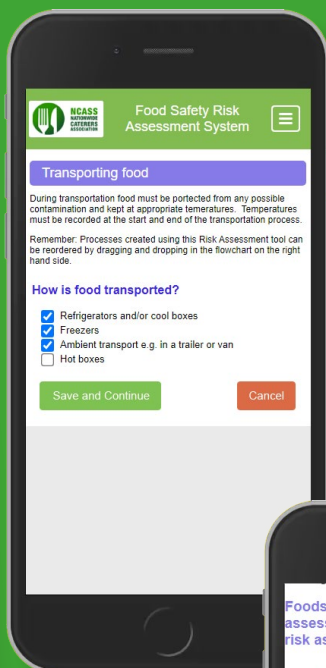
Of course, if you need any help or further assistance with creating these highly important documents or have any questions about them, please do get in touch! We are always here to help and happy to assist. Our aim is to make risk assessments a straightforward process for you to create and have confidence in, understand and feel you can take full responsibility for.

FOOD RISK ASSESSMENTS

To successfully complete the food risk assessments, you need to consider the journey your food takes from collection of raw ingredients to plating up your offering to a customer. The system guides you through the process, it requires minimal input – you have to select which stages of the food journey apply to your business, then log this journey accurately using the drag and drop method to create the process flow chart. Now you can sit back and let the system do the rest.

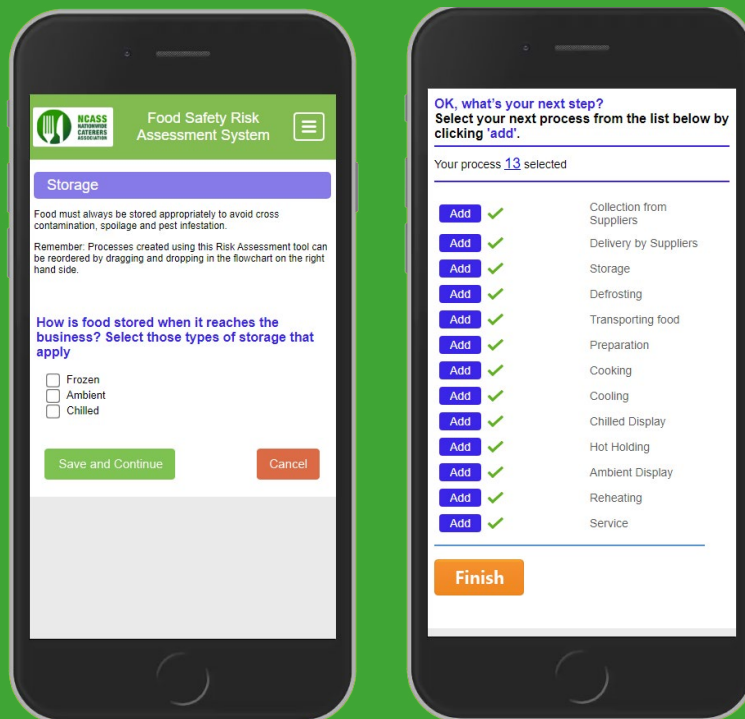
Your subsequent responsibility to review, understand and properly implement the contents of the risk assessments is key to their success and your legal compliance. What is written down should be implemented in real life, and if you do something different then ask yourself could I do it like this instead? If you carry out appropriate alternative controls then add in this specific detail to the risk assessments so that they reflect real life. The key to this is making it specific to your business and ensuring it is properly implemented – so you are doing what is written down.

The reality is when getting inspected, fielding questions from customers or worst case scenario, if something goes wrong, it is your responsibility to have the answers and ensure the information is correct and accurate to the journey that the food has undertaken. If filled in correctly, food risk assessments will prove invaluable in the unfortunate but possible instance where something has gone wrong, for example a case of food poisoning.



As important as providing accurate input when filling out the risk assessments is, it is just as important to spend the time reading through the produced document to make sure you understand it. Understand the critical limits that detail the basic rules of each specific component, the monitoring procedures you must follow and the corrective actions that run through what you can do to right a potential wrong.

The final document is thorough and extensive in the information it provides. This may seem like a lot to absorb, but that is for good reason. Your business will only benefit as a result, and you should treat the document like a resource to go back and refer to. It is important to educate yourself, take the information the risk assessment has generated and apply it.



FIRE & HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENTS

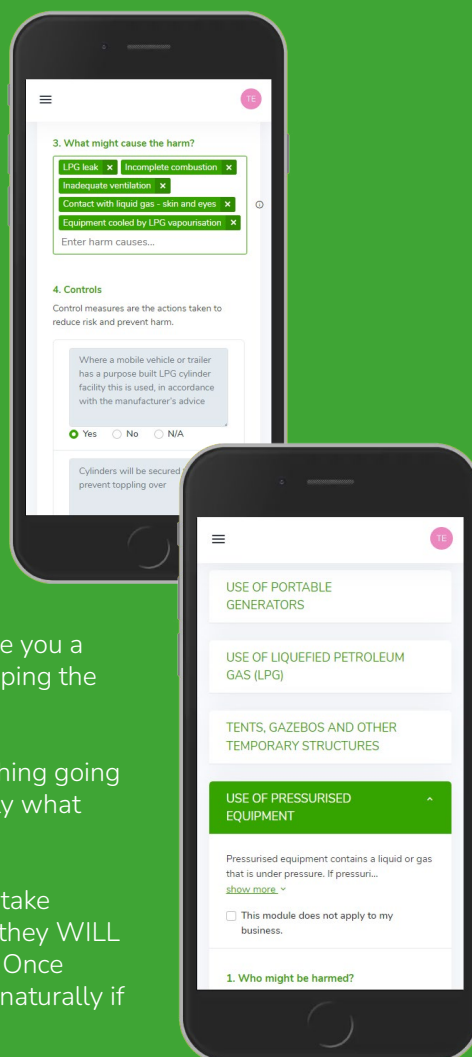
The Fire & Health and Safety risk assessments require a bit more input in the initial stage as we have added a lot more controls for you to consider, but this is a worthwhile investment for the document it produces. We will soon be moving away from a generic approach to these risk assessments, and as a result the completed risk assessment you will now be able to create will be bespoke and far more specific to your individual business and set up.

The risk assessments you use and have in place to represent your business need to be relevant to you and specifically how your business works, and we have created these risk assessments and designed this process with that in mind.

Through the action of populating all the necessary data and information as required, ideally you will be surveying your unit or premises and considering thoroughly with each point, which elements of the assessment are specific to your business. Ultimately this will give you a greater understanding of what you need to be aware of in terms of keeping the business safe.

Producing risk assessments will radically reduce the chances of something going wrong as you will have covered yourself, but you will also know exactly what you need to be aware of through a lens of a safe operation.

We cannot advise strongly enough that every NCASS member should take advantage of the risk assessments that we offer. The short of it is that they WILL make your life as a caterer much easier. Cover yourself and worry less! Once completed, you will only have to redo when renewing membership, or naturally if something in the business changes.





TRAINING

As mentioned at the outset of this article, NCASS offers a wide range of online training courses that are designed to give competency in all areas of running a food business.

Depending on the level of membership, you'll gain discounted training places – we strongly recommend that you take advantage of these. They are there to be used, so use them!

All NCASS courses have been inspected and assured through the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Wrexham County Borough Council via our Primary Authority Partnerships as well as being accredited by City & Guilds. For ease of completion and to suit your convenience, all courses are available to complete online.

Do you want to exceed standards and stand out? That's why we give more training courses than you generally need – this way you can give all staff Level 2 Food Hygiene training, regardless if they're front of house for example. Undertaking training across the business is a great way to raise the bar, and is a great self-investment. The return you get for the money you spend is priceless, moves the business closer to operating at optimum and sets you apart.

Furthermore, you want to get the best value for money out of your NCASS membership – training is one of the most advantageous ways you can achieve just that. Taking advantage of the discounted training places is a great way to ensure just that – with varying membership levels you can save £100s against the RRP of these courses!

Some benefits to having all staff trained include:

- Having properly trained staff should reduce the chances of something going wrong
- Evidence of training is often a criteria / prerequisite to trade at events – supports with work opportunities and getting street trading consent etc
- Accredited training certificates and up to date training records are the easiest way to demonstrate compliance and confidence in management, which can support with routine inspection and with achieving the best food hygiene rating
- Increased confidence in the operation of your business – gain a higher level of trust in staff who you know are trained adequately in the jobs they are doing
- It will have a positive effect on everyone your business comes into contact with – be it customers, event organisers or Environmental Health Officers for example

When it comes to working with food, there are no shortcuts. It may sound alarming, but the lives of the public are quite literally in your hands when catering and trading - you must keep food and people safe. As well as being vitally important to the sale-to-sale, day-to-day running of the business where each transaction must be handled with care, training factors in massively to the overall compliance of your business.

When it comes to running a food business in the UK, there are legal requirements for food business operators to:

- Ensure that food handlers are supervised, instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters relevant with their work
- Ensure that those who are responsible for the development and maintenance of the food safety procedures have received adequate training in the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)

For the benefit of your business and to reduce the chances of mistakes being made, NCASS also recommends that:

- Those staff who occasionally handle or prepare food should undergo Level 1 Food Hygiene training
- Those staff who regularly prepare or handle food should undergo Level 2 Food Hygiene training
- Food Business operators and managers who are responsible for supervising staff or developing the food safety management system should undergo Level 3 Food Hygiene training, Allergen Awareness training and HACCP training

As well as keeping your business compliant and ensuring you have a competent team you can trust, training is a great way to give your staff something back, it gives them a recognised qualification, it helps them develop their interest in the industry and it also goes to show how much you value them.



COURSES AVAILABLE TO YOU ONLINE RIGHT NOW INCLUDE:

Food Safety training

- Level 1 Food Hygiene: Develop knowledge of best practice food hygiene principles
- Level 2 Food Hygiene: Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of food hygiene
- Level 3 Food Hygiene: Develop extensive knowledge of supervisory management, legislation and food hygiene practices
- Allergen Awareness: Gain proficient understanding of handling and understanding allergens in the workplace

Health and Safety training

- Health and Safety in Catering: Provide knowledge and understanding of health & safety principles and practices
- Essential First Aid: Learn how to handle minor injuries and what to do until a professional arrives
- Fire Extinguisher: Understand how to operate a fire extinguisher and suitability of particular extinguishers for different scenarios
- LPG / Gas Safety: Understand the importance of using LPG safely in a catering environment
- HACCP: Develop knowledge of the HACCP system and how to use it in your business

These are great resources that we want you to take advantage of, firstly to ensure you are running a totally compliant and safe business, but also to get the most value out of your membership! You have already paid for your membership so why not reap the rewards? You wouldn't pay for a burger then not eat it?!