



The Investment in Training

Training is integral to the success of your business and by investing in training you are investing in the future of your business. It is a legal requirement for food businesses to provide appropriate training in food hygiene matters relevant to the work activities of staff.

But why is it so important?

Beyond the obvious assurances that staff members will know better than to serve food that they accidentally dropped on the floor, investing in training can improve staff retention, support good practices across the business and evoke confidence in a visiting EHO, not to mention your customers.

Human error is unavoidable and whilst other industries have the luxury of increased automation, food and drink businesses do not. Whilst we can't perform a software update on people (yet), comprehensive up-to-date training can help to minimise the severity of human error and ensure that everyone is aware of the necessary corrective actions should mistakes happen (because let's be honest, they will).

Comprehensive training ensures consistently high levels of hygiene and general high standards across your business, reducing the risk of illness and fostering a positive reputation as a safe place to eat. A successful business that utilises and maintains an effective training programme will always be going above and beyond the bare minimum of what is required. Effective training builds confidence, improves standards, reduces mistakes and increases efficiency.

An unexpected visit from an Environmental Health Officer shouldn't be something to fear, but it can be for those who lack confidence in their team. A tentative request to return when the manager is back, is an instant red flag for a visiting EHO and not something that is likely to evoke confidence in management. Adequate training bolsters due diligence and indicates to EHOs that you are invested in maintaining high standards of safety and hygiene.

So it's time to take the newbie for a walkaround and just remind them to wash their hands, right?

Not necessarily. Though you may have decades of experience and be confident in your ability to show your new chef the ropes, it is much harder to log and assess the efficacy of this kind of training. Enter stage right; NCASS training courses.

A training certificate from an accredited and reputable training provider such as NCASS, is the easiest way to prove to an EHO that your staff have partaken in comprehensive training. This kind of training provides in-depth information on the theoretical side of Health and Safety, which can then be supplemented by practical training within your business. NCASS training courses are designed specifically for small independent food and drink businesses. We don't overload you with information that you don't need or present facts and figures that are only relevant to large chains.



Just because it works for Pizza Express, doesn't mean it'll work for your business and all of our courses are catered to businesses just like yours. It's important to invest in high quality training as a highly trained team should reduce the likelihood of mistakes being made or accidents taking place.

But what does that actually entail?

Training can, and should, go beyond the bare minimum and good hygiene is merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the overall Health and Safety of your business. Ensuring that relevant employees are also trained on topics such as Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), LPG safety and allergen awareness, enables you to create a well-rounded and knowledgeable team.

It also alleviates the burden of only one person having this knowledge and leaves you confident that your staff will know what to do in the event of an emergency or should an EHO come to call if you aren't on site. NCASS has recently launched new and updated training courses including our HACCP Training for Catering course. This course provides a general grounding in food safety management and the principles of HACCP, with relevant and practical tips for the application of HACCP in small independent food businesses. There is particular focus on the NCASS Safety Management System (SMS) and how it incorporates and complies with the principles of HACCP.

We have also developed a new LPG safety course titled Safe Use and Installation of LPG in Mobile and Outdoor Catering. This course highlights key safety messages around LPG. It is aimed at everyone that uses LPG and we've simplified the technical jargon to ensure that the course is simple and easy to follow. We recommend that anyone that handles LPG within their business take this course as soon as it is launched. An important part of maintaining the high calibre of our training is our commitment to constant improvement in order to offer our trainees more. As such, we recently launched our new Learning Management System (LMS) which is designed to be more user friendly and inspire deeper learning.

NCASS training courses are created, inspected and accredited by industry experts and NCASS members receive a discount on all training courses making them the most cost effective training on the market. We are also one of the only providers to use the esteemed City & Guilds accreditation so you can be confident that they are some of the most highly respected courses in the industry. All of our training courses are also assured by our Primary Authority Partners the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Monmouthshire Council. NCASS training courses are amongst the most highly regarded in the industry and an NCASS training certificate is proof of your comprehensive understanding. Simply put; it's worth it. Rather than thinking of training as an expensive investment in learning, think of it instead as an invaluable investment in your workforce.

The benefits of consistent high quality training often outweigh the initial financial implication and it is important to consider the Return on Expectations (ROE) rather than solely the Return on Investment

(ROI). ROE seeks to measure the success of training by focusing on tangible changes such as increased understanding or positive behavioural changes. In so doing, ROE allows training to indirectly increase revenue by focusing on goals which will lead to long term positive financial changes, such as greater retention and happier customers, rather than the short term cost of training.

Training can sometimes be seen as an inconvenient but necessary expense, however it is a foundational part of building a strong and competent team. Not only does it help to keep your customers safe, it can have a positive effect on employee morale and subsequently retention.

In a 2022 YouGov survey, only 3% of respondents chose to work in hospitality for the career prospects. Career progression within the industry can often appear limited, however investing in training shows employees that you are invested in them and that a future career within the industry is possible. Employees in whom you have invested are far more likely to want to stay in your business and with an employee turnover rate of 30%, double the UK average, it is a small price to pay if it means retaining good staff.

As with any industry, a strong team is vital to the success of your business and providing employees with the skillset to do their job competently, is just one of the many ways that training can help with retention. Thorough training means that your staff understand the 'why' behind regulations and this understanding inevitably leads to the consistent embodiment of these regulations. Training enables employees to feel confident in their skillset and their ability to do their job safely.

This helps to create a positive workplace culture in which employees are motivated to maintain good practices and feel supported in their career development. It also shows employees that you care about their future and as an industry that employs a lot of young people, this is essential to fostering an environment of viable professional development. 16 to 24 year olds make up around half of the workers in some hospitality roles with 50% of wait staff, 48% of bar staff and 48% of coffee shop workers falling within that age bracket. Investing in training is investing in their future and so too, your businesses' future.

By investing in training, you invest in your staff, your business and your future and it's a surefire way to keep your EHO happy! Head to your training page within your Member Dashboard to get yourself or your staff signed up to the courses that are available.

