

Fork lift operator training – recognised accrediting bodies

Voluntary accreditation schemes for lift truck training

It is important that fork lift truck operators are trained to the standards outlined in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance **L117 Rider-operated Lift Trucks**, whether using in-house trainers or external training providers.

There are a number of organisations who provide accreditation for lift-truck training schemes. These voluntary schemes are intended to:

- Help set and maintain professional training standards.
- Help employers select training organisations or lift-truck suppliers who offer a good standard of training.

HSE no longer administers an accrediting bodies scheme, but if you decide to use one, the way a typical scheme is likely to operate is outlined below.

Although accreditation is voluntary, the use by an employer of an accredited training provider (ATP) provides some assurance that the training provided will be at least to the standard described in ACOP L117.

While ACOP L117 is not law, it has been produced under section 16 of the **Health and Safety at Work etc Act, 1974** (HSW Act) and has special status in law.

Each accrediting body will be able to provide details of appropriately qualified and experienced ATPs to enquirers who seek advice about fork lift truck training, along with a description of their assessment criteria.

Accredited training providers

Accrediting bodies accredit organisations or individuals as 'accredited training providers' who are deemed competent to provide (or, in the case of individuals, to be) the instructors who carry out the training.

An ATP may be an organisation, individual or an in-house training scheme. The main conditions of accreditation are that ATPs use qualified and experienced instructors only, that they follow course syllabuses approved by the accrediting body and that they be subjected to regular monitoring visits by the accrediting body.

The training must also be carried out in suitable premises, which may be a dedicated training centre or an area set aside for the purpose at an employer's premises.

To become accredited, a training provider applies to one (or more) of the accrediting bodies. If the training is to be carried out at a training centre, the accrediting body will inspect that facility.

If training is to be carried out at employers' premises, then the applicant is asked to demonstrate that they have all the necessary equipment and documentation, and to arrange to conduct a training course at which an assessor from the accrediting body would be present.

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Instructors

There are two levels of instructor associated with accrediting bodies: accredited and registered. Both are trained as instructors, and assessed as being competent, on a course approved for the purpose by an accrediting body.

An accredited instructor (AI) will additionally have been inspected by the accrediting body, be subject to regular monitoring and have to use a course syllabus approved by the accrediting body. AI registration is valid for 5 years, after which the instructor is reassessed and re-accredited.

A registered instructor (RI) is trained and tested to the same standard as an AI. Registration is for a 5 year period after which the instructor is reassessed and re-registered. However, an RI is not inspected, monitored or subject to control over their course syllabus by the accrediting body.

This does not mean that the standard of training provided by an RI is necessarily lower, nor that they do not follow a syllabus produced by an accrediting body. However, being outside the accredited system, the training may not be as uniform as that provided by an AI, nor is it subject to the same control.

Some in-house training schemes are provided by an RI, and the employer may not consider it necessary to apply for accreditation because they monitor their own standards.

Certificates of training

Certificates issued by an ATP (or AI/RI) will quote their accreditation number, the name of the accrediting body, and the name and registration number of the instructor who conducted the training.

Certificates should always provide sufficient information to allow the training to be traced back to course content. If training has been limited (e.g. lifting to (say) 3 metres), then the certificate should identify this limitation to ensure operators only undertake work for which they have been trained.

Note that there is no legal requirement for certificates, which are often confused with licences, but ATPs will always issue them and HSE encourages their use as a good way of demonstrating that training has been provided. And, remember there is no such thing as a fork lift truck licence.

Health and Safety Executive's guidance

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance **L117 Rider-operated Lift Trucks**, is aimed at employers and those responsible for the safe operation of lift trucks, as well as those in control of worksites, the self employed, managers and supervisors.

This HSE pocket card **INDG457 Use lift trucks safely** is aimed at lift truck operators. It aims to help operators and those they work with to stay safe while working with lift trucks. It covers operating, people, loads and slopes.

This HSE leaflet **INDG199 Workplace transport safety** will help people involved in workplace transport reduce the chances of incidents happening. It is mainly aimed at managers and identifies some of the safety problems for common vehicle operations. Drivers, operators and their safety representatives will also find it useful.

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UKMHA further guidance

Also see UKMHA Fact Sheets 1, 2, 9, 12, 14, 16, 19, 24, 28 and 30 for further information.

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The information in this Fact Sheet has been assembled and interpreted to give truck owners and users basic guidance on frequently asked questions. Further important information will be given in the quoted reference documents. Responsibility for meeting the safety obligations discussed rests with the employer, and the UKMHA will not accept liability for any problem arising as a result of the content of this document. Technical Bulletins, containing more detailed information and updated as appropriate, are made available free to members of the **UKMHA SAFE USER GROUP**.

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34B Kingfisher Court,
Hambridge Road,
Newbury,
Berkshire RG14 5SJ

01635 277570
info@ukmha.org.uk
www.ukmha.org.uk