Lesson 7.3: Workplace Policies and Procedures

Workplace policies and procedures are a legal requirement of companies with five or more employees.

What are workplace policies and procedures?

A Workplace Policy is a document that defines a company's expectations regarding employee behaviour and performance. They are written statements that lay out how companies handle certain workplace issues, or how employers expect employees to act. Workplace policies are usually managed by the human resources department of a company and support workplace procedures.

A Workplace Procedure tells employees how to implement the workplace policies. They explain specific actions for employees and are important because they tell staff what to do in a workplace situation and when, for example a health and safety procedure would be relevant in the event of a fire, and state how employees should evacuate the premises safely.
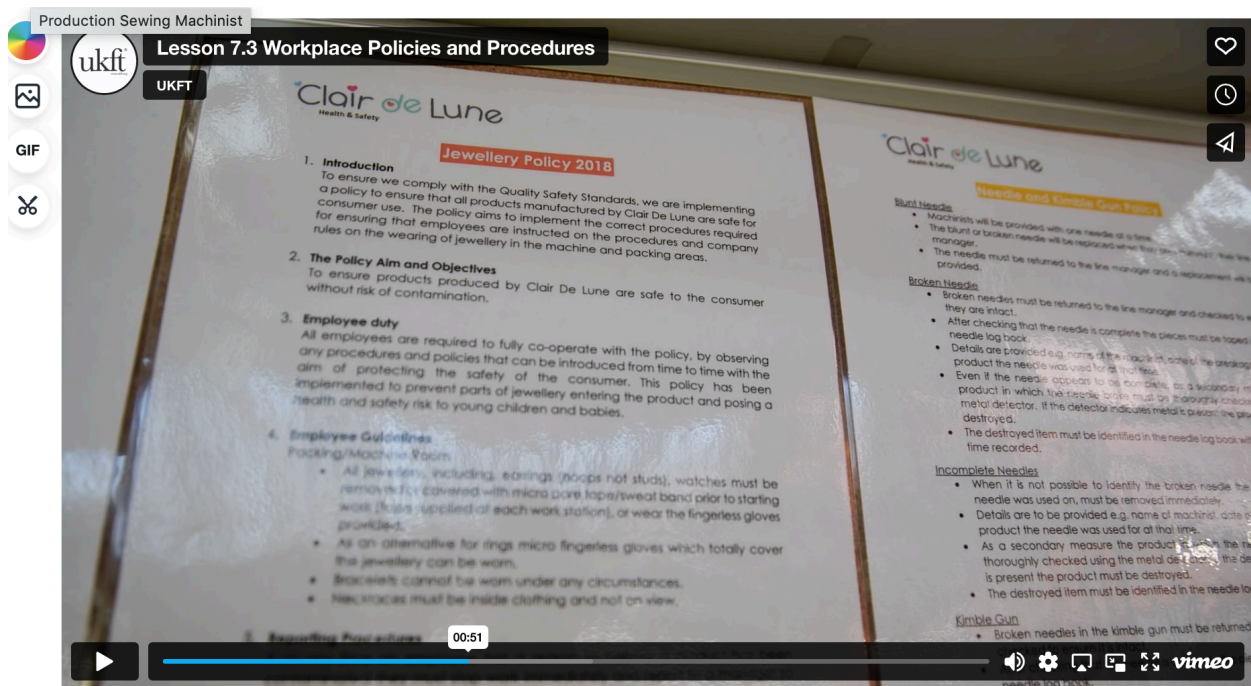
When used together, policies and procedures give a well-rounded understanding of how a workplace operates.

As an employee, it's important that you know and understand the policies and procedures in your workplace. They let you know what is expected of you at work and therefore will have an impact on your working life.

Policies and procedures do differ across the fashion and textile industry depending on the size and type of business.

When used together, policies and procedures give a well-rounded understanding of how a workplace operates.

Watch the video below for a tutorial on policies and procedures . Then see the ten real examples of the most common workplace policies and procedures used in the fashion and textile industry.

Lesson 7.3 Workplace Policies and Procedures

https://vimeo.com/586238008/e951ba5519

Ten examples of policies and procedures used by the fashion and textiles industry

1. Recruitment	**Recruitment Policies** outline how the company hires new people and aims for consistency in the recruitment process. It may cover the following: ○ Internal hiring preferences ○ The expected amount of short-listed applicants ○ How to check references ○ How to select a suitable candidate for the job offer ○ Equal opportunities and anti-discrimination ○ Job descriptions and advert templates ○ Selection process and timeframe
2. anti-discrimination	An **anti-discrimination and harassment policy** is important to promote a healthy and positive workplace for all employees. This type of policy may include: ○ Procedure for employee complaints ○ Education and training for employees ○ Provide a clear definition of discrimination and harassment ○ Guidelines for dealing with discrimination and harassment ○ How management expects to respond to complaints ○ Confidentiality information

3. Code of conduct

A **code of conduct** is a set of rules that companies expect employees to follow. The rules establish the expected behavioural standards for all employees and may cover the following:

- Attendance and absence
- Employee behaviour
- Company values
- Break and mealtime policies
- Confidentiality
- Use of company property
- Use of social media
- Plagiarism
- Travel policies
- Conflicts of interest
- Client interaction
- Dress code

4. Internet and email

Internet and email policy, this outlines how companies expect employees to use work email accounts and the internet and sets up procedures to minimise risk, which is especially important for secure networks. It may include

- Internet access rules
- Appropriate online usage
- Controls on misuse of the internet
- Restrictions on web browsing
- A security protocol for online data
- Download rules
- Social networking rules
- Work email usage rules
- How to frame emails to colleagues
- Work email usage at home or outside the office

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5. Mobile Phones	A **mobile phone policy** covers the rules of mobile phone usage in the workplace. This sort of policy is set up to promote productivity and reduce distractions. It may cover: o When you can use your personal mobile phone o Where you can keep your personal mobile phone during work hours o Rules surrounding personal phone calls
6. Smoking	A **smoking policy** covers a workplace's rules regarding smoking and tobacco use. Many companies do not allow smoking on their premises. It's important for employees to know where and when they can smoke, if applicable. The policy may cover: o Whether smoking is allowed o Designated smoking areas o Smoking breaks o Smoking off-site
7. Drugs & alcohol	A **Drug and alcohol** policy covers a company's rules regarding drug and alcohol use. It may mention procedures for dealing with rule breaking. It may also mention the procedure for dealing with drug testing. A drug and alcohol policy is usually a strict list of rules that may cover o The company's tolerance to drug and alcohol use o Drug testing rules o Alcohol use rules o Procedure for dealing with intoxicated individuals

8. Health & Safety	The **Health and Safety** policy covers a company's obligations under work health and safety laws. It is an important policy because it establishes how employees are protected. Such a policy may cover the following: o Emergency procedures o Risk assessment o Employee safety training o First aid information o Equipment maintenance o Safe handling of materials and substances o Supervision rules o Delegation of authority o Accident training o Physical and mental health information o Monitoring hazards
9. Grievance	A **Grievance** policy is in place to handle formal complaints made by employees. This policy can outline employee rights and how the company expects to respond to grievances received. The policy may cover: o The procedure for submitting a formal grievance o Company policy regarding response o Procedure for investigating the grievance o Time frame o Confidentiality o Possible outcomes o Appeal information

10. Discipline	A **Discipline and Termination** policy establishes how a company may handle employees who don't follow policies. It demonstrates consequences and possible dismissals. This policy may cover: ○ Procedure for dealing with incidents that go against company policy ○ How a company responds to rule breaks ○ Your rights to appeal discipline ○ Procedure for an investigation into incidents ○ Reasons for termination ○ Pre-termination procedure ○ How to tell an employee they have been let go ○ Post-termination procedure

How are policies and procedures communicated?
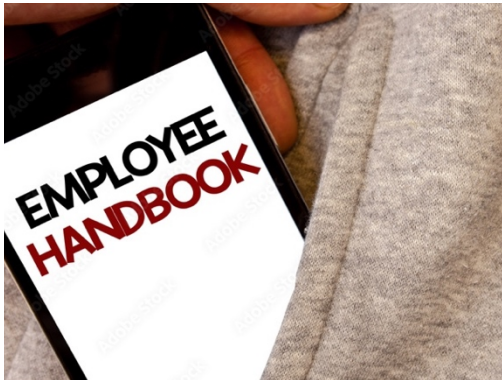
Polices and procedures may be set out and circulated in a hard copy or digital employee handbook designed to give guidance to employees. These handbooks are usually distributed when an employee starts the job as part of the induction process.

Employee handbooks can help new employees settles into their new workplace, give them a good understanding of company values, insight into how the company works, information on whose who, how to do things and what not to do.

As well as information on policies and procedures, the employee handbook may include the company structure, values, history, and mission.

The handbook is not usually overly rigid or static but a living document that is amended and updated as necessary.

Now you know what workplace policies and procedures are, and why they are in place, Lessons 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 will go into more detail about the policies and procedures that may affect your day to day working life as a production sewing machinist.

GROUNDWORK: Completing this groundwork is an option, it will help you to better understand your role, your company, and internal processes and procedures. For those undertaking an apprenticeship these activities will help you gather information relevant to the End Point Assessment.

Note: For those learners, who are independent and not yet working as an employed production sewing machinist, alternative recommendations are included.

Check out your companies polices and procures; if you don't already have them, ask for copies, and put them in your file hard or digital file. Make sure you understand what the policies and procedures mean and don't be afraid to ask your supervisor or manger about anything you don't understand.

For those learners, who are independent and not yet working as an employed production sewing machinist, check out example policies and procedures on the site below. This will give you an idea of what your employer may expect of you if you were to become a sector employee

https://www.acas.org.uk/search?keys=workplace+policies

Knowledge Challenge 7.3

1. What is a workplace policy?

- A workplace policy is a document that defines legislation and regulations regarding employment
- A workplace policy is a document that defines a company's expectations regarding employee behaviour and performance
- A workplace policy is a document that defines a company's standards regarding employee performance and work ethic

2. What is the purpose of a workplace procedure?

- A workplace procedure tells employees how to meet production targets
- A workplace procedure tells employees how to implement workplace policies.
- A workplace procedure tells employees how to meet quality standards.

3. Why is it important to know and understand your company's workplace policies and procedures?

   - Because they tell you what is expected of you at work
   - Because they tell you about the customers and clients
   - Because they tell you what the company makes and how they make it

4. A workplace procedure tells employees how to implement the workplace policies. Below is a list of three typical polices, match the policy to two of the procedures listed.

Policy	Procedures
Code of conduct	• Report and discuss grievances with your immediate manger/supervisor
	• Do not use your mobile phone on the production floor.
Mobile phone policy	• Report intended absence before 9am.
Grievance policy	• Always wear the provided company overall during working hours
	• The company will respond to formal grievances with ten days of receipt.
	• Keep mobile phones in your works locker during working hours.