

Report

Report to:	Clyde Valley Learning and Development Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 November 2015
Report by:	Chair of Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Steering Group

Subject:	Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project - Delivery of Elementary Food Hygiene Training
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ inform the Joint Committee of progress made by the Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project in developing an alternative approach to the delivery of Elementary Food Hygiene Training

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Joint Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that it be noted that a new model has been developed by the Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project for the delivery of Elementary Food Hygiene Training;
- (2) that it be noted that the new approach has been developed and approved in consultation with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS); and
- (3) that it be noted that this model is the first qualification approved jointly between REHIS and a partner organisation to be delivered through e-learning.

3. Background

3.1 The Clyde Valley Councils have a requirement to provide training in the principles and practice of food hygiene at the elementary level for a number of staff groups and, in particular, for home care workers. Many of the target audience are part time workers.

3.2 Employees are required to maintain and implement hygiene procedures based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. The HACCP approach provides a systematic way of identifying food safety hazards and making sure that they are being controlled on a daily basis.

3.3 Historically, the Clyde Valley Councils have delivered this training either directly or through a third party, over six hours of traditional classroom based training followed by a one hour assessment. The curriculum was approved by REHIS and, on successful completion of the test, resulted in the achievement of the REHIS award for Elementary Food Hygiene.

- 3.4 Employees who reached the pass standard retained their accreditation for a period of three years, before attending refresher training, which was delivered over three and a half hours, including training and assessment.
- 3.5 The Clyde Valley Councils recognise and value the significance of providing an award that is relevant, credible and carries the status that REHIS exemplifies in this field. However, the pressing requirement to examine all approaches to learning and development has led the Clyde Valley Group to review the current approach.

4. Context for Change

- 4.1 The Clyde Valley Councils remain committed to providing appropriate training, learning and development for all staff groups. This commitment has to be realised while maintaining vital front line services. In addressing these challenges, the primary focus is always the needs of the customer and the protection and safety of employees.
- 4.2 In the current economic climate, all council activities are under scrutiny to establish that Best Value is achieved in all transactions. In a learning and development context this means delivering the relevant training, at the appropriate level, to the target audience, at the right time, while maintaining quality throughout.
- 4.3 Clyde Valley Councils have adopted a number of different strategies to address the issue of delivering learning outcomes more efficiently and economically. The effective use of information technology is central to these strategies and, in particular, the use of e-learning is now recognised as the preferred means of delivery if the subject matter and nature of the training is appropriate. Having considered the approaches being adopted for the delivery of Elementary Food Hygiene training in other public sector organisations as well as industries in the private sector, it is clear that e-learning is already an established and accepted mode of delivery.
- 4.4 In addition, the Group has also reviewed the continued suitability of the Elementary Food Hygiene award to the needs of the client group. Whilst this level of qualification has, in the past, represented the best fit for council staff in the context of their range of jobs, there is an emerging body of thought that believes a specifically tailored award has the potential to offer greater value to our respective staff and organisations.
- 4.5 It is in the context of these factors that the Clyde Valley Group developed a proposal for the establishment of a bespoke and tailored Joint Award between REHIS and the Clyde Valley Group which would be certified by the Institute.

5 Further Developments

- 5.1 Taking into account each of these factors, a proposal for the creation of a new bespoke and jointly awarded qualification was developed by members of the Clyde Valley Group and submitted for appraisal to REHIS.
- 5.2 The proposal involved the development of a new and more focused curriculum which, although still based on the HACCP principles, was more closely tailored to needs of the target group of employees. In taking this approach, aspects of the course which were previously deemed to be superfluous have been eliminated, while contextual examples have now been included which have greater relevance.

- 5.3 The high burden of time commitment required to attend classroom based training has also been addressed by converting the six hour classroom course to a series of e-learning modules. As with all e-learning provided by the Clyde Valley Councils, this has the additional benefit of being accessible at a time and place that suits the learner, and can be broken down into manageable learning sessions.
- 5.4 Learners can access the e-learning modules directly from a location that suits them, however, supervised sessions to support learners can also be provided should these be required.
- 5.5 The requirement to provide a test of knowledge remains an important aspect of the new qualification, and this is also achieved through e-learning. On completion of all six short modules, learners are required to pass a brief multiple-choice knowledge test under examination conditions. Test questions are randomised in order to maintain rigour and maximise the learning experience for candidates.

6 Outcome

- 6.1 In October 2015, the Clyde Valley Group's proposal was appraised, evaluated and approved by the board of REHIS in Edinburgh.
- 6.2 The board provided extremely positive feedback on the proposal to deliver this new qualification under the joint branding of REHIS and the Clyde Valley Group. The ground breaking aspect of the proposal was also noted as this is the first qualification approved by REHIS to deliver the programme by e-learning.
- 6.3 The course content is now being finalised along with the administration procedures and design of the course certificates. Subject to the agreement of REHIS, it is anticipated that the new course will be ready for delivery by January 2016.

7 Employee Implications

- 7.1 Employees undertaking this training will have less time away from their place of work when completing the course, as the new course can be delivered more flexibly and in less than half the time of the previous one.
- 7.2 Learning and development personnel will be available when required to support learners in accessing the e-learning modules, and to supervise the testing process.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The new approach will generate savings in the cost of delivery as well as improving the quality of the provision across all areas.
- 8.2 In addition, there will be a direct cost saving based on the following:-
- ◆ previous costs of training delivery (trainer costs, room bookings, travelling expenses, employee replacement costs) are reduced or eliminated
 - ◆ registration fees of £10.00 per candidate for both first time and refresher training are eliminated
 - ◆ a one off administration charge is levied on all candidates by REHIS of £4.00

9 Other Implications

- 9.1 The implications in terms of risk were evaluated as part of the approval process by the Clyde Valley Group and this was subsequently discussed with REHIS. No issues were identified.
- 9.2. This approach has additional benefits in terms of sustainability through the reduction in travelling involved in the delivery.

10 Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment will be carried out by the programme governance group as one of its first tasks following its establishment.
- 10.2 Consultation has been ongoing from the outset of this project across all eight Clyde Valley Member Councils and with REHIS.

Gill Bhatti

Chair, Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Steering Group

16 November 2015

Previous References

- ◆ Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project - Shared Services in Social Care - 14 June 2010

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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