English for European trade unionists

Level Three

Health and Safety

The ETUI-REHS is financially supported by the European Commission
Foreword

Effective communication is an essential tool in the goal of building a European trade union identity that transcends political and geographical borders. The ability to speak a language other than one’s own is an important step towards achieving this goal, enabling trade unionists from across the European Union to exchange information and experience, and to learn about other cultural and trade union contexts.

The Education Department of ETUI-REHS (formerly ETUCO) has been involved in the promotion and delivery of foreign language training since 1993. This activity has involved a number of publications, including *English for European Trade Unionists Levels 3 + 4* which first appeared in 1995 under the auspices of a LINGUA-funded project. This material has now been revised and updated, and made available as electronic files for the first time.

The new units are:

- Introductory unit: Language learning strategies for European trade unionists
- Three level 3 units (upper intermediate): Trade union organisation; Trade unions and Europe; Health and Safety
- Three level 4 units (advanced): Working Women; Workers of the World; European Works Councils

A description of the language level, a profile of the target group, advice on how to use the materials and a grid showing the full contents can be found in the Introductory Unit. Tutors will find additional advice on approaches and methodology in the *LanguageTrainers Guide* published in 2005.

My thanks to all those who have participated in the preparation and production of these materials. We hope that they will contribute to improved communications and better understanding amongst trade unionists throughout Europe.

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Director
ETUI-REHS Education

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Acknowledgements

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</tr>
<tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk">www.bbc.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission of the European Union</td>
<td><a href="http://ec.europa.eu">http://ec.europa.eu</a></td>
</tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.etuc.org">www.etuc.org</a></td>
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<td>Health and Safety Executive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Confederation of Trade Unions</td>
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</tr>
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<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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</tr>
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<td>International Textile Garment and Leather Workers’ Federation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.itglwf.org">www.itglwf.org</a></td>
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<td>Labour Research Department</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATFHE (now University and College Union)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ucu.org.uk">www.ucu.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Internationalist</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newint.org">www.newint.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Statesman</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newstatesman.com">www.newstatesman.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Union of Journalists</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nuj.org.uk">www.nuj.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El País</td>
<td><a href="http://www.elpais.es">www.elpais.es</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public and Commercial Services Union</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pcs.org.uk">www.pcs.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Services International</td>
<td><a href="http://www.world-psi.org/">www.world-psi.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Robins</td>
<td><a href="mailto:JonRobins@aol.com">JonRobins@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SASK – Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sask.fi/english/">www.sask.fi/english/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seppo Leinonen</td>
<td><a href="http://www.seppo.net">www.seppo.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIPTU</td>
<td><a href="http://www.siptu.ie">www.siptu.ie</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sunday Times</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sunday-times.co.uk">www.sunday-times.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Times</td>
<td><a href="http://www.timesonline.co.uk">www.timesonline.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and General Workers’ Union</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tgwu.org.uk">www.tgwu.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades Union Congress</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tuc.org.uk">www.tuc.org.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>UNISON</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unison.org.uk">www.unison.org.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Union Ideas Network</td>
<td><a href="http://www.uin.org.uk">www.uin.org.uk</a></td>
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<td>UNITE-HERE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unitehere.org">www.unitehere.org</a></td>
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</tr>
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</table>

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Looking ahead

In this unit you will focus on Health and Safety in the workplace. You will study the following:

Vocabulary

- for discussing the role of Health and Safety representatives
- for describing hazards and risks
- for talking about Health and Safety issues

Grammar

- some phrasal verbs
- conditionals
- some modal verbs

Functions

- writing letters and emails
- making telephone calls
- reporting back
Health and Safety at work

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Attitudes to Health and Safety

The following statements reflect different kinds of attitudes to health and safety.

Discuss these statements in pairs, saying whether you agree/disagree and why.

1. Dealing with health and safety at work is common sense. Any dangers to members are obvious.

2. Health and safety at work is one issue where workers and management are in complete agreement.

3. Workers suffer injuries, ill-health and death in the workplace because employers don’t care.

4. Health and Safety reps should concentrate on their own workplaces. The abuse of workers health in other countries has nothing to do with them.

5. The biggest problem for the H and S rep is the members. You get management to buy protective safety clothing, and then the members won’t wear it.

6. Successful people have their work-life balance organised so that they can enjoy quality time with their family and friends.
HAZARDS AND RISKS

Complete each sentence below with one of the words or phrases given:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>damage</th>
<th>duty</th>
<th>risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>musculoskeletal system</td>
<td>occupational stress</td>
<td>respiratory system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impairment</td>
<td>preventative measures</td>
<td>fatal accidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hazard</td>
<td>protective clothing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: Noise is a major cause of damage to health.

Now complete the following sentences:

1. A ____________________ is something with potential to cause harm.
2. A ____________________ is the likelihood of that potential to cause harm being realised.
3. The employer has a ____________________ to maintain a reasonable temperature which must be up to the minimum after the first hour.
4. Over-exposure to asbestos causes problems to the ____________________.
5. Where workers are exposed to hazardous substances ____________________ must be supplied by the employer.
6. Constant excessive noise leads to ____________________ of the hearing function.
7. Safety reps monitor risks in order to encourage employers to implement ____________________.
8. Changes in working practices and conditions have resulted in a dramatic increase in ____________________.
9. There are many more illnesses and deaths caused by health problems at work than ____________________.
10. Incorrect posture at workstations causes problems to the ____________________.
SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES IN EUROPE

It is often useful to consider what you already know about a subject before you begin to read about it. The two activities below are to help you set the scene for a text about safety representatives in Europe.

1. **Discuss with a partner what you know about the job of a safety representative in the workplace in your country/organisation.**

2. **Compare some aspects of safety representation in your country with the UK by completing the table below.**

### Comparing Health and Safety Representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects to consider</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Your country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How are safety representatives selected?</td>
<td>By union members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Who can be a safety rep?</td>
<td>Only accredited union members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How many safety reps would you expect to have in an organisation?</td>
<td>In most organisations each department would have a safety rep responsible for between 30 and 100 members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What rights do safety representatives have?</td>
<td>They have the right to information, to carry out inspections, to time off in order to carry out their duties and attend courses of training. They do not have the right to stop the job.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do safety committees exist in your workplaces?</td>
<td>Employers are required by law to set up safety committees, consisting of management and union safety representatives, if requested to do so by the union.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safety representatives in Europe

A. A report comparing worker representation on health and safety in eight European Union countries, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, the UK, and Sweden, concluded that worker representation on health and safety is falling far short of the statutory requirements right across Europe.

B. It pointed out that while the European “framework” directive, which came into effect at the end of 1992, contains rights to worker, and/or worker representation, consultation and participation on health and safety, it left the appointment of representatives to be decided by national regulations and practice.

C. In the UK (unlike some of the other member states) safety representatives can only be appointed in companies where the union is recognised for collective bargaining. Representation has been declining and in 2005, 70% of unionised workplaces had safety committees, compared with 80% in 1995, and 75% of employees in unionised workplaces were covered by safety representatives, compared with 79% reported in 1995.

D. According to another survey only 53% of workplaces are recognised for collective bargaining (according to 2005 figures). This survey also found that there has been an increase in the proportion of workplaces where management dealt with health and safety issues without consultation in recent years, from 22% in 1999 to 37% in 2005. 57% of workplaces were without recognised unions compared with 19% where they were present.

E. According to the Worker representation on health and safety in Europe report by David Walters, Alan Dalton and David Gee, published by the European Trade Union Technical Bureau, many workers in other European Union countries are similarly experiencing the problem of lack of safety representation.

F. Only 65% of French and Greek firms and 60% of Spanish firms which are legally required to set up health and safety committees with worker representatives, have actually done so. In Ireland, it is estimated that less than half the eligible workplaces have safety representatives.

G. In Germany, although one survey found that 100% of firms with over 500 employees had a Works Council system (which deal with health and safety along with other issues), it also found that only 6% of firms with between five and twenty workers had a Works Council.

Bargaining Report #143, Oct. 1994
REMEMBER - you often skim or read a text quickly to get an idea of its overall meaning (i.e. to get the gist of the text). Then, if the text is relevant to your needs or interests, you can read it again more slowly in order to get more precise information.

3. **Skim the text on p.7 and, from the following list, choose an appropriate heading to summarise the main point of each paragraph.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works Councils</th>
<th>Safety representation in the UK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representation not meeting legal provisions</td>
<td>More management control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with EU Directive varies</td>
<td>Appointment left to individual States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euro-wide problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example:** paragraph A = Representation not meeting legal provisions

4. **Now read the text more slowly and carefully, decide if the following statements are true or false, then in pairs compare and justify your decisions:**

a) The recent report looked at health and safety representation in eight European countries.  **True/False**

b) Individual member states were left to make their own arrangements regarding the appointment of health and safety reps.  **True/False**

c) In the UK there has been a 10% increase in the number of unionised workplaces with safety committees.  **True/False**

d) There has been a decrease in the number of workplaces where management consults on health and safety issues.  **True/False**

e) In Ireland under 50% of workplaces have safety reps.  **True/False**

f) In Germany 100% of firms have a Works Council.  **True/False**
PHRASAL VERBS:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>carry on</th>
<th>= continue</th>
<th>The members decided to carry on with the meeting.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>carry out (1)</td>
<td>= put into practice</td>
<td>The management refused to carry out the agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= undertake</td>
<td>The reps carried out an investigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carry off (1)</td>
<td>= manage to perform well</td>
<td>Although he was nervous before the meeting the rep carried it off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= remove</td>
<td>We discovered they had carried off the equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carry over</td>
<td>= transfer</td>
<td>They agreed to carry the remaining business over to the next day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carry forward</td>
<td>= transfer [ahead]</td>
<td>The profit was carried forward to the next year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fill the gaps in the following sentences with an appropriate form of carry.

1. It is a tradition which has been __________ from an earlier period.
2. It was decided not to __________ the new policy immediately.
3. Instead there was general agreement to __________ as before.
4. It was a great achievement to __________ the negotiations so well.
5. The matter was __________ from the previous meeting.
6. They decided to __________ the inspection as soon as possible.
7. The injured worker was __________ on a stretcher.
8. She felt unable to __________ the conversation.
9. Although the pay negotiations had failed, the staff __________ working as normal.
10. As some important documents were missing, it was decided to __________ a thorough search.
WHY INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY?

Health and safety matters in other countries may seem remote to you and your members’ everyday life at work or in the community. Whether we work for a multinational concern, live next door to one of their sites, work with products produced in other countries, eat products that have been sprayed with pesticides in another country, or use products in our home, the health, safety and welfare of workers involved is a matter of direct relevance to us.

The way that national and multinational industries operate in all countries may:

- Cause danger, ill health and death to workers.
- Introduce products that are dangerous to consumers world-wide.
- Threaten the health, safety and welfare of whole communities.

Workers health and that of surrounding communities is abused in this country and throughout the world. Major hazards from industrial operations often make headline news. However, working people have daily experiences of their lives being destroyed through accidents and ill health, which do not make headline news. Asbestos related cancers, exposure to agricultural poisons, the health effects of working with new technologies etc. all take their daily toll.

In the absence of uniform international requirements, health and safety at work cannot be viewed in purely domestic terms. Industry is part of an international economy controlled by fewer and fewer major multinational corporations.

Decisions affecting the health and safety of workers and communities can be taken thousands of miles away. Those decisions do not necessarily take any account of the health interests of workers. In fact, there may be a conscious decision to operate double standards. Countries may be chosen for industrial sites because they have lax or non-existent standards.


3. Select words or phrases from the text which mean the same as the following:

1. business/firm (1-5) ..............................
2. very close (1-5) ..............................
3. harmed (10-15) ..............................
4. become major media items (10-15) ..............................
5. cause constant harm or damage (15-20) ..............................
6. standardised (15-20) ......................................
7. local (20-24) .............................................
8. a long way away (25-29) .............................
9. deliberate (25-29) ......................................
10. loose (25-29) ..........................................  

Discussion points

- The importance of knowing about health and safety matters in other countries.
- What we can do as a result of knowledge of events and conditions in other countries.
- Any international disasters which you can recall.
- A recent health and safety issue which has made news in your own country.

How much do we know about health and safety standards in other countries?
IDENTIFYING HAZARDS

Trade unionists are familiar with the hazards they are likely to find in their own workplaces. These will vary from place to place but some will be in common. It is often helpful to build up lists of words based on your own experience and to share these with others.

1. a) Draw an outline plan of your workplace (indicate where applicable: office space, production areas, warehouse, canteen, kitchen etc).

        b) Indicate the approximate number of employees in each area and if relevant the number of Health and Safety reps.

2. List any hazards you are familiar with in your workplace (maximum 6) and if possible locate these on your outline plan.

3. Take your partner on a virtual tour of your workplace and give warnings about any hazards you may encounter.

4. Work with your partner to complete the following table based on your own experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Who is affected?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: lifting equipment</td>
<td>technicians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Health Hazards - for example: eye strain, aches and pains, RSI, chemicals, noise, radiation, biological, stress, temperature and so on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Who is affected?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>example: VDUs</td>
<td>secretarial staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A long time spent working at a computer can cause eye strain and RSI.
PLEURAL PLAQUES:

Reduction in Asbestos Compensation

The video (BBC1 News, 15 February 2005) features an interview with a solicitor involved in the court case about compensation.

Before watching the video, look at the following text on Pleural Plaques to understand the vocabulary and what the situation is:

THE COST OF THE ‘WORRIED WELL’

- Potential cost of pleural plaques to insurers: £1.4bn
- Potential claims not yet made: 100,000
- Number of claims received each year: 3,300
- Rise in claims since 1990: 200%
- Final payout before yesterday’s test case: £12,500-
- Final payout after yesterday’s test case: £7,000

Number of claims by disease type

© The Times, London 16 February 2005
1. Watch the video clip right through, then watch it a second time and answer the questions below. There is some useful vocabulary listed on the right-hand side.

1. The reporter asked what the insurers have done over the years. What is the solicitor’s reply?  
   a symptom to rule to represent to lose out on to evade compensation negligently to deliver a knock-out blow

2. What are the changes in payments for Pleural Plaques?
   a) Provisional :
      was ___________
      now is ___________
   b) Full and final :
      was ___________
      now is ___ __________

3. What do these two levels indicate ?
   a) Provisional : ______________
   b) Full and final : ______________

4. How many workers
   a) are now affected ? _____________
   b) will be affected ? _____________

5. What are the insurers afraid of?

6. What did the judge decide today?
   a) ______________
   b) ______________

7. Describe the reactions of
   a) a worker : ______________
   b) the insurers : ______________

8. a) What step can the insurers take now?
    b) What will they probably request?

Working with video 1
2. **Complete the following sentences (one dash = one letter).** You will find most of the words in the vocabulary list for Question 1.

   a. Ian McFall - - - - - - - - - - - men who felt that they were - - - - - - - - - on payments.

   b. The insurers attempted to deliver a - - - - - - - blow.

   c. Those who accept a full and final - - - - - - - - , which means that they can’t - - - - - - more if their condition - - - - - - will see their - - - - - - fall.

   d. Today Mr Justice Holland - - - - that no matter how many men there are, they deserve - - - - - - - - for their employers’ - - - - - - -.

   e. The insurers have been given the - - - - to - - - - and they could potentially ask for - - - - - - to be stopped altogether.

3. **Do you know another word or words in English meaning the same as the words below, which appear in the sentences in Exercise 2 above?**

   a. attempted
   b. full
   c. no matter how
   d. deserve
   e. potentially
MAKING TELEPHONE CALLS

Union representatives may often need to make telephone calls in which English is the common language.

- With a partner write down all the words and phrases you associate with telephone calls. Compare your list with those of other pairs.
- Discuss what you find difficult about making telephone calls
- Complete the sentences below with an appropriate word or phrase from the following list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>speaking</th>
<th>holding</th>
<th>receiver (phone)</th>
<th>phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other line</td>
<td>wrong number</td>
<td>engaged (busy)</td>
<td>unobtainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put me through</td>
<td>ring back (call back)</td>
<td>extension</td>
<td>bad line</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples: Do you know her extension?

1. I’d like to speak to Roger Orr, could you _____________ please?
2. I’m sorry, the line’s ________________, can you hold?
3. You’re through now. Extension 7562, Johnson ____________.
4. I’m sorry, I must have dialled the ________________.
5. Mary Porter’s on the ________________, can I take a message?
6. No one’s answering at the moment, could you ________________ later?
7. This is a ________________ I can’t hear you very well.
8. The number is ________________. Are you sure you have the right number?
9. Please put the ________________ down and wait until I call you.
10. Her line is busy at the moment would you mind ________________?
STUDY BOX

Making contact
- I’d like to speak to Mr Watson, please.
- Could I speak to Jane, please?
- Tommy Cole, please.
- Extension 3782 please.
- Is that Butterworths Breweries?
- Could you put me through to the manager please?
- Is that Eva?

Taking and leaving messages
- I’m sorry, Sven isn’t here at the moment
- Could I take a message?
- Do you want to leave a message?
- Could I leave a message?
- Could you tell Ana that I phoned?
- Could you ask him to ring/call me back on 2235468.
- Could you say I’ll call back later?
- (on answer machine) This is Paula, I’m arriving at 18.00. Please meet me in the arrivals hall.

Getting the wrong number
- I’m sorry, I’ve got the wrong number.
- My mistake, I must have dialled the wrong number.
- Sorry wrong number. I’ll ring off.
- Sorry to trouble you, that’s not the number I wanted.

Ending the call
- That’s fine. Thank you very much.
- Right, that’s very helpful.
- OK now. Thank you very much.
- Right. Thank you. Goodbye.
Practical exercises for three participants A, B and C

1. A speaks to B and asks to speak to C. A asks if he/she is going to attend the training course in Brussels and then they make arrangements to meet.

2. As for 1) but C is out of town at the moment so B takes a message about the arrangements A wishes to make.

3. B calls C with the message (2 above) from A. C calls A to alter the arrangements.

Note: It is important for the participants not to face each other during these exercises so that they simulate as far as possible the authentic distance between speakers and lack of face-to-face contact of telephone calls.
**MODAL VERBS**

Modal Verbs used to express obligation

**should / ought to / must / have to**

- **should / ought to**
  
  There is no difference between *should* and *ought to* although *should* is more commonly used especially in the negative and interrogative forms. They are both used to express an obligation that is not very strong. They are often used to express advice or a duty, something that is a good thing to do (or not to do).

  **Examples:**
  
  - You **should** attend union meetings more often
  - It’s going to rain. We **should** take an umbrella
  - I **ought** to spend more time learning English
  - We **shouldn’t** forget to inform our colleagues
  - It’s late. We **ought** to go now
  - **Should** I take flowers or a bottle of wine with me?
  - You **shouldn’t** use the car so much
  - I **should** have sent her an email yesterday

- **must** and **have to**

  **In the present tense**

  Both must and have to are used to express a stronger sense of obligation or necessity. This is especially the case when the speaker feels it is something they personally really need to do (or not to do).

  **Examples:**
  
  - We **must** pay our union subscriptions
  - I **have to** start work at 7am tomorrow
  - I **mustn’t** forget to bring the report with me
  - She **has to** meet the Danish delegation at the airport
Have got to is a more informal way of expressing the same ideas

Examples:
- I’ve got to go to an important meeting tomorrow morning
- We’ve all got to work overtime

Have to (rather than must) is used when the obligation comes from a system/rule/regulation/law decided by someone else (a more objective obligation).

Examples:
- In the UK you have to drive on the left side of the road (This is the law)
- In the UK you have to pay for your drinks at the bar when you order them (This is the usual system in British bars)

In the past tense

Have to is the only way to express obligation because there is no past tense of must.

Examples:
- There was a bus strike last week so I had to walk to work
- We had to negotiate a new agreement last year
- Fortunately I didn’t have to go to hospital
- Did they have to buy new equipment?

Reference to the future can be made with both must and have to

Examples
- I must go to the annual conference in August
- She has to visit the new factory next month

Stronger reference to the future can be made by using have to and will(‘ll)

Examples:
- I will have to talk to the new manager next week
- We’ll have to prepare for the meeting
Complete the following sentences by choosing the most suitable form of *should, ought to, must* or *have to* (there may be more than one possibility in some cases)

1. Trade union organisations ___________ issue special bulletins on sexual harassment
2. The doctor said “you ___________ stop smoking. It’s affecting your health”
3. I ___________ walk 3 miles to school when I was a child
4. If she changes her job, she ___________ go to work by train
5. I think we ___________ change the time of the meeting
6. I ___________ work from 9am till 5.30pm
7. Tomorrow I ___________ finish work before 6pm. I have a dental appointment
8. She doesn’t usually work at weekends but last Sunday she ___________ work
9. Why _______ I (__________) do this? It’s not my responsibility
10. I forgot to call Brussels this morning. I _______ do it this afternoon
11. Why _______ we _______ read these documents? Because the regulations say you ________
12. I _______ go now or I’ll be late for the meeting
MEETING OTHER TRADE UNION REPS

Study the following ways in which someone has reported back on a conversation. Note how they have introduced the other person’s name and how they have introduced that person’s opinion.

“I met an interesting person last week called Marta. She told me that Health and Safety was a priority in her organisation.”

“You may be interested to know that I met Manfred from A and L and he said that Health and Safety was top of his agenda.”

“I spoke to Tom Clapperton from the T & G and he thought that there was insufficient risk assessment in many workplaces.”

“Guiseppe was from UIL, he commented unfavourably on the new monitoring system.”

“In Anna’s opinion, training was a vital ingredient in achieving safe working environments”

STUDY BOX

Note the difference in use between to tell (told) and to say (said)

- What did he say to you? He said (that) the injury was not serious
- What did he tell you? He told me (that) the injury was not serious
- I said I wanted to speak to the boss immediately
- The rep said: “this is a key issue for us”
- I told them I wanted to speak to the boss tomorrow
- When he told me the news I was very surprised

Other ways of reporting back

Complete the following with an appropriate opinion on working conditions. You can use the views expressed above.

a) Michele put forward the view that . . . .

b) Roberto stated that . . . .
Health and Safety

c) Annette declared that . . . .
d) Frank held the view that . . . .
e) Concha believed that . . . .
f) According to Ferenc....
g) As far as Anton was concerned....
h) From the trade union perspective.....
i) From the employer’s point of view.....

ROLE PLAY

You are interested in Health and Safety and while attending an international conference you decide to find out as much as possible about the experience of Health and Safety issues of other English-speaking delegates.

1. Draw up a list of questions to help you in your discussions and prepare your own answers so as to be able to respond to questions yourself. Questions should cover the following:
   - Introductions (job, workplace: real or imaginary)
   - Main Health and Safety problems experienced.
   - Attitude of fellow workers
   - Attitude of employer

2. Discuss these issues in pairs, changing pairs as requested.

3. You are expected to report back to your colleagues after you return from the conference. Write down some notes to help you remember whom you have met.

4. Give a brief report to the group about some of the people you have met and state one view that each one expressed.
VDUs and glasses

(VDU = Visual display unit)

This is a radio phone-in programme and you will hear one listener phoning to ask the advice of experts. (Source: BBC Radio 4, Moneybox Live, 17 February 2003)

1 Listen to the programme and then answer the questions below. There is some useful vocabulary listed at the right-hand side.

1) What was the listener’s enquiry?  
   to clarify the provision

2) When asked the above question, what did the employer reply?  
   to contribute

3) Based on the experts’ advice and information, answer the following:

   a) what are the general categories of people who qualify for a free sight test and a possible contribution towards spectacles through the Benefits System?
   i) ____________________________ pegged to
   ii) ____________________________
   iii) ____________________________ registered
   iv) ____________________________ partially sighted
   v) ____________________________ glaucoma
   vi) ____________________________ diabetes
   vii) ____________________________ a voucher

   b) which others may also qualify?
   viii) ____________________________ (savings: £ ________ )
   ix) ____________________________ (savings: £ ________ )
   (these are not linked to the employer / work)

4) What are the rights of employees who constantly use a VDU (Health and Safety regulations)?  
   to be entitled to provide access
2 With a partner discuss:

- what the situation is in your countries about VDUs and sight tests and
- what other possible health and/or safety risks there are for frequent users of computers at work (for example, RSI).

What are the rights of employees who constantly use a VDU?
IS YOUR OFFICE SAFE?

1. Describe an office with which you are familiar.
   - How would you rate your office in terms of safety on a scale of 1 (unsafe) to 5 (very safe)? Justify the rating you have given it.
   - Make a list of common office equipment.
   - What potential hazards would you associate with this equipment?

2. Now read the following passage.

Do you know that your office is safe?

There is no such thing as a typical office. Some are small, others immense. Offices are found both in old and new buildings. Some of these buildings may have been specifically designed for use as offices. In other instances the office will only be one part of a workplace which is not primarily concerned with office work. People work in offices which are attached to building sites or coal mines, or part of factories and hospitals and therefore share the same health and safety problems as other workers.

Look around the office you work in. Are you hemmed in between desks, filing cabinets, machinery and boxes? cramped conditions not only cause discomfort but increase the chance of office workers tripping over wires or bumping into equipment. Overcrowding is usually worse when the office is in an unsuitable building, but even purpose-built offices can be ‘outgrown’ and need careful planning to avoid accidents.

Electrical safety is as important in offices as in factories. Faulty electrical equipment can cause shock to users and may be a fire hazard. All electrical equipment should be regularly maintained and any unsafe equipment immediately taken out of service.

Fire precautions are poor in many offices. Fire exits may be locked or obstructed; extinguishers may be old and fire drills non-existent.

Overcrowding increases the hazards, by making it more difficult to escape, should a fire occur.

More and more new machinery is being introduced into offices. Equipment such as this can cause problems of noise, lack of space, and fumes. It also brings a wide range of mechanical hazards. All dangerous parts of any machine must be guarded so that the operator does not come into contact with them. Fail-safe devices should prevent any machine from moving if the guards are not in place.

Health and Safety in the Office, TUC
Health and Safety

Answer the following questions based on the above text.

- Why is there no such thing as a typical office?

- To what extent do office workers often share the same health and safety problems as other workers?

- What are the causes and dangers of overcrowding?

- Why is fire such a high risk factor in offices?

- What disadvantages as far as health and safety are concerned can arise from the introduction of new machinery?

Find the following words in the text and make up separate sentences to show the meaning of each one. The first one is done for you as an example.

Example:

- primarily concerned (1-5)
  The recruitment officer is primarily concerned with the appointment of new staff.

- hemmed in. (5-10)
- cramped. (5-10)
- purpose-built. (10-15)
- outgrown. (10-15)
- fail-safe. (20-25)

1. ..........................................................................................................................................

2. ..........................................................................................................................................

3. ..........................................................................................................................................

4. ..........................................................................................................................................

5. ..........................................................................................................................................

Working with reading 3
HEALTH AND SAFETY AGREEMENT

Letter writing is often an integral part of our work. This unit introduces some important aspects of the layout of a letter.

Read the following letter then study the notes corresponding to the numbers in brackets.

(1) T&G District Office
7, George Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 2AP
UK

(2) 16/4/06

Sr. Carlos Montero (3)
UGT
Avda de America, 25-4
28002 MADRID
SPAIN

Dear Carlos (4)

Health and Safety - Provision of Information (5)

It was good to meet you last week at the European Workplace Hazards Conference - The Way Forward. As promised I am enclosing (6) an extract (7) from an agreement we have recently signed with one of the major companies in our region. I hope this will be of use to you in your forthcoming discussions. (8) I would be pleased to receive any comments you have about its usefulness and I would be particularly interested to know if there are any provisions about the supply of information which you usually include in your agreements and which we have not included here. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance. Hoping to see you on another occasion.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely  (9)

Anna Fielding
Trade Union Safety Rep. T&G Branch X/9943 (10)
1. **Note and comment on the following aspects of the above letter indicated by the numbers in brackets. To what extent is the layout of a letter different in your own country?**

1. The address of the sender.
2. The date (16 April 2006)
3. The name and address of the person to whom the letter is sent.
4. The style in which the letter is addressed.
5. The main heading.
6. Reference to an **enclosure**.
7. The enclosure of an **extract** rather than a **whole** document.
8. The request for a reply/action needed.
9. The style in which the letter ends.
10. The position and branch of the sender.

2. **Discuss the above letter.**

- How did it come about?
- What do you expect the **enclosure** to contain?
- What is Carlos expected to do?
- What would Anna like to know?

3. **Draft a reply from Carlos thanking Anna and commenting on the usefulness of the information. Remind her of the date of the next conference and ask if she would be prepared to make a short presentation about some agreements with companies with which she is familiar.**

4. **Now consider the enclosed agreement reproduced below and look up in your dictionary the words you do not understand.**

   *Once you feel that you have fully understood the agreement note down those provisions which you feel are better than those operating in your own workplace. Note anything you feel is missing.*

   **Discuss these provisions in pairs and then compare your findings with those of another pair.**
ENCLOSURE TO LETTER

PROVISION OF INFORMATION

To ensure that all Safety Representatives are adequately informed, the Company will make available the following categories of information to Senior Safety Representatives:

On a regular basis:
- Accident statistics.
- Any dangerous incidents or occurrences.
- Any reports or surveys done by the Health and Safety Executive or outside consultants on health or welfare.
- Any new substances with detailed hazard information which the Company is planning to use.
- Any information obtained by the Company on newly established hazards of existing materials or machinery.
- Any new machinery to be introduced. (Notification in advance and agreement on health and safety standards).
- Circulars and information from the Health and Safety Commission.
- Results of all test measurements, etc, on the processes or substances which may affect health and safety.
- Training plans for health and safety.
- Any new work, experiments, etc, instructions given for new work to the employee on health and safety precautions.

Information on request:
- Copies of laws, documents, Health and Safety Commission material, relevant to health and safety.
- Books, pamphlets, circulars on health and safety as requested and which are relevant to the workplace.
- Details of research done on hazards of chemicals, including unpublished research, where the Company has access to the information.
- All details from suppliers of chemicals and substances.
- Information on different systems of work, different safety and health precautions in operation outside the Company, where this is available.
- Information on health records, including any long term studies on health risks.
- Available protective equipment for work being done or about to be done.
- Details of contracts with suppliers and contractors on health and safety matters.
- Management will meet provisions in part by the provision of a reference point where all documents are kept. This reference point should be freely accessible to all union members and their representatives.
REPORTING AN ACCIDENT

Fill the gaps in the following description of accident at work with an appropriate entry from the box below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>painful</th>
<th>recovery</th>
<th>lacerations</th>
<th>bleeding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>slips</td>
<td>pulse</td>
<td>stretched</td>
<td>dislocated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fracture</td>
<td>passes out</td>
<td>lying</td>
<td>emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hurts</td>
<td>injuries</td>
<td>bruising</td>
<td>x-ray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breathing</td>
<td>falls</td>
<td>consciousness</td>
<td>agony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A colleague is walking past an oil storage tank and fails to notice that there has been a leakage of oil. She ___________ on the greasy surface, stumbles and __________ awkwardly. The next moment she is ___________ on the ground and screaming in __________. She then __________. You put her in the __________ position and call the first aider.

He checks her ___________ and her ___________ and calls for an ambulance. The victim regains ___________. She does not appear to be ___________ and she is able to give some indication of the extent of her ___________. She says her shoulder is extremely ___________ and her left leg ___________ a lot. She is ___________ to the ambulance and taken to the Accident and ___________ Department of the nearest hospital. On close examination and ___________ it is revealed that she has a ___________shoulder and a compound ___________ of the left tibia, with ___________around her rib cage and ___________ to her left cheek.
Role Play 1

*Work in groups with each participant taking one of the following roles (roles B and C could be combined):*

A. You are a friend of the office worker who has had the accident described above. You telephone your union representative and report the accident giving brief details.

B. As a trade union representative you receive the telephone call about the accident. You make notes of the names of the people involved and nature of the accident which you give to the health and safety rep.

C. You are the health and safety rep. You have received the news about the injured office worker. You telephone him/her in order to find out what has happened and what could be the possible causes.

D. You are the office worker who has had the accident. Prepare some notes about the accident (date, time, place, cause, consequences, your present condition etc) in order to respond to a telephone request for information.

Role Play 2

*In two small groups prepare for a meeting between (A) Workers’ representatives and (B) Management.*

Group A wishes to draw the attention to a number of accidents that have occurred recently. The group prepares a number of examples and suggestions as to the causes of the accidents (changes in working practices, increased pressure, stress, etc.)

Group B wishes to point out that non-compliance with H&S rules seems to be on the increase and prepares a number of examples (not wearing safety helmets, protective clothing, misuse of fork-lift trucks, etc.)

*Role-play the meeting and try to come to a joint agreement with regard to resolving the issues that are raised.*

*These two role-plays could be performed by different groups as mini-dramas with the “audience” discussing and evaluating the respective performances.*
CONDITIONALS

Compare the following statements and discuss the different possibilities they represent:

- If your computer crashes, **carry out** the following procedure.
- If your computer crashes, **you will** *(you’ll)* lose time.
- If your computer crashed, **you would** lose time.
- If your computer had crashed, **you would have** lost time.

For convenience **conditionals** may be classified as follows:

**Type 1 = Neutral Type**

If (= whenever, every time) + present tense, then present tense or imperative

*Used for processes and instructions.*

**Examples:**
- If you press the button, the machine stops.
- If an accident happens, report it at once.
- If the alarm sounds, leave the building at once.

**Type 2**

If + present tense, then future tense *(will *(‘ll)*, won’t)*

*Used for situations which are likely to happen or for facts.*

**Examples:**
- If you contact the safety rep, *(s)he’ll* help you.
- If the union doesn’t take the initiative, management *won’t* do anything.
- If the union requests a meeting, management *will* usually agree.
- If there is enough time, *we’ll* discuss the proposal.
Type 3
If + past tense (simple or continuous), then conditional tense (would, wouldn’t)

Used for situations which are possible but less likely to happen or are unreal.

Examples:
- If management was more flexible, we would soon reach an agreement.
- If workers received proper training, fewer accidents would occur.
- If the office wasn’t so overcrowded, workers wouldn’t feel so stressed.

Type 4
If + pluperfect tense (had, hadn’t + past participle), then conditional perfect tense (would, wouldn’t have + past participle)

Used to speculate about the possible consequences of something which did not happen.

Examples:
- If he had followed the instructions, the accident wouldn’t have happened.
- If we had known about the chemical substances, we would have taken precautions.
- If the union hadn’t acted so quickly, members would have been at risk.

1. Put the verbs in the brackets into the correct tenses after studying the example.

Example:
If the safety rep (know) yesterday, he (send) a report.
If the safety rep had known yesterday, he would have sent a report.

NB: there are TWO versions possible for some sentences

1. If the machine (stop), (restart) it at once.
2. If you (have) sufficient training, normally you (not find) this difficult.
3. If the union (not complain) last week, the company (not do) anything.
Health and Safety

4. If the union (put) in a request soon, the inspector (visit).
5. If the safety rep (send) a report, the management (have to) respond next week.
6. If it (become) any colder in the office today it (be) impossible to work.
7. If the photocopier (had) its regular service last month, it (not break down) today.
8. If smoke (appear), (sound) the alarm.
9. If he (know), he (not do) it.
10. If the conditions (be) not right, then (not do) it.

2. Complete the following sentences. The first one is done as an example:

Example:
If there is a big fire in the workshop, **there will be a lot of damage**

1. If the machine breaks down, ________________.
2. If we had known, we ________________.
3. If you are exposed to fumes regularly, you ________________.
4. If the legislation was applied, the workers ________________.
5. If the union hadn’t objected, management ________________.
6. If the inspector had called, he ________________.
7. If his / her seat is not correct, the VDU operator ________________.
8. If you notice an exposed wire, ________________.
9. If you write to me, I ________________.
10. If the alarm had sounded earlier, we ________________.
**STUDY BOX**

**Dates**
- 30 November 1994 = the thirtieth of November, nineteen ninety-four
- 1 May 2006 = the first of May, two thousand and six (twenty o six)
- The 1990s = the nineteen nineties
- 1981-5 = nineteen eighty-one to eighty-five
- 19th century = the nineteenth century

**Numbers**
- 22.4m = twenty-two point four million
- 3,762,321 = three million, seven hundred and sixty-two thousand, three hundred and twenty-one
- 28.7% = twenty-eight point seven percent
- 1/3 = a third (one third)
- 1 € = £0.67 = a /one Euro equals 67 pence

1. *Take turns to read out the following dates and numbers while one partner writes them down. Then read back your answers to each other.*

**A**
1) 7 August 2003
2) 57.4m
3) 84.3%
4) 2,231,003
5) 1985-90

**B**
1) 29 March 1986
2) 125,340
3) 2/3
4) 1970-5
5) 1,493,251
2. **Study the following sentences.**

1. In 2005 the TUC had a membership of **just under** 6.5m workers.
2. **One quarter** of all employees now work part-time.
3. Service industries now account for **three out of (every) four** jobs.
4. **53%** of the workforce have no problems with Health and Safety.
5. The official rate of fatal injuries is **much lower than** the actual rate.
6. The incidence rate has **gone up** in the construction sector.
7. **Over** 350 were injured when the building collapsed.
8. **38%** of workers claimed they were suffering from stress.
9. The number of accidents has **fallen** in the last ten years.
10. The number of kilometres **multiplied by 5, divided by** 8 equals the number of miles.

3. **Select a word or phrase from the following list which has the same meaning as those underlined.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>more than a third</th>
<th>times</th>
<th>just over 50%</th>
<th>nearly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one out of (every) four</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>more than</td>
<td>over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>significantly below</td>
<td>dropped</td>
<td>risen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. An increasing number of workers suffer accidents at work through violence. The chart below set out a breakdown of victims by occupation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shop supervisors/assistant managers</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop assistants</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop managers</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security officers/store detectives</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance agents/collectors-canvassers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HGV drivers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk round staff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory worker</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage forecourt attendant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Violence to Staff: A report by USDAW*
Discussion points

- Comment on the above figures in general.
- Compare security staff with shop assistants.
- Compare HGV drivers with factory workers.
- Discuss the situation in your own country/occupation.
- Could you suggest other ways of presenting these figures?

A dangerous occupation?
WRITING EMAILS

Discussion points.

- How do you normally communicate (a) within your own organisation; (b) with other organisations and to what extent do you use fax, email, letters and memos.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of these different means of communication?
- An email message is usually short. It needs to be clear and accurate. It usually contains essential information, for example, requesting information or confirming a meeting. The style will vary depending on the relationship between those involved. In more formal emails the names will usually be followed by the title of the job or position of the person concerned.

1. Read and reply to the following two messages

A

From: Mary
Sent: Tuesday 23 February 2006 9:33
To: Terry
Subject: Accident Stats
Importance: High

Hi Terry

Please let me have your monthly accident statistics as soon as possible. I need them for the meeting next Friday.

See you

Mary
Health and Safety

From: Louise Lewis
Sent: Tuesday 23 February 2006 9:33
To: John Morgan, T&G, Branch Sec
Copy: Terry Dunne, H&S Rep
Subject: Health and Safety Inspection

Dear John

This is to inform you that there will be a Health and Safety inspection conducted by our Health and Safety Officer Gillian Laidler on Thursday 29 March. Terry Dunne has been invited but if you would also like to attend please let me know as soon as possible. An extract from the report of the last inspection is attached for reference.

Best wishes

Louise Lewis
HR Manager

Attachment

SAFETY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Measurement of Safety Performance

Noted

That the accident rate was generally falling.

A key recommendation was that departments should organise local safety committees to progress Health and Safety matters, supported with help and advice from the Health and Safety Office. Two general areas need to be dressed:

Training

Departmental Health and Safety training requirements need to be identified and implemented.

Safety Policies

Documentation in this area is poor generally. However, to improve matters the Health and Safety Office was not willing to offer guidance and assistance.
PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF VDU POLICY

Considered
A progress report on VDU policy implementation and a letter from the HSE regarding VDU policy for staff working at home on computers.

Noted
That the letter from the HSE states that an employer is not responsible for IT equipment purchased and held personally at employees homes.

Action
J. Barber to write a letter to all employees

2. You hear that an English colleague, Paul Rooney, has been injured in an accident at work
   a. Write an email to him expressing your concern and best wishes
   b. Write an email to your colleagues at his workplace to enquire about the nature of the accident and the injuries sustained.
## Working with language 4

### PHRASAL VERBS - *get*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>get through</th>
<th>= 1. finish</th>
<th>He worked hard and <strong>got through</strong> a lot of reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 2. make contact</td>
<td>The line was busy and she couldn’t <strong>get through</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| get by      | = survive, manage | Although he had only studied English for 2 years he **got by** very well at the meeting. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>get over</th>
<th>= 1. recover</th>
<th>They failed to <strong>get over</strong> the accident.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 2. communicate</td>
<td>It was important to <strong>get</strong> the message <strong>over</strong> to the members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| get across  | = communicate (*like 2 above*) | It is important to **get** the safety regulations **across** to the members. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>get on</th>
<th>= 1. progress</th>
<th>Because of their training they are <strong>getting on</strong> very well.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 2. have a good relationship</td>
<td>The two unions <strong>get on</strong> well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>get at</th>
<th>= 1. mean</th>
<th>I’m not sure what you are <strong>getting at</strong>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 2. reach</td>
<td>We were unable to <strong>get at</strong> the trapped men.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| get out     | = produce | She promised to **get** the report **out** as soon as possible. |

| get off     | = escape | The company **got off** with a small fine after the accident. |

---

*Fill the gaps in the following sentences with an appropriate form of get.*

1. The union was anxious to ___________ the statistics ______ to the members.

2. The two union reps were able to ___________ well with each other.

3. However, they decided it was important to ___________ the agenda by 12 o’clock.
4. She wanted to __________ the newsletter ____ as soon as possible.

5. He certainly knows sufficient to be able to __________ in London.

6. There was so much to discuss they never thought they would be able to __________ it all.

7. Time and time again they failed to __________ the policy _____ to the general membership.

8. I tried to __________ to you this morning on the phone.

9. Although he had made a serious mistake, he __________ with a warning from his line manager.

10. Please can you explain it again as I don’t understand what you __________.
INTERVIEW WITH A SAFETY REP

1. Listen to this interview with Dennis about his experiences and opinions as a safety rep and then answer the questions below:
   Source: Hazards questionnaire, based on interview with Dennis Mac, Amicus union.

1. What work sector is Dennis involved in?

2. Why does he think that Health and Safety law is important?

3. What did his H & S training give Dennis?

4. How much time each week does he spend working as a safety rep?

5. What has he set up for other reps?

6. List four of the main hazards at his firm:
   a) _____________
   b) _____________
   c) _____________
   d) _____________

7. According to Dennis:
   a) how important is a safety rep in a firm?
   b) why?

8. How did Dennis, as a rep, help a fellow worker?

9. Is he popular with management?

10. What is his advice to other reps?
2. Complete the following sentences or phrases (… before or after the words in the exercise means that this section is only an extract from a sentence). You will hear all the words needed in the text:

1. I’ve always been keen on workers’ _________ and putting an end to ____________

2. … ‘Working _________’ and ‘Managing _________’ courses …

3. … working at _________ and _________ spaces

4. Apart from _________, no one can have more _________ than a safety rep.

5. … seeing him through a successful _________ claim.

6. Without the _________ that training and knowledge can give you, you’ve got one hand tied _________ your _________.

3. Read the comments on the following page by other safety reps from different jobs and unions about their experience.
   (Source: Hazards website)
   a. Identify which reps refer to the issues below
   b. Make a list of which of these apply to your workplace
   c. With a partner, discuss and compare your workplace issues

- training
- work problems
- main work hazards
- asbestos
- bullying
- accidents
- workers’ rights
Comments from SAFETY REPS:

Sue Quinlan, PCS
"Don't let the bastards get you down!"

Ron Jackson, Community
"Most safety reps are better trained and know more about health and safety than workplace managers and supervisors."

Dennis Mac, Amicus
"A rep can change things for the better, where people would otherwise just put up with things."

Elizabeth Corbett, GMB
"Training and information is the key to success on all health and safety issues."

Nicki Kennet, NAPO
"The Hazards Conference is also an excellent way of keeping up to date."

Gilly Marqgrave, UNISON
"I was originally a steward but quickly realised that the vast majority of problems in the workplace have a health and safety angle."

Jeanette Devereaux, USDAW
"I could see lots of problems in the workplace so I put myself forward and was elected."

Doru Athinodoru, GMB
"There is no statutory law to protect workers from bullying at work and I believe the trade union movement can play a major role to rectify this."

Graeme Slater, Amicus
"While working for British Coal I saw a man trapped and killed by a Dosco cutting wheel."

Jean Chaplow, GMB
"None of our families would ever realise how much asbestos we have around us as cooks."

Teresa Mackay, TGWU
"Agriculture is one of the most dangerous industries... trade union Roving Safety Reps could turn this situation around."

Derek Townsend, CWU
"If you believe you can help, go for it!"

Kim Brookes, UNISON
"I wanted to do something because I saw many things were wrong."

Anthony Hitchins, TGWU
"Major hazards at work are: Stress associated with shiftwork, production schedules constantly changing, RSI."

Shaun Badmin, PCS
"Safety reps prevent accidents and injuries at work and that's a proven fact."

Sarah Page, Prospect
"We all have a right to a safe and healthy working environment. Health and safety reps can formally assert that right on behalf of their colleagues and check their boss's compliance."

Pat Dowling, UCATT
"I get enormous satisfaction knowing people are going home safely to their families."
The human body

The diagram below shows some parts of the body that are frequently damaged in accidents.

Label the diagram with everyday terms or anatomical terms as appropriate and compare your answers with your partner.
Check the meaning of the following terms in your dictionary and make sentences to show their meaning:

- prognosis
- artery
- skin
- symptoms
- muscle
- thrombosis
- diagnosis
- nerve
- x-ray

Example:

**Prognosis:** forecast or prediction:

As a result of the doctor’s **prognosis**, the patient knew it would be several months before she could return to work.

Relate each of these aspects of the body with one of the hospital departments in list 1-10

a. ears  

b. bones  
c. heart

d. skin  
e. eyes  
f. kidney and bladder

g. mouth and teeth  
h. brain and nerves  
i. stomach and intestines

j. blood

Example: a. ears = 5 Audiology

1. Neurology
2. Dermatology
3. Urology
4. Ophthalmology
5. Audiology
6. Gastro-enterology
7. Cardiology
8. Haematology
9. Orthopaedic
10. Orthodontic
STUDY BOX

There are many common expressions in English that use parts of the body.

Study the following examples. Are there similar expressions in your own language?

- The new rep’s got her head screwed on (she is very clever)
- I’m keeping my nose clean (I’m not getting involved in this problem)
- We’re trying to keep our chins up (we’re trying to keep cheerful)
- I’ll have to put my shoulder to the wheel (I’ll have to work very hard)
- He’s a difficult person but his heart is in the right place (he has good intentions)
- Now’s the time to put your best foot forward (to do your best; to hurry)
- I put my foot in it yesterday (I made a social mistake - I said the wrong thing)
- Are you pulling my leg? (are you joking with me?)
BULLYING AT WORK: A Survival Guide
(Source: BBC2, 6 March 2003)

In this video you will hear the experiences of three victims of bullying at work and also advice from them and from psychologists on how to deal with it. There are some quotations below from the video. These introduce new points in the theme.

1. Watch the video right through, then watch it again and answer the questions below. There is some useful vocabulary listed on the right-hand side.

a. What is Statistic 1? (all statistics are on an orange background)

“Going to work can be a pain but is it a nightmare? Is there someone at work who makes you feel physically sick. Perhaps you're being bullied”

b. What is Statistic 2?

“WHO is bullying? HOW are they doing it?”

c. Complete the three verbs:

Professor Cary Cooper says that the bully is a boss who

d _________

u _________

and psychologically d___________ the individual threatened

(UMIST = University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology)
“WHAT does the bully do? WHY does he do it?”

d. Neil Crawford, psychologist, describes two elements in the bully. Describe them:
   i) ______________________
   ii) ______________________

e. What is Statistic 3?

“Symptoms of stress: bingeing on chocs, fags, booze”

f. How can a doctor help?


g. What is said about:
   a) helping oneself?
   b) rights?
   c) assertiveness training?

h. What help against bullying do companies or unions provide?

i. If no help is available, what should the individual try to do?

j. What are the three options?
   a)
   b)
   c)

“DON'T GIVE UP - TAKE CONTROL!”
2. You have heard three people describing their experiences of being bullied at work, how they suffered and how they coped with it.

*Now divide into three groups with each group focusing on one of these individuals:*

- Anna Bradshaw
- Frank Brook
- Anne Thomson

*And build up a picture of each one about:*

  a) his/her former job
  b) how each was bullied
  c) family involvement
  d) how each succeeded in coping
  e) what advice they give to others who are being bullied

*Then report back to the other groups.*

3. When you listen to this video, you will hear several speakers of English with different accents in English.

*Working with a partner, discuss the following points:*

  a. Can you identify these different accents?
  b. In your own countries, are there different accents? What do these accents indicate?
  c. Have there been cases of bullying in your workplaces? How were they dealt with?

4. *Complete the sentences below (from the video text). Fill in the blanks using the appropriate word from the list.*

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crazy</td>
<td>chicken</td>
<td>psychological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>rules</td>
<td>geared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destroying</td>
<td>pants</td>
<td>organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>threatened</td>
<td>cabinet</td>
<td>complain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>battlefield</td>
<td>bottle</td>
<td>litigation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.
bullying is ___________ the individual. The bully wants him out or feels ___________ by him.

2. If work seems like a ___________, if you worry about being ambushed around every filing ___________ then you’re probably being bullied. It starts by driving you ___________.

3. It’s better to keep talking (to family or friends about the bullying) and bore the ___________ off everyone than ___________ it up.

4. Are you always the one to play ___________? It’s time to turn the tables. Start setting your own ___________.

5. 90% of companies and unions are not ___________ up to deal with bullying but the more you ___________ the better they’ll have to get.

6. If their ___________ hasn’t done anything about it, then it’s important for the individual to gain ___________, to see off this damaging human being. It’s extremely important to go to ___________.

Working with video 2
WORK-RELATED STRESS

You have a document on work-related stress in the EU with two charts:

> **Figure 1** focussing on Risks

and

> **Figure 2** on Relevant outcomes,

comparing the situation in 1990 (for some aspects in Figure 2) 1995 and 2000

1. **Using Comparisons**: some of the basic words of comparison are listed below:
   
   - the same as
   - more than
   - as much *(uncountable)* as
   - less *(uncountable)* than
   - as many *(countable)* as
   - fewer *(countable)* than

   *Complete each of the sentences below by using one of the expressions above and information from the charts (NB: there may be more than one expression possible):*

   **Example**: 
   Work caused _______ back complaints ____________ 1995 / 2000
   Work caused fewer back complaints in 1995 than in 2000

   1. Workers had _______ control over the order of tasks _______ 1990 / 1995
   2. _______ people had tight deadlines _______ 1990 / 2000
   3. There were _______ monotonous tasks _______ 1995 / 2000
   4. _______ workers were absent for 75 days per year (or more) _______ 2000 / 1995
   5. There was _______ work assistance available _______ 1995 / 2000
WORK-RELATED STRESS in the EU

Figure 1 Risks for work-related stress. Indicative figures of these risk factors, as identified in a survey, are presented in Figure 1. This graph features only those countries that were in the EU for the entire period (1990-2000).

Figure 2 Relevant outcomes regarding work-stress risks shows outcomes that may be relevant to risks for work-related stress. In general, a rise in work-related complaints can be seen over the period 1995-2000.

Source: European working conditions surveys 2005 pp 5 - 6, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
2. **REPORT WRITING**

You have been asked to write a brief note-style report on the themes below, based on the relevant areas of the bar charts (Figures 1 & 2 page 56). This report is for circulation and, later, discussion at the health and safety meeting tomorrow.

The aspects you need to focus on, for comparison under the heading of work-related stress, are:

**1995 and 2000 :**

a) Risks :
   i) deadlines at work
   ii) monotonous tasks

b) Outcomes :
   i) fatigue
   ii) stress
   iii) arm and leg complaints

What is your conclusion based on these comparisons?
The current working environment

Prepare the answers to the following questions and then compare your answers with a partner

- How many hours a day do you work?
- How many days a week do you work?
- How many days holiday do you have?
- How do you relax?
- Do you do any form of exercise?

Read and discuss the following text and then discuss the questions below

Is the working environment more stressful nowadays?

We live in a rapidly changing working environment with constant threats of transfers of production, out-sourcing and potential job losses. New technologies, rapid communication systems, the personal computer, the mobile telephone have all helped to make work more immediate and the workforce more accessible to pressure from their employers. In some cases there is an increasing “culture of work” where there is an expectation that employees will work longer hours to show that they are dedicated to the cause and to get promotion. On the other hand this may be the only way to safeguard one’s job!

Excessive stress brings problems for both employees and employers. The impact on health can be severe. Stress has been linked to both heart disease and diabetes. Deterioration in the work-life balance can impose serious strains on family and social relationships.

Employers may notice an increase in sickness levels, a rise in absenteeism, careless and negligent observation of health and safety standards and errors in the production process. In other words threats to their competitiveness!

How does this text relate to your personal experiences?

1. Make a list of:
   a. the risks for work-related stress in your own workplaces
   b. what their outcomes / results are / have been

2. Discuss what steps your firm / plant takes to solve these problems

3. Discuss what measures, if any, you take to make your work less stressful.
CARRYING OUT AN INSPECTION

Safety representatives have to identify Health and Safety problems in the workplace on a regular basis. It is common practice to have a checklist, like the one below (adapted from Hazards at Work, TUC) to assist in the identification of problems. However, this example is not intended to fit all circumstances and safety reps will develop checklists in accordance with their own requirements.

**Inspection Checklist**

**Housekeeping**
1. Are all work areas kept clean and tidy?
2. Are accumulations of dirt and refuse removed at least once daily from floors?

**Overcrowding**
3. Is there a risk of injury from overcrowding or poor workplace layout?

**Temperature**
4. Is the temperature reasonable?

**Lighting**
5. Is the lighting sufficient and suitable?

**Sanitary accommodation**
6. Are there sufficient and suitable sanitary conveniences?

**Guarding of dangerous machinery**
7. Are dangerous parts of machines securely fenced?

**Training and supervision**
8. Do all workers receive sufficient training in their jobs, especially where machinery is involved?
9. Are all young workers properly supervised?

**Noise**
10. Are there problems with noise?
Health and Safety

Safety of floors, stairs etc
Are all floors, steps, stairs, passages and gangways:
11. free from obstruction?
12. free from slippery substances?

Fire
13. Has the alarm been tested in the last three months?
14. Are all the fire exits properly maintained and free from obstruction?
15. Are all flammable materials properly stored?

Welfare
Are there suitable:
16. washing facilities?
17. seating facilities?
18. canteen facilities?

First aid
19. Are there adequate first-aid facilities?

Dust, fumes and substances hazardous to health
20. Are workers protected against exposure to dust and fumes and substances hazardous to health?

Recording of incidents
21. Are all accidents, dangerous occurrences, near misses and cases of occupational disease specified and recorded?

1 Discuss this checklist. Would it be appropriate for an inspection of your workplace? Would you need to add or delete any sections? For example, add a section on lifting weights.

2 Working in pairs carry out an inspection of an area of your own workplace, or one agreed with your trainer, using the above checklist with any additions or deletions appropriate to your circumstances.

3 Compare the findings of your inspection with another pair and pick one or two common problems which seem particularly important. Ask each other questions about these (eg how, why, when, where, what).

4 Prepare a report to management expressing your concern about these problems and requesting a meeting to discuss them. You may wish to use some of the expressions of concern noted below. Role play a meeting with management to discuss your findings.
Study Box

Expressions of concern

We regret to have to point out that . . . .
It is with regret that we . . . .
Regrettably we have noticed that . . . .
Unfortunately it has come to our notice that . . . .
It has been brought to our attention that . . . .
We are anxious to inform you . . . .
It is a cause of great concern to us that . . . .
We are very concerned about . . . .
Looking Back

Now you have finished this unit you should:

➢ be able to describe the role of a Health and Safety representative.
➢ be able to compare and contrast working conditions in different workplaces.
➢ be able to discuss the broader significance of health and safety.
➢ be able to write a letter and an email.
➢ be able to deal with simple telephone calls.
➢ be able to report back on discussions.