

Choose Safety Programme: Guidance for Teachers and Education Institutions (2026/2027 Academic Year)



Please review the information below to help you access materials and understand the support available to you for the Choose Safety Programme during the 2026/2027 academic year.

Introduction and Programme Support 2026/2027

Education plays a vital role in shaping a culture of safety in the workplace. The **Choose Safety** Programme, which introduces the principles of workplace safety and health to students in Post-Primary, Further Education and Training, and Adult Education, continues to be a key initiative for the Health and Safety Authority (HSA).

For all enquires related to the Programme (including registration, ordering books and obtaining student certificates), please contact the HSA at contactus@hsa.ie. For data protection queries, please contact dpo@hsa.ie.

Please note: the HSA will **not be providing technical support for Digital Badges during the 2026/2027 school year**. This includes assistance with **new registrations** and **technical troubleshooting**. Schools that **already have an active Digital Badges account** may continue to award badges as normal. More information on Digital Badges, is provided below.

About the Choose Safety Programme

The Choose Safety Programme is a free programme available to post-primary schools, colleges of Further Education and Training (FET) and Adult Education colleges. It introduces Senior Cycle students and students in FET and Adult Education to the principles of workplace safety and health.

The Programme provides material for more than 20 hours of tuition. The lessons may be expanded or condensed to suit the timetable arrangements in schools and the ability range of students. It is particularly suitable for those students who will engage in work experience during the school year.

The HSA provides a school pack to each participating school/education institution. The school pack consists of a [student workbook](#), and a [teacher text](#). The pack is also available as Gaeilge [do mhic léinn](#), agus [do mhúinteoirí](#).

Soft copies are available free of charge for download by education institutions and non-education bodies.

Hard copies of the student and teacher texts are provided free of charge to education institutions who have registered for the programme. To register for the programme and order **hard copies** of the student and teacher texts, please contact our Contact Centre at contactus@hsa.ie.

Programme Design

The Programme is designed around six Units. Each Unit contains enough material and teaching suggestions to cover five or more class periods. Teachers may dip into the text and engage in those topics and student activities that best suits the level of knowledge of the students.

- **Unit 1** focuses on general health and safety in the workplace for young workers, key responsibilities, employment rights, and induction.
- **Unit 2** introduces the concept of hazard and risk and the process of risk assessment. The Unit also focuses on manual handling and ergonomics, slips, trips and falls, and fire safety.
- **Unit 3** considers effective controls within the context of the management of working at height, workplace transport safety, and chemicals. It also looks at two key work sectors - farming and hospitality.
- **Unit 4** addresses the specific roles of a safety officer and safety representative and the work environment. It also covers workplace health and well-being.
- **Units 5 and 6** challenge the student to reflect and discuss how the principles of health and safety can be applied to real-life work practices. It also focuses on accident prevention and introduces the examination of case studies. This Unit revisits the issues raised earlier in the course.

The Units are usually delivered to Senior Cycle students including Transition Year, LCA, LCVP, as well as PLC and other courses in Further Education and Training (FET).

Programme Registration and Books

All participating education institutions are required to register for the Choose Safety Programme.

Post Primary Schools and Further Education and Training (FET) institutions can register for Choose Safety by contacting the HSA at contactus@hsa.ie. Please note that the individual registering for the education institution should be a teacher or tutor within the institution who is responsible for implementing the Programme. Upon successful registration, educational establishments will have the option to download the teacher and student textbooks in PDF format. This ensures that the Programme materials are readily available for use. Pending requirements, education institutions can also order hard copies of the student and teacher texts.

Student Certificates

Each student who has successfully completed the Choose Safety Programme can receive a **Certificate of Completion** in recognition of his/her increased understanding of health and safety at work. Certificates are available for completing one or more units of the Programme or for full completion of the Programme. The teacher can judge whether the student has engaged adequately to deserve accreditation. For most, a **Certificate of Completion** can be reasonably awarded. Students meriting a **Certificate of Distinction** must show advanced understanding of the issues raised. They will have completed almost all the activities, including each of the "short projects" and at least one of the major assignments in Unit 6.

Certificates are available in either English or Irish. Certificates are issued digitally by the teacher. The certificate features an image of the HSA CEO signature. The teacher completes the student and educational institution details on the certificate.

To obtain certificates for your student, please contact the HSA at contactus@hsa.ie. Please note that the individual requesting the certificates should be a teacher or tutor within the institution who is responsible for implementing the Programme.

Digital Badges

Students can earn Digital Badges for completion of HSA Choose Safety Programme Units that are delivered in participating schools and through Further Education.

A Digital Badge is an online symbol or indicator of an accomplishment, skill, competency or interest. Badges can be used to represent achievements, communicate successes and set goals. Digital Badges can complement the certificates that students get for completing the entire Programme because a badge is awarded for each unit of the programme. This may suit teachers who teach individual units of the course.

The Digital Badges are awarded by teachers upon completion of individual Units of the Programme or the full Choose Safety Programme, using the students' email addresses, with their consent. Students need to have their own email address to be issued Digital Badges. Badges are issued from the HSA's Digital Badge Platform: <https://badges.hslearning.ie>

Students will be sent a notification of the award via email. Students can collect their badges in a secure online backpack. Badges can be shared with family and friends, teachers and potential employers by displaying them on the student's online CV and on social networking sites.



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GDPR

The HSA is committed to protecting your personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The purpose of collecting registration data is to ensure educational and non-educational organisations receive necessary resources while tracking programme use and reach. For education users, details like school roll numbers, names, sectors, and contact information verify eligibility, streamline communication, and aid administration. For non-education users, data on organisation type, material use, and participant numbers helps tailor resources and monitor impact. Contact details enable support, and location data assesses regional participation and ensures equitable access aligned with programme goals.

All data is stored securely in accordance with GDPR requirements. We use appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access, disclosure, or alteration. Data is retained only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it was collected or as required by law. Registration data is not shared with any third parties. If you have any questions or wish to exercise your rights under GDPR, please contact dpo@hsa.ie.