

Managing Substance Abuse in the Workplace

Based on SAQA's Unit Standard 244581, NQF Level 3, 2 Credits

Introduction

It's vital that management understand the magnitude of substance abuse in the workplace and know how to identify impaired or under-the-influence employees. Employers must be able to effectively manage potential incidents before they occur. Drug and alcohol abuse impacts safety, productivity and the cost of doing business.

Workplace substance abuse is a sensitive and very costly problem facing employers of every size and industry.

The awareness that the abuse of substances may affect the workplace just as the workplace may affect substance abuse is, however, increasing in acceptance. Many aspects of the workplace today require alertness, and accurate and quick reflexes. An impairment to these qualities can cause serious accidents, and interfere with the accuracy and efficiency of work. This course is ideal for anyone interested in issues such as how substance abuse problems may affect the workplace, possible costs to a business, and how a business can address such issues.

Course Objectives

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of substance abuse and addiction
- Understand the implications and consequences of substance abuse and addiction for the individual and the organisation
- Learn how to deal with intoxicated and addicted employees

Course Outline

Recognise the signs and symptoms of substance abuse and addiction

- The concepts of substance abuse and addiction are explained with examples
- Clusters of symptoms that indicate possible substance abuse are identified
- Patterns of behaviour in the workplace that indicate dependency are identified
- Stages in the dependency process are outlined with examples
- The dangers of managers making an unqualified clinical diagnosis are explained with examples

Describe the implications and consequences of substance abuse and addiction for the individual and the organisation

- The impact of substance abuse on an individual as well as co-workers is explained
- The relationship between substance abuse and work performance is explained with reference to agreed performance standards as well as its impact on productivity, cost, risks, safety and legal implications

Explain the manager's role in dealing with intoxicated and addicted employees

- Dealing with intoxication at work with reference to an organisation's policies and legal practice
- The manager's role in intervening in the situation
- Situations where it would be necessary to refer an employee for assistance are identified and an indication is given of available professional support structures
- Issues of confidentiality, discrimination and professional and ethical conduct are discussed
- The recovery process is explained