

Personal Safety & Wearing Name Badges

Use of name badges can increase an individual's personal safety risk. A risk assessment should be carried out to determine whether wearing name badges poses an unacceptable personal safety risk. If it is considered to pose such a risk, an employer cannot insist that staff wear name badges.

Customers and clients have been known to use the information on name badges to harass staff. Wearing badges can therefore lead to staff feeling vulnerable and stressed.

Staff should be consulted about the use of name badges and should decide on a policy they feel suitable. It is safer to use only first names on the badges, or you may decide to use a title and surname. Staff should be able to use an assumed name if they prefer, or they may decide they prefer to use their own first name but an assumed surname. Different staff members may make differing decisions about their own name badge.

Staff may decide that a "no name" or "no surname" policy is safest, in which case names or surnames should not be given out. It must be explained to clients that this is the organisation's policy if they request the surname of a staff member.

Rather than wearing name badges, staff could wear badges which indicate their position and department, and a code could be determined if needed to differentiate between different staff members - e.g. one staff member could wear a red triangle on their badge, whilst another wears a blue dot. "Checkout No. 3 Operator" or similar could be used if necessary.

Name badges should always be removed before leaving your place of work / conference venue / wherever it is that you have been given a name badge to wear. Individuals could be at risk if someone reads their name badge and pretends to know them.

Under the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act, employers are obliged to exercise a reasonable duty of care with respect to the safety of their employees. Whilst clients may find it helpful to have full names of staff printed on name badges, this should not be done if staff feel this is done at the expense of risk to their own safety.