

Tattooing, acupuncture, semi-permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis

People wishing to carry out tattooing, acupuncture, semi-permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing or electrolysis are required to register both themselves and the premises used for that purpose with their local authority under the Local Government (Misc Provisions) Act 1982.

Should you wish to operate from more than one premises, you will need to register each premises. There are no powers to refuse registration, but the practice is controlled through compliance with byelaws.

For more information on how to register or to register please click [here](#).

It is an offence to conduct tattooing, semi-permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing or electrolysis unless the registration has been formally approved. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, you have a general duty of care to persons not in your employment. You must, therefore, ensure that the procedures, equipment and facilities used are safe, hygienic and prevent the spread of infection.

Unregistered operatives

An unregistered person found operating illegally either from their own homes, an unregistered premises or a registered premises face a fine of up to £1,000 from the courts.

People who are aware of unregistered people working illegally should contact the health and safety team as there is no guarantee that they are complying with the byelaws.

Risks associated with buying equipment online

Even though tattoos etc. have become very popular in recent years, it is vital people do not put themselves at risk by ensuring that they use a registered operative at a registered premises. The ease of purchasing equipment online by the public means there could be an increased risk of [hepatitis](#), [septicaemia](#) and [HIV](#). Untrained people may not take the necessary precautions when using the equipment and this could lead to the wound/s becoming infected.

Under 18s

The Tattooing of Minors Act (1969) prohibits the permanent tattooing of anyone in Great Britain under the age of 18 years. Operatives should ask for proof of age before tattooing a client. If you have a complaint about under age tattooing you should contact your local police station.

Information for teachers

Please click [here](#) for an information leaflet for teachers on illegal tattooing and under age tattooing.

Hairdresser registration

Do I need to register?

You do not need to register to run a hairdressing business. However, you should inform the council that you intend to set up a business. You must comply with health and safety law.

If your hairdressing business offers treatments such as electrolysis, acupuncture, cosmetic piercing, semi-permanent skin colouring or tattooing, you will be required to register for these. Click [here](#) for more information.

Where can I find more information?

For information on health and safety in hairdressers please click [here](#) to go to the HSE website. The website has information on dermatitis, use of gloves and risk assessments which includes an example risk assessment for hairdressers.