Protective security awareness for front-line venue staff

A protective-security briefing should give venue staff a practical way to report observations and follow the site emergency arrangements. Show the contact route and the location terms used by control. Explain the difference between reporting something unusual and making an accusation about a person. Keep the focus on behaviour, objects and circumstances that can be described factually.

UK general awareness linked to official ProtectUK resources. Site preparedness and statutory compliance require the venue's own arrangements.

The practical principles

Observe and report responsibly

Know the venue's security contact, emergency reporting route and procedures for unusual items or behaviour. Report specific observations and context, such as an item deliberately concealed in an unusual location. Focus on actions and circumstances rather than a person's appearance or background. Keep a safe distance from an item of concern and leave investigation to the authorised security or police response.

Follow emergency guidance

For a firearms or weapons attack, official advice is Run Hide Tell: escape if there is a safe route; if escape is unsafe, hide and protect yourself; call police on 999 when safe. Follow current official guidance and police instructions. Avoid going closer to film or retrieve belongings. The venue's plans may include evacuation, invacuation or lockdown for different incidents, so learn the local instructions in advance.

Prepare through the venue plan

Find the emergency action cards and take part in relevant briefings. Know how warnings reach staff and visitors, including those who need assistance. ProtectUK offers official learning resources; use them directly under their terms. This awareness course makes no ACT endorsement or statutory-compliance claim. The venue's responsible person must keep procedures aligned with current guidance, applicable duties and implementation dates.

Work through a shift scenario

Fictional exercise: a staff member notices an unattended item in an unusual place and cannot establish an innocent explanation through the venue procedure. They report promptly and follow the instructions for keeping people safe. They should not touch, move or inspect a suspicious item themselves. If there is an immediate emergency, use the emergency route and follow official police guidance.

Avoid the common failure

A generic awareness course cannot establish whether a premises meets statutory duties. The responsible person should use current official guidance for scope and implementation. Staff can still learn the site reporting and emergency arrangements now. This material makes no ACT endorsement or compliance-certification claim, and does not teach surveillance, searching or confrontation.

A second situation to discuss

Fictional scenario: You notice a bag deliberately hidden behind a barrier near an entrance, with no owner apparent.

Keep clear and report the precise location and observations through the security procedure. Follow instructions about keeping others away and contacting police. Leave searching or moving the item to the authorised response.

Use a working record

Record the specific arrangements below before the briefing. Keep the wording short enough for a colleague to use during the shift. Where a field does not apply, explain why; where information is missing, assign a person to resolve it. Store personal or sensitive details in the business's approved system.

- Location/time
- factual observation
- reporting contact
- emergency instructions
- staff role
- exercise feedback
- review owner

At the next handover, ask what changed, which action remains open and who now owns it. Close the record only when the agreed follow-up is complete. A recurring problem should inform the next briefing and the relevant operational procedure.

Check understanding

Reports should focus on:

Specific behaviour and circumstances Objective observations avoid profiling and improve usefulness.

A suspicious item should be:

Left alone and reported from a safe position Investigation belongs to the authorised response.

A contractor asks to bypass the delivery entrance during a rush

Someone wearing branded workwear asks to bring equipment through a staff door. They know the event name but their arrival is absent from the expected-delivery list. How should the door team respond?

Compare your decision

Keep the access point controlled and follow the venue's verification procedure. Contact the responsible organiser through a trusted channel. Avoid granting access solely on appearance, urgency or familiarity with the event. Escalate suspicious behaviour under the local plan.

Rehearse a neutral response: "Please wait here while I confirm the job with event control." Record who verified the visit and the approved access route.

Sources and scope

- Source: https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/run-hide-tell
- Source: https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/risk/unattended-and-suspicious-items

- Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-terrorism-protection-of-premises-act-2025/terrorism-protection-of-premises-act-2025-statutory-guidance

Original workplace examples and suggested record. Prepared 19 October 2026. Use the current linked guidance and the venue's procedures for operational decisions.

Use this on shift

Resource page and fillable working record · Read the online guide · Course details