businesscompanion
trading standards law explained

Pricing and payment

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Before you start, make sure you choose your location by using the drop-down list at the top of the page and then clicking on the arrow.

For more detailed information, please see the In-depth Guides below. Some laws are different in England, Scotland and Wales, and some are enforced differently, so the In-depth Guides provide country-specific information.

Once you've finished, make sure you look at the full range of Quick Guides to see whether there are any other areas of law that affect your business.

If you provide goods to consumers, you have a responsibility to make sure they are aware of the price of buying from you.

The law sets out general requirements not to mislead your customers on price. There are also specific rules on payment surcharges.

Your obligations to consumers

The law on price marking states that where goods are offered for sale to consumers, they must have their price clearly indicated. The pricing information must be clearly legible, unambiguous, easily identifiable and inclusive of VAT and any other taxes.

This information should be clearly visible to your customers without them having to ask for it.

Pricing information is required in both the retail shop environment and when selling by distance

> means - online, for example.

Unit pricing

Unit pricing is designed to allow your customers to compare products by reference to weight or volume. For example, two packets of breakfast cereal of differing weights will have a price per kilogram, as well as a total price shown.

Unit pricing is required by law for products that are either:

- Sold loose from bulk - for example, fruit and vegetables
  or
- Required by weights and measures legislation to be marked with an indication of quantity or sold in a prescribed quantity

Note that small shops with a retail area of less than 280 m^2 do not have to display the unit price.

General requirements in relation to pricing

The law prohibits businesses from misleading their customers - for example, displaying goods at a lower price than actually charged, or showing a sale price when the higher price was never charged. The law also prohibits a trader from omitting or hiding information that a consumer would need to make a decision on whether to purchase goods. An example of this would be failing to inform a customer of a compulsory additional charge.

Paying with a card

By law, you are not allowed to make a charge for consumers paying for goods and services using a personal debit or credit card.

Credit-related purchases

Anyone who offers credit to consumers must be authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority.

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