

Guidance Note	Date of Issue: Dec 17
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Guidance Notes for Inspecting Medium and High Hazard Areas

The guidance notes below are to be used as a prompt when undertaking the 3 monthly inspections of medium hazard schools/departments. Please be aware that the notes are not exhaustive and these are not the only factors that should be considered.

Slips/trips

- Are there obvious slip or trip hazards? Consider uneven surfaces, trailing cables, edges of floor coverings, removal of waste products and water introduced from outside
- If personal belongings are present, are they tidied away – do they have to be in the work area?
- Do cleaning activities introduce a hazard?
- Are there understood processes and/or materials for managing spills?
- If there is a history of slipping accidents despite precautions, consider suitability of floor surfaces or footwear controls

Fire Hazards – Ignition Sources

- Are potential ignition sources identified and adequately controlled – heat sources and electrical equipment inspected and maintained?
- Is the use of extension sockets and loading of electrical sockets minimised to prevent electrical fire?
- Is the area secure to prevent out of hours and unauthorised access?
- Is smoking limited to more than 15 metres from the building?

Fire Hazards – Combustible / Flammable Materials

- Are waste products regularly removed?
- Are combustible materials separated from ignition sources, i.e. electrical distribution boards and heating systems?
- Is storage of combustible materials avoided in protected stairwells or corridors?
- Are flammable materials appropriately stored in accordance with [university guidance](#)?

Fire Hazards – Escape Routes

- Are staff, students and visitors aware of procedures to adopt in event of discovering a fire, or upon hearing the alarm?
- Are escape routes to the final exits clear of obstacles?
- Are fire extinguishers in their correct location, unobstructed, within their certificate date and not being used as door stops?

Chemical hazards

- The presence of chemicals may require control under the COSHH or DSEAR Regulations. Remember that not only the main substance, but all intermediate and end products will need to be assessed
- Specific Regulations apply to work with Genetically Modified Organisms, Lead and Asbestos. Contact OHES for further advice
- In very straightforward usage scenarios, the supplier's Safety Data Sheet (SDS) may provide a sufficient assessment of risk. To account for changes in the supplier's information or exposure limits, is the latest version of the Safety Data Sheet available?
- In more complex scenarios, does the COSHH/DSEAR assessment considers the 8 principles of good practice to ensure exposure is adequately controlled?
- If control measures are recommended, are these in place, operated accordingly and inspected and maintained appropriately?

Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) Performance

- If control measures include LEV such as fume cabinets or ducted extraction, do users know how to check effective performance and is this noted or measured periodically in accordance with the risk?
- In addition, LEV must be thoroughly examined by the university's insurance engineer at least every 14 months. Is there a sticker to this effect?
- If respiratory protective equipment (RPE) is also required by the Safety Data Sheet / COSHH assessment, have (employed) wearers been face-fit-tested by the OHES department?

Powered Fixed Machinery

- Has machinery been assessed at the point of procurement against the [Procurement and Use of Work Equipment Procedure](#) and generic risk assessment?
- Is the manual and/or Safe System of Work for the equipment accessible to users?
- Further information can be sought from the OHES department

Portable Power and Hand Tools

- Powered portable tools are also defined as machinery. Have these been assessed at the point of procurement against the [Procurement and Use of Work Equipment Procedure](#) and generic risk assessment?
- Are all hand tools maintained in a good state of repair?
- Is the manual and/or Safe System of Work for the equipment accessible to users?
- Further information can be sought from the OHES department

Pressure systems

Is a planned inspection and maintenance programme, in accordance with the manufacturer's manual, in place?

- Consider:
 - Are operating conditions known, suitable protective devices fitted and do they work, i.e. safety valves?
 - Are operators suitably trained?
- Consider anything that may inadvertently become pressurised and how this is currently prevented
- Is the system greater than 250 bar/litres (requiring a scheme of examination via our insurers), and has it been referred to OHES?

Work/storage at height

- Is all work where there is a risk of falling liable to cause injury planned, organised and conducted by a competent person?
- If undertaken, consider the hierarchy of controls for working at height;
 - Avoid working at height if possible
 - Use work equipment/other measures to prevent falls
 - Where risk of falls cannot be eliminated use equipment/other measures to minimise distance and consequence of falls
- Are heavy items stored lower down and lighter / less used items kept higher up? Consider alternative storage, reducing access at height if possible
- Is there an adequate number of kick steps or step ladders and are these [regularly inspected](#) in accordance with RGU guidance?
- Scaffolds and other access systems have specific competency and inspection requirements. Contact OHES for guidance

Vehicle movements

- Are supervisors, drivers and others, including contractors and visiting drivers, aware of the [site rules](#) and their responsibilities to help maintain a safe workplace and environment?
- Are infringements reported to OHES?
- If relevant, does your area have access to the Estates Driving on Campus risk assessment?
- In areas where there are vehicle movements consider:
 - Is there segregation of vehicles and pedestrians, by physical means or marked areas?
 - How are reversing risks being managed?
 - Is lighting suitable and signage visible and comprehensive?
 - Are surfaces without defects?

Electricity

- Is portable equipment visually checked by staff and included within a scheme of portable appliance testing?
- Check for trailing cables, overloaded extension sockets, any obvious damage to cables or equipment or unauthorised and untested modifications
- If possible, use reduced voltage and/or fit a residual current device (RCD). Are suitable RCDs used where electrical equipment is part of

a wet process? Note that these may be on various points of the circuit. Ask OHES for advice

- If overloading of outlets and trailing cables are noted, are there sufficient electrical sockets provided? If more sockets are required, contact Estates & Property Services

Electromagnetic Fields

- Is there any equipment powered by means other than a three-pin plug (single phase) supply?
- Does the manufacturer's manual or project risk assessment indicate an electromagnetic field risk?
- Are there persons operating this equipment who have declared use of a medical implant or pregnancy?
- Contact OHES for further advice

Ionising Radiations

- Do any activities, equipment or substances produce electromagnetic waves of a wavelength of 100 nanometres or less (a frequency of 3×10^{15} hertz or more) capable of producing ions directly or indirectly?
- Contact OHES for further advice

Non-Ionising Radiations

- Are there significant sources of artificial optical radiation, ultra-violet light or infra-red radiation, e.g. welding and UV curing, and have these been risk assessed?
- Has the [Laser Safety Policy and Procedure](#) been applied to Class 3B or 4 lasers?
- Contact OHES for further advice

Manual Handling

- Prior to any manual handling activity being conducted the manual handling risk filter at the beginning of the risk assessment template should be considered to determine if a detailed manual handling risk assessment is required
- If hazardous manual handling is identified, have manual handling risk assessments been conducted?
- Note that any use of handling aids (manual or powered) will introduce other hazards and risks that will need to be assessed

Mechanical handling/lifting appliances

- Has machinery been assessed at the point of procurement against the [Procurement and Use of Work Equipment Procedure](#) and generic risk assessment?
- Lifting equipment and accessories (e.g. slings, blocks, hooks, etc.) are regulated by specific Regulations and require periodic thorough examination by the university's insurers

Noise

- Under The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, if work areas experience any of the following it is likely that investigations into the noise level will be required:

- Noise intrusive for most of the working day, do staff need to raise voices to conduct normal conversation when 2m apart?
- Are noisy power tools/machinery used for more than 30 minutes a day, are there noises due to impacts or explosive sources?
- If so, then a noise risk assessment will likely be required to;
 - Identify source of noise and persons likely to be affected
 - Contain reliable estimate of employees exposure
 - Identify controls and/or hearing protection required
 - Identify employees requiring health surveillance and whether any are at particular risk
- A noise risk assessment will require the assistance of the OHES department

Vibration

- Two types of vibration should be considered:
 - Hand arm vibration, from using power tools
 - Whole body vibration, transmitted via feet or vehicle seat
- For hand arm vibration, manufacturer's data on weighted acceleration will help to inform whether there is a risk
- If exposures are likely to be in excess of the exposure action value (2.5 m/s² A(8)) of The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005, a vibration risk assessment will require the assistance of the OHES department
- Control of vibration risk is normally achieved by limiting exposure time, but it may be necessary to consider alternative equipment

Environmental considerations

- Is the space, lighting, temperature and ventilation suitable for the activities?

Display Screen Equipment

- If Display Screen Equipment (DSE) is present and staff use this for an hour a day or more, each day, has a DSE assessment been conducted by each employee?
- A self- assessment is to be conducted in the first instance and if there are issues that need clarification, then the OHES department should be contacted

Lone working

- Is there lone working or out-of-hours activities?
- The need for lone working should be minimised. If lone working is necessary, either out with normal working hours or out with building opening hours then the Lone Working / Out-of-Hours Policy and Procedure must be adopted

First Aid and Box Contents

- A First Aid needs assessment is conducted on a building-by-building basis by OHES to establish the number of trained staff required. Any cases of low levels of First Aid trained personnel should be highlighted to OHES

- Are First Aid box contents checked on a monthly basis (using the [checklist](#)) and any expired or depleted items brought to the attention of the Senior Janitor?