

# *lechyd a Diogelwch – Health and Safety*



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STANDARD

## **CONTROL OF ASBESTOS**

This Policy Standard states University policy on the control and management of asbestos containing materials at the University. *It replaces the previous policy OHSU G20.*

This Policy Standard should be regarded as the benchmark standard for the control of asbestos at the University.

The Policy Standard states duties and responsibilities of the University and its Colleges, Departments, staff, students and contractors.

***The Standard applies to:***

- *Each College and Department*
- *Staff, Students, Visitors and Contractors*
- *Each building owned and leased by Bangor University*

***The Standard does not apply to:***

- *Buildings and rooms rented by the University\**

Date of Implementation: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009

*\* where rooms and buildings are temporarily rented by Colleges and Departments local controls should be established to confirm asbestos does not pose a risk to University staff or students.*

### POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Bangor University, so far as is reasonably practicable, but in accordance with the relevant legislation, statutory requirements and good practice, to ensure the health and safety of staff, students and visitors to the University.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In addition to the general duties of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, the management and control of asbestos containing materials are governed by specific and detailed health and safety legislation; particularly The Control of Asbestos Regulations and its Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance documents.

This Policy Standard has been produced having due regard for legislative requirements and good practice across the Higher Education Sector, and seeks to ensure University compliance with both. The Policy's objective is to state University policy and provide summary information on responsibilities and duties. In addition, it is supplemented by more detailed Information Sheets and by the Asbestos Management Plan.

In accordance with its Health and Safety Policy the University delegates responsibilities and duties for implementing this Policy Standard to appropriate Colleges and Departments and, by the Asbestos Management Plan, to specific key individuals.

#### Definitions:

*Asbestos is a collective term for 'silicate' materials mined in the form of a soft mineral rock. The most common types of asbestos found in the UK are:*

- *CHRYBOTILE: more commonly known as white asbestos*
- *AMOSITE: more commonly known as brown asbestos*
- *CROCIDOLITE: more commonly known as blue asbestos*

### 2. BACKGROUND

Asbestos has for many years been used for a variety of tasks, for example, refurbishment of older buildings, thermal insulation, fire precautions and within numerous building products. The commercial use of asbestos in the UK began around the end of the nineteenth century and increased gradually, with large quantities of asbestos used from the 1950s to early 1970s. However, asbestos is not only found in building materials. It can also be found in some *older* equipment, in particular those involving high heat levels, such as Gavenclamp Ovens and heat resistant gloves – both once commonly found within science laboratories.

Asbestos fibres are a potential carcinogen; very small fibres can be breathed into the lungs, where they remain and where they may cause longer term ill health effects. Touching asbestos materials may not in itself be dangerous as asbestos is only hazardous if the actual fibres are disturbed and these become airborne.

As a result of the potential risks, asbestos has been the subject of gradual voluntary and formal bans since the 1970's and by 1999 the importation, supply and new use of nearly all forms of ACMs was banned in the UK. The management of asbestos, is now also governed by detailed

legislation which, to summarise, require the University and its Colleges and Departments to manage asbestos and protect staff, students and others from asbestos fibre exposure.

Asbestos which remains 'in-situ' is not prohibited but this must be managed and must not pose a risk to health. If ACMs are kept in good condition, sealed / encapsulated and left undisturbed, fibres will not get into the air; and the presence of the asbestos-based material will not constitute a significant danger. For this to be the case asbestos must be carefully and properly managed.

As such, the University has in recent years commissioned two full surveys of its buildings to identify asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and a record of all known ACMs is kept in the form of an Asbestos Register.

This document, in conjunction with its associated Information Sheets and the University Asbestos Management Plan, forms the Bangor University Asbestos Management System.

Further advice on the hazards and risks of asbestos and where asbestos can be found are contained in the Policy Standard's associated Information Sheets.

### 3. UNIVERSITY DUTIES

Through this Policy Standard the University establishes clear objectives and standards for the management and control of asbestos, the University will therefore:

- a) prevent, as far as is reasonably practicable, exposure to asbestos fibres;
- b) ensure a suitable Asbestos Register for all buildings and equipment within the estate and those buildings leased by the University, is available;
- c) ensure a suitable Asbestos Management Plan, based on risk assessment, is implemented.
- d) provide appropriate resources for the management and, where appropriate, removal of asbestos containing materials;
- e) ensure training, instruction and information on asbestos and asbestos management is provided to appropriate staff, students and contractors;
- f) promote general awareness of asbestos and of the University Asbestos Management System; and,
- g) regularly review the Asbestos Management System.

### 4. DUTIES OF COLLEGES AND DEPARTMENTS

In pursuance of commitments and objectives of this Policy Standard each College and Department has a responsibility to manage asbestos materials under its control and to cooperate and abide by procedures for asbestos management. In particular the Policy Standard requires:

- a) The Estates & Facilities Department will produce and maintain an effective estate-related Asbestos Management Plan which:
  - i. ensures the suitability and usability of the Asbestos Register;
  - ii. assesses and confirms the integrity and safety of asbestos materials within the University estate;

- iii. appoints an Asbestos Supervising Officer or Manager to oversee the Asbestos Management Plan and its implementation;
  - iv. ensures building maintenance and refurbishment works are undertaken having due regard to the risk from asbestos and in accordance with the Asbestos Management Plan;
  - v. inform and train staff in Asbestos Awareness if there is a likelihood they may encounter ACMs during the course of their work;
  - vi. ensure only competent licensed contractors are engaged in asbestos removal and supervisory projects and that all removal contracts are notified to the HSE where required;
  - vii. ensure all ACMs are suitably risk assessed, periodically inspected and confirm no significant risk is posed by them; and,
  - viii. ensure all ACMs are maintained in a safe condition, isolated, or removed, in accordance with on-going maintenance and removal programmes (based on risk and/or logistical requirements).
- b) The Estates & Facilities Department shall bring to the attention of the University any concern relating to asbestos management, particularly where those concerns are outside of its own area of managerial responsibility.
- c) Each College and Department to implement systems and procedures that:
- i. ensure all equipment containing ACMs are managed and risk assessed and their details included in the University Asbestos Register as well as within a local Register of Asbestos;
  - ii. ensure building services or materials are not disturbed or interfered with unless specifically authorised to do so by the Estates & Facilities Department and only following confirmation that ACMs are not present;
  - iii. allow access to Estates & Facilities staff or appointed specialists, to investigate and assess any ACMs that may be present in rooms and areas within the College/Department's control;
  - iv. inform and train staff in Asbestos Awareness if there is a likelihood they may encounter ACMs during the course of their work; and,
  - v. report to Estates and Facilities immediately all concerns relating to ACMs.

### 5. DUTIES OF STAFF, STUDENTS AND VISITORS

Each member of staff, student and visitor has a responsibility in law to cooperate with the University and/or not to interfere with anything established in the interest of health and safety.

- a) This Policy Standard requires that each member of staff must:
- i. not interfere with any building material or building services unless as part of controlled work, subjected to an approved risk assessment and specific approval;
  - ii. cooperate with this Policy Standard and the Asbestos Management Plan;
  - iii. report any concerns to the Estates & Facilities Department immediately;

- iv. attend training as requested;
- v. not remove or interfere with signage indicating the presence of asbestos or which are placed in the interest of health and safety.

b) Students and visitors must:

- i. not interfere with any building material or building services;
- ii. not remove or interfere with signage indicating the presence of asbestos or placed in the interest of health and safety;
- iii. cooperate with the University and its officers on all matters pertaining to asbestos and health and safety.

## 6. OPERATIONAL AND PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

The following Information Sheets are available; these provide practical guidance on the action Colleges / Departments need to take to meet the requirements of this Standard:

- The Hazards and Risk of Asbestos.
- Where can Asbestos be found?
- Asbestos within Equipment – what you need to do.

The **Asbestos Management Plan** can be viewed on both the Estates & Facilities Department and Health and safety Services' websites.

Additional asbestos guidance and information, including guidance on legislation and how to undertake an asbestos risk assessment can be found on the Health and Safety Services Website – [www.hss.bangor.ac.uk](http://www.hss.bangor.ac.uk).

## 7. REVIEW AND AUDIT PROCEDURES

- a) The Estates & Facilities Department will periodically review the effectiveness of the Asbestos Management Plan and its own compliance with this Policy Standard.
- b) Each College/Department must periodically review their own procedures to ensure the requirements of this Policy Standard are implemented, are suitable and effectively eliminate or reduce risk to as low as is reasonably practicable.
- c) Health and Safety Services will undertake periodic audits to ensure compliance against this Policy Standard.
- d) In addition, the University's Health and Safety Committee may from time to time review the effectiveness of the University's system for the management of asbestos risk.

**End.**