

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY UNIT

## POLICY NOTICE - OHSU P4 (revised 2001)

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

#### Introduction

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 have been introduced under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to enable the UK to implement a European Directive on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the workplace. The regulations came into force on 1st January 1993.

PPE is any equipment designed to be worn or used by an employee to protect against one or more hazards likely to endanger health and safety at work.

The PPE Regulations do not apply to processes covered by any of the following regulations, where there is a more comprehensive requirement for provision and use of PPE:-

- The Control of Lead at Work Regulations 1980
- The Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999
- The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999
- The Noise at Work Regulations 1989
- The Construction (Head Protection) Regulations 1989
- The Confined Space Regulations 1997

#### Outline of the PPE at Work Regulations

The PPE at Work Regulations require employers to:-

- 1 Provide suitable PPE to employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health or safety while at work. An assessment should be undertaken to ensure the PPE is correct for the risk and circumstances of use.

**Note:-** PPE should be used as a last resort when other means of protection have been ruled out.

- 2 Arrange for the regular maintenance and periodic replacement of PPE.
- 3 Provide appropriate storage for PPE.
- 4 Provide Information, Instruction and Training to wearers of PPE.



- 5 Take all reasonable steps to ensure that any PPE provided to employees is properly used.

### **Provision of PPE**

The Regulations require the University to provide PPE to its employees free of charge. Students are required to provide their own general PPE such as laboratory coats and wet weather clothing. Any special PPE such as safety spectacles, gloves etc will be provided by the Department.

### **Action required**

#### **1 University level**

It is the responsibility of the university:-

- a) To take all reasonable steps to secure the health and safety of members of staff and students.
- b) Where a member of staff or a student raises a matter related to health and safety concerning PPE, to:-
  - i) take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances.
  - ii) take corrective measures where appropriate.
  - iii) advise the member of staff or student of actions taken.
- c) To give sufficient information, instruction and training as is necessary to ensure the health and safety of members of staff and students who use PPE. This provision will also apply to persons not in direct employment, such as temporary staff. Managers and supervisors who are responsible for PPE users will also be given appropriate training.

#### **2 Departmental Level**

Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring implementation of the legislation in their Department. They need to:-

- a) Identify all hazards not adequately controlled by other means of protection.
- b) Arrange for an assessment to be carried out to recommend/ensure PPE is suitable for the risks and employee.

**Note:-** Heads of Departments are recommended to nominate a member or members of their staff to be 'Departmental PPE Assessors' and to have them trained through the Occupational Health and Safety Unit.

- c) Make arrangements for regular maintenance and periodic replacement of PPE.

- d) Ensure that all persons working with PPE are trained in the use, fitting and maintenance of the PPE.
- e) Encourage members of staff and students to report any problems related to PPE.
- f) Ensure assessments are reviewed if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or if there has been a significant change in the risks or PPE to which it relates.
- g) Ensure that all relevant records are kept.

### **3 Member of staff/Student level**

Members of staff/Students must ensure that:-

- a) They comply with instruction and training in all PPE activities.
- b) They use the PPE which has been provided to minimise the risks to their health and safety.
- c) Where a problem arises concerning PPE, a member of staff or student should adopt the following procedures:-
  - i) Inform their Head of Department or other responsible person immediately.
  - ii) In the cases of an adverse health condition, advise the Occupational Health Nursing Adviser and/or Occupational Health Physician and his or her own general practitioner.

### **References**

- L25 Guidance on Regulations - Personal Protective Equipment at work Regulations 1992.  
OHSU G4 Guidance Notes on Personal Protective Equipment.