

UON Key Risk Area: KRA 1.5

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Clothing

1. Purpose

To outline the requirements and practices for the management of personal protective equipment (PPE) to assist with correct selection, supply, use, replacement, maintenance, training and storage.

2. Scope

This document applies to all Faculties, Divisions, and organisational units of the University of Newcastle and all its controlled entities.

3. Definitions

- **Leader/Supervisor:** Any member of the University responsible for supervising staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students and/or for leading research projects.
- **Senior Managers/Managers:** Heads of School, Directors, Associate Directors and Managers of organisational units, as well as equivalent roles to these positions.
- **Leaders/Supervisors:** Any member of the University who is responsible for supervising staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students and/or for leading research projects.
- **Workers:** As defined in the NSW Work Health & Safety Act 2011, workers include employees, conjoints, students on work experience, contractors, sub-contractors and their employees. Staff, conjoints, students on work experience, and contractors may be referred to collectively as workers, or separately as staff, conjoints, students, or contractors.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Safety clothing, including footwear, or equipment for specified circumstances or areas, where the nature of the work involved or the conditions under which people are working, requires its wearing or use for personal protection to minimise risk of harm.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Senior Managers/Managers

- Exercise due diligence by ensuring adequate resources are in place so that the requirements of this procedure are met.

4.2 Leaders/Supervisors

- Provide and make financial allocation for appropriate PPE to staff, students, visitors and other workers where required;
- Ensure that where the use of PPE is required, it can be supported by a risk assessment that indicates it is warranted to protect workers from potential exposure to a hazard;
- Ensure adequate training and supervision is provided where staff and other workers, students and visitors are required to use PPE;
- Ensure procedures are adopted for cleaning, maintenance and replacement of all PPE purchased by the school or administrative unit;
- Ensure that Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) or Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) for the tasks include reference to PPE when required;
- Communicate the requirements for staff and other workers, students and visitors to utilise PPE and follow SOP or SWMS when required;
- Ensure that clear and appropriate signs are positioned in locations where PPE must be worn;
- Ensure staff who undertake teaching inform the requirements for, and monitor the use of, appropriate PPE by students under their supervision.

4.3 Contractor supervisors/coordinators

- Any person managing or supervising contractors is required to ensure the contractors provide their employees with PPE that conforms to the relevant standard.

4.4 Workers

- Must comply with the requirement to wear appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment when this is necessary for the work activities being undertaken.

4.5 Health and Safety Team

- Provide advice on the type of PPE available to protect workers from exposure to workplace hazards;

- In conjunction with the school or administrative unit, provide advice and support with training.

5. Procedures

PPE is the least preferred control measure in the hierarchy of controls for the following reasons:

- The hazards and risks remain;
- The issue of effectiveness in relation to proper fit and design for different individuals;
- PPE can sometimes be awkward, uncomfortable and limiting, which may make workers less likely to use such equipment.

However, PPE can complement other control measures thereby increasing personal protection.

All PPE provided by the University shall comply with current legal requirements, and where appropriate, the relevant Australian Standard.

5.1 Selection

The selection of appropriate PPE for a task must be based on a risk assessment. The decision making process can be supported by other sources of information including:

- Designers, manufacturers or suppliers of PPE, who can give advice on the specifications and appropriate use of their products;
- Australian Standards;
- Safety Data Sheets (SDS);
- Standard Operating procedures (SOP), safe work methods statements, job safety analyses.

NOTE: It is important to ensure the correct selection of equipment as not all PPE will meet the same performance requirements and provide the same protection.

Circumstances in which PPE will be required to be provided and worn include:

5.2 Types of PPE

- **Head protection (Hard Hats):** shall be provided and worn where there is a possibility a person may be struck on the head by a falling object, a person may strike their head against a fixed object or there may be inadvertent head contact with electrical hazards. Head protection must comply with Australian Standards AS/NZS 1800:1998 Occupational protective helmets - Selection, care and use and AS/NZS 1801:1997 Occupational protective helmets. Hard hats shall be stored away from windows and sunlight, inspected regularly or before next use and replaced if the

shell has faded or has other damage. The headband should be replaced if the plastic or the cloth sweatband has deteriorated.

- **Eye protection:** shall be provided and worn where a risk of eye injury exists. Typical hazards might include flying particles, dust, splashing substances, harmful gases, vapours, aerosols, lasers and high intensity radiation from welding operations. Eye protection includes safety glasses (including prescription safety glasses), safety goggles or face shields. Prescription safety glasses shall be provided for staff, honours and post graduate research students where prescription glasses have to be worn by the worker to carry out the inherent duties of the job and where it is not practical to wear safety glasses over the top of their normal prescription eye wear. Safety glasses must be worn in all University laboratories unless lesser requirements can be justified by a risk assessment as outlined in Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.1: Safety in laboratories - Planning and operational aspects. All safety eye wear MUST comply with Australian Standards AS/NZS 1336:1997 Recommended practices for occupational eye protection, AS/NZS 1337.1:2007 Personal eye protection – Eye and face protectors for occupational applications and AS/NZS 1338.1,2,3:2012 Filters for eye protection, and the eye equipment must be appropriately stamped with the correct Australian Standard code.
- **Hearing protection:** shall be provided and worn where a risk of noise induced hearing loss exists. Typically this is associated with the use of equipment including sonicators and heavy machinery. The need for hearing protection shall be assessed via conducting noise surveys in potential noise hazard areas. Hearing protection can include ear plugs or ear muffs and must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1269.3:2005 Occupational noise management - Hearing protector program. See also UON KRA 1.6 Noise Management.
- **Respiratory protection:** shall be provided and worn if a risk of exposure to an atmosphere that is or may be injurious to health exists. Respiratory protection includes disposable masks, particulate respirators, half face respirators, full face respirators and supplied air respirators. All respiratory protection use requires appropriate training. Some respiratory protection equipment requires regular testing and certification. Respiratory protection must comply with Australian Standards AS/NZS 1715:2009 Selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment and AS/NZS 1716:2002 Respiratory protective devices.
- **Protective clothing and sunscreen:** shall be provided for staff members, students and other workers or visitors who are required to work outdoors and are exposed to the sun's rays for continuous periods. Direct exposure of the skin to UV radiation from outdoor work shall be minimised by providing hats, long sleeves/trousers and an adequate supply of sunscreen. Protective clothing and personal insecticide may also be provided for workers conducting activities outdoors.

- **Laboratory coats/gowns (including disposable):** shall be provided for staff members, students and other workers or visitors working in or visiting laboratories or associated facilities. Schools and facilities shall have a de-contamination and laundering procedure in place to ensure this clothing is maintained in an acceptable condition. Laboratory coats may be provided to undergraduate students at the discretion of the School and if students are required to provide their own coats/gowns the School must provide clear instruction relating to the safe transport, decontamination and laundering of this clothing. Laboratory gowns or buttoned lab coats are required to be worn in all University laboratories unless lesser requirements can be justified by a risk assessment as outlined in Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.1: Safety in laboratories - Planning and operational aspects.

It should be noted that minimum requirements for PPE in a University laboratory are laboratory clothing (lab gown), protective eyewear (safety glasses) and closed shoes unless lesser requirements can be justified by a risk assessment as outlined in Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.1:2005.

- **Hand protection:** shall be provided and worn where there is an identified hazard associated with a potential for hand injury. Hazards include chemicals, biological substances, radiation, cryogenic material, high temperature material and apparatus, sharps and manual work e.g. gardening, cleaning. It is recommended that the use of latex gloves be minimised due to the risk of sensitisation and allergy. Careful selection is required to ensure glove type is suitable and should comply with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2161.1:2000 Occupational protective gloves – Selection, use and maintenance.
- **Protective footwear (safety footwear):** shall be provided and worn where a risk of harm to feet exists. This may apply particularly to workshop, maintenance or gardening staff. Protective footwear must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2210.1:2010 Safety, protective and occupational footwear – Guide to selection, care and use. Enclosed, impermeable shoes must be worn in all University laboratories unless lesser requirements can be justified by a risk assessment as outlined in Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.1: Safety in laboratories – Planning and operational aspects. Some University facilities require disposable booties (provided) to be worn over enclosed shoes as part of infection control or clean room protocols.
- **High visibility safety vests:** shall be provided and worn where risk of injury associated with working on or near roadways or near moving traffic or moving plant exists.
- **Life Jackets (Personal Floatation Devices):** shall be provided and worn where a risk of harm through drowning exists such as boating. PFD must comply with AS 4758 (2010) and there must be enough PFD provided and of appropriate sizing to cater for all persons on board vessels at all times.

- **Face Protection (e.g. face shields):** shall be provided and worn where risk of facial injury associated with a task exists e.g. working with liquid nitrogen. Face protection must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1337.1:2007 Personal eye protection – Eye and face protectors for occupational applications.
- **Protective Lead Aprons:** shall be provided, worn and maintained where indicated in the approved Standard Operating Procedure(s) for x-ray producing equipment in compliance with AS/NZS 4543.3:2000. The use of protective lead aprons should occur in consultation with the University Radiation Safety Advisor.
- **Fall prevention equipment:** shall be provided in accordance with Safe working at heights guidelines. Refer to the [UON KRA 3.1 Working at Height](#) and [Managing the risk of falls at workplaces code of practice](#) for further information.
- **Personal security alarms (duress alarms):** shall be provided for staff where a risk assessment has identified that there is a risk of personal harm due to the activity they are performing.
- **Personal gas detection equipment:** shall be provided for staff where a risk assessment has identified that there is a risk of personal harm in a confined space due to exposure to atmospheric hazards.

5.3 Funding of PPE and Protective Clothing

- PPE required in the workplace for staff and for students involved with research activities will be provided by the University with costs to be met by the relevant Faculty, School, Division, Research group or work area. If staff identify need for PPE they should discuss this with their supervisor in the first instance.
- Where possible researchers should including funding for safety equipment within their research budgets. Where these items are excluded researchers should discuss funding for such items with their schools. For competitive research applications where this is not possible then funding for these items should be included on the UON Application Coversheet.
- Depending on the School and the equipment, responsibility for meeting the cost of some types of PPE for teaching activities may lie with the student (this will be identified on enrolment), unless the PPE is identified as being provided by the University. This will be at the discretion of the relevant Head of School or Pro Vice-Chancellor.

5.4 Use

- Heads of School or administrative units shall provide supervision to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the appropriate equipment and clothing is being used in the manner required;
- All PPE provided for use must be appropriate for the user and the identified risk;

- Disposable PPE (gowns, gloves, booties) must be disposed of in-line with facility protocols and not removed from the facility;
- Single use PPE shall only be worn once;
- PPE must be kept in a clean and hygienic condition for the user;
- PPE must not be shared between users unless it can be cleaned to hygienic standards e.g. face shields. Some PPE is not suitable for cleaning to hygienic standards therefore must not be shared e.g. ear muffs. Disposable PPE must never be shared;
- Any PPE used must be stored and located in a place such that it remains clean, free from dust, dirt and chemicals and where it cannot deteriorate;
- Any storage areas used for protective clothing and equipment must be clearly identified;
- Signage must be clearly displayed at entrances to facilities where PPE is mandatory.

5.5 Maintenance

- There must be appropriate and adequate maintenance of PPE in line with the manufacturer and Australian Standards requirements to ensure it is maintained in working condition ready for use;
- Where specific maintenance and/or testing requirements exist for an item of PPE appropriately detailed records must be maintained;
- Maintenance must include inspection before each use to determine if the equipment will work as intended;
- Where PPE is damaged such that it may not provide the necessary protection, it should be either repaired by a qualified repairer or disposed of appropriately and replaced;
- Staff and other workers, students and visitors shall use PPE for the purpose intended and in the manner required by the University and shall immediately inform their supervisor of any defects or deficiencies of which they become aware in PPE provided.

5.6 Training

- Facility inductions must include identification and explanation of local PPE requirements;
- Training must be provided on the correct use, maintenance, storage and limitations of PPE;

- Staff and other workers, students and visitors shall receive appropriate training in the use of PPE.

6. Attachments

Nil

7. References

[NSW Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#)

[UON HSP 2.2 H&S Responsibilities](#)

[UON HSP 4.1 Risk Management](#)

[UON KRA 1.6 Noise Management](#)

[UON KRA 1.7 Laboratory Safety](#)

UON KRA 1.8 Biological Hazards & Infection Control

UON KRA 1.9 Radiation Management

UON KRA 1.10 Scuba Diving/Water Based Activities

[UON KRA 3.1 Working at Height](#)

Document Summary Table

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT – KRA 1.5					
Date of first edition:	30/9/15	Date this review will take effect:	N/A	Date of next Review:	30/9/18
RM Folder Ref:	<completion by policy team>	Document Number:	KRA 1.5	Revision Number:	
Approved by:	Director, People and Workforce Strategy				
Owner:	Associate Director, Health and Safety				
Contact:	University of Newcastle Health and Safety Team				
Governing Legislation:	<p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 – Regulations and Codes of Practice</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1269.3:2005 : Occupational noise management - Hearing protector program</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1336:1997 : Recommended practices for occupational eye protection</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1337.1:2007 : Personal eye protection - Eye and face protectors for occupational applications</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS1338.1,2,3:2012 :Filters for eye protection</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1715:2009 : Selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1716:2012 : Respiratory protective devices</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1800:1998: Occupational protective helmets - Selection, care and use</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 1801:1997: Occupational protective helmets</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 2161.1:2000 : Occupational protective gloves - Selection, use and maintenance</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 2210.1:2010 : Safety, protective and occupational footwear - Guide to selection, care and use</p> <p>Australian Standard AS/NZS 2243.1: Safety in laboratories - Planning and operational aspects</p> <p>Ansell guide to glove selection - available via weblink: http://www.ansellchemsafe.com/Content.aspx?topicID=189</p>				

Document Summary Table

Supporting documents & forms of this procedure/guideline:	<p>UON HSP 2.2 H&S Responsibilities</p> <p>UON HSP 4.1 Risk Management</p> <p>UON KRA 1.6 Noise Management</p> <p>UON KRA 1.7 Laboratory Safety</p> <p>UON KRA 1.8 Biological Hazards & Infection Control</p> <p>UON KRA 1.9 Radiation Management</p> <p>UON KRA 1.10 Scuba Diving/Water Based Activities</p> <p>UON KRA 3.1 Working at Height</p> <p>Radiation Safety Manual</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Induction Procedure for Students 000921</p>
Keywords:	<p>PPE, safety glasses, gloves, duress alarms, fall prevention, face protection, face shield, coat, gown, protective clothing, footwear, sunscreen, respiratory protection, personal floatation device, life jacket</p>
Important Notes:	<p>This replaces Clothing and Protective Equipment Procedure 000933</p>
Revision History / Version Control	<p>Use this field to record revision and amendment history if required</p>