

**NUI Maynooth –  
Safety Policy Statement**

**(currently under review)**

**1 October 2014**



Oifig Uachtarán Ollscoil Mhá Nuad  
Maynooth University Office of the President  
Uachtarán: An tOraon Pádraic Ó Nualláin, MB, BCh, BAC, BSc, PhD  
President: Professor Philip Nolan, MB, BCh, BAO, BSc, PhD

### University Safety Policy Statement

The National University of Ireland, Maynooth, supports the aims and provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other relevant legislation. The University is committed to complying with all relevant legislation. It recognises that one of its foremost duties is to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, its employees and students with a safe and healthy work environment. It also recognises its duties to guests, visitors, contractors and other persons who may be affected by the university's activities.

The Governing Authority is fully committed to the implementation of this policy. In practical terms the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety of any activities rests with those who direct the work. The Governing Authority will ensure that responsibility for Safety, Health and Welfare is effectively assigned, accepted and fulfilled at all levels of the University.

The Governing Authority undertakes to ensure that adequate resources are provided to implement the University's safety policy. This includes that:

- (i) Adequate resources are provided to ensure that proper provision can be made for safety, health and welfare.
- (ii) Safety is a prime consideration in all forward planning.
- (iii) Adequate numbers of suitably trained personnel are available to undertake all work activities.
- (iv) Sufficient resources are available to provide necessary information, instruction, and training with respect to safety, health and welfare.

It is the duty of every staff member and student to take reasonable care of their own safety and health and that of any other person who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions on campus.

The commitment and co-operation of all staff and students of the University is absolutely essential for the implementation of this policy and I would like to thank you in anticipation for your co-operation in this regard. This policy will be reviewed annually, in light of any changes in legislation and when necessary taking account of developments at the University.

Professor Philip Nolan  
President  
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## **Management of Safety, Health and Welfare**

Under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act of 2005 the University has a duty to manage its activities. This will be achieved by the following:

- Managing work activities in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all staff, students and others who may be affected by the University's activities.
- By conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as reasonably practicable, improper behaviour likely to put staff or students at risk.

The University recognises its responsibility to ensure that:

- The design, provision and maintenance of the place of work that is safe and without risk,
- The design, provision and maintenance of safe means of access and egress,
- The design, provision and maintenance of plant and machinery or any other articles that are safe and without risk to health,
- The provision of systems of work that are planned, organised, performed, maintained and revised as appropriate so as to be, as far as reasonable practicable, safe and without risk to health,
- The provision of information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary,
- The provision and maintenance of personal protective clothing and equipment as is necessary,
- The preparation and revision as necessary of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies,
- The prevention of risk to health at work in connection with the use of any article or substance, including noise, vibration, radiation and other physical agents,
- The provision and maintenance of facilities and arrangements for the welfare of staff and students,
- Documented risk assessments are undertaken and review as necessary,
- Prescribed accidents or dangerous occurrences are reported to the Health and Safety Authority,
- The provision of competent persons to assist in the management of safety, health and welfare,

This approach to safety, health and welfare will be undertaken on a Departmental\* basis (\*includes Research Institutes and other Designated centres) and each Departmental Safety Statement will form an integral part of the overall University safety management systems and structures. The names and job titles of staff with responsibility for managing Safety, Health and Welfare must be named in Departmental Safety Statements.

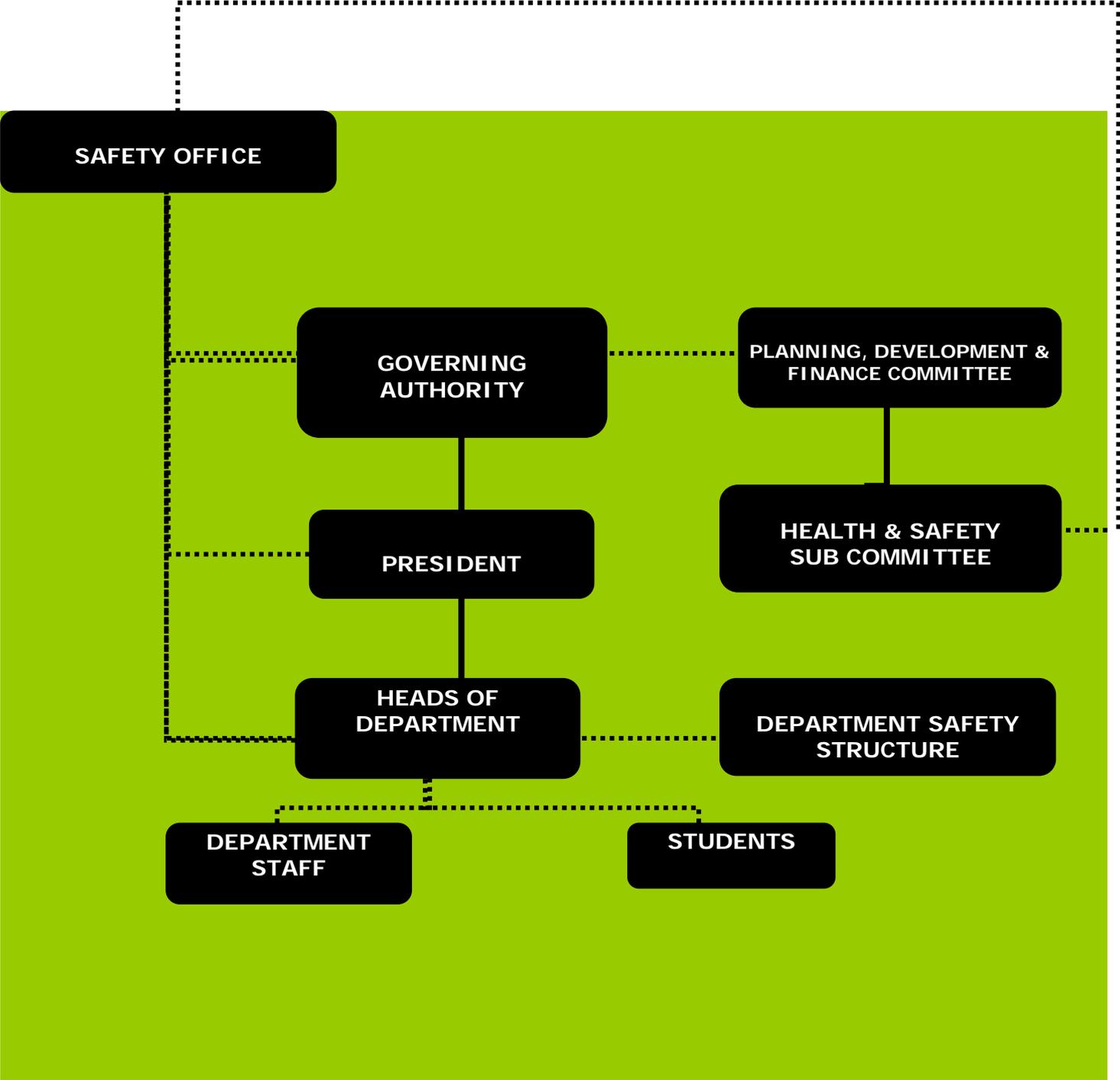
Any Departmental Head may seek assistance from the Health and Safety Office in the preparation, auditing and review of their Departmental Safety Statements. The co-operation and active management involvement by Heads of Academic and Service Departments form the basis of the University's management approach to Safety, Health and Welfare.

### ***Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment***

The identification of hazards, the assessment of the risks and the implementation of controls are key to effective health and safety management and must be documented in departmental safety statements. The crucial elements in connection with hazard identification and risk assessment are as follows:

- All hazards at the place of work must be identified,
- Associated risks to safety and health must be assessed,
- Adequate control measures must be implemented,
  - Risk assessments must be specific to the place of work (i.e. equipment and tasks),
  - All risk assessments must be recorded in writing,
  - Risk assessments must be periodically evaluated,
  - After the most recent evaluation, any necessary improvements to protect staff must be put in place,
- Provision of appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision,
- Creation of safe systems of work,
- Safety Auditing,
- Consultation with staff and students,

Organisation Chart



## **Responsibility for Safety, Health & Welfare**

### **Governing Authority**

The ultimate responsibility for health and safety rests with the Governing Authority.

### **University President**

The President of the University is responsible to the Governing Authority for the implementation of policy on safety, health and welfare in the University. The President discharges that responsibility through the Heads of Departments. The planning, organising, controlling and monitoring of all safety matters rests with the individual Head of Department. The Health and Safety Officer and the University Health & Safety Sub Committee have an advisory role to ensure that the above functions are carried out effectively.

### **Planning, Development & Finance Committee**

The Planning, Development & Finance Committee of the Governing Authority, assisted by the University Health & Safety Sub Committee, is responsible for maintaining and promoting the safety policy of the university.

### **Health & Safety Sub Committee**

This Sub Committee will address all aspects of Health & Safety. Specifically:

- To maintain and promote the Health & Safety Policy of the University;
- To provide improved access and facilities for people with disabilities;
- To report annually to the Planning, Development and Finance Committee and at other times as desirable;
- The Sub Committee may establish working groups to assist it in completing its work.

The Committee will also address all matters appropriate to it as defined under relevant legislation. The Committee will:

- Ensure the University's safety policy is reviewed at regular intervals;

- Improve the integration of health and safety into the existing management structure in order to ensure effective monitoring of new legislation and the auditing and review of the University's safety management programme;
- Monitor the implementation of departmental safety statements;
- Make recommendations to the Planning, Development and Finance Committee on the implementation of the University's health and safety policies;
- Review and approve University Guidance documents in order to ensure compliance with current legislation,

### ***Composition of NUI Health & Safety Committee***

Director, Corporate Services (Chair)

Bursar

Campus Services Officer

Health & Safety Officer

Nursing Officer

Radiological & Biological Safety Officer

Head of Security

Dean of Science and Engineering

Dean of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy

Dean of Social Sciences

Two members of Governing Authority

Two members elected by the staff of the University

Co-opted members of Staff

SPCM Representative

Student Representative

### **The University Safety Office**

The functions of the University Safety Office will include the following:

- (i) to recommend to the University Health & Safety Sub Committee appropriate action necessary to implement the University Safety Statement;
- (ii) to set and prioritise performance standards in order to ensure the continued improvement of health and safety in the University;
- (iii) to keep a complete record of occupational accidents and training;
- (iv) to advise heads of department and individuals directly on matters of safety, health and welfare.

## **Heads of Department**

Heads of Department include all heads of academic and service departments as well as officers of the University who are responsible for their own work and that of their staff, if any. Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that the University safety policy is supplemented with a written safety statement relevant to their own department which should be based on the nine management headings identified below.

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that their individual safety statements adequately cover these headings. The safety statement may also include departmental guidance documents, which may cover individual work situations. A copy, (and any subsequent review) of the departmental safety statement should be lodged with the Health and Safety Office. Heads of Department will be assisted in the preparation and review of their department's safety statements by the Health and Safety Office. Heads of Department may appoint a departmental safety advisor to assist and advise on safety matters but ultimately responsibility for safety rests with the Head of Department.

*The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that:*

- (i) The safety statement is brought to the attention of all staff within their department,
  - (ii) All staff fully understand and observe the arrangements for safety, and that they sign a statement to this effect;
  - (iii) Safety audits, safety inspections and regular review of the safety statement (changes should be noted and implemented) are undertaken in order to ensure the effectiveness of the department's safety procedures,
  - (iv) All staff are provided with adequate information, training and instruction on the hazards and risk associated with work in their department (records of formal and informal training of staff must be kept and copies should be forwarded to the Health and Safety Office),
  - (v) Clear formal communication channels are maintained in order that the results of ongoing risk assessments are communicated to staff (departments may form a departmental safety committee to advise the head on safety matters; the committee should meet at least once a term and keep a record of their meetings),
  - (vi) Records are kept of all accidents, dangerous occurrences, and fire drills (these records must be communicated to the Health and Safety Office),
  - (vii) Appropriate personnel protective equipment (PPE) is supplied to staff where required;
  - (viii) First aid facilities are available in the department and there is a staff member available who has received training in occupational first aid.
  - (ix) Undergraduate and postgraduate students are taken to be untrained in safety matters.
- Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that, in so far as is reasonably

practicable, students receive safety information and training appropriate to the hazards and risks that they may be exposed to while in the department. The Departmental Safety Statement will draw attention to potential hazards within the department and detail the necessary safety measures to be taken.

### **Academic Staff in Research Departments**

Academic staff in research departments are responsible under the direction of the Head of Department for safety within their research group. This includes responsibility for post-doctoral fellows, postgraduates, research assistants, technical staff, undergraduates and visiting academics while working under their supervision. All staff and students under their supervision must receive information, instruction and training on the hazards and risks associated with their work. As a general rule, the standards of safety in University research laboratories should not be inferior to those in good commercial or professional practice.

### **Radiation Protection Officer**

The University has appointed a Radiation Protection Officer (RPO) to advise and monitor on the use of ionising radiation, ultra-violet radiation, laser, and microwave radiation. The RPO will ensure that the University complies in full with the Radiological Protection Act 1991 and other relevant legislation. *The RPO is required to:*

- Advise the University on all matters relating to the safe use, transport, storage, and disposal of all sealed and unsealed radioactive sources,
- Ensure that there is a written risk assessment in place for the use of any radiation source,
- Ensure that the risk assessment identifies the hazards associated with the use of radioactive sources and that appropriate control measures are in place,
- Control the purchasing and disposal of all radiation sources and to keep a record of all such transactions,
- Ensure radiation monitoring equipment is available and that it is properly maintained and calibrated,
- Make periodic contamination checks of personnel and work areas,
- Liaise with the Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland.

### **The Biological Safety Officer**

The Department of Biology, has appointed a Biological Safety Officer. The Biological Safety Officer, who is a member of the Biological Safety Committee will advise the Department on all matters relating to the safe use, transport, storage and disposal of biological agents

## **University Staff**

*All University staff are required to:*

- Comply with relevant statutory provisions, as appropriate and take reasonable care of their own safety and not endanger others by their acts or omissions,
- Co-operate with the University and any other person to enable them to comply with any relevant statutory provisions,
- Read and fully understand the University safety policies and Departmental safety statements and procedures,
- Promote safe work practices in accordance with the Departmental safety statements,
- Ensure that equipment is operated in a safe manner and that good housekeeping standards are maintained,
- Use PPE as required,
- Report any accident, dangerous occurrence, or potential safety hazard to the Head of Department or departmental safety advisor and co-operate fully in any accident investigation,
- Ensure all safety rules are communicated to students, contractors and other persons working in their department,
- Refrain from misusing anything that is provided in the interests of health and safety;
- Undertake appropriate health and safety training which includes the use of work equipment, as required,
- A member of staff while at work shall ensure that he/she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he/she is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person.

## **Students**

*Students of the University are required to:*

- (i) Co-operate with all safety rules and regulations of the University,
- (ii) Ensure equipment is operated in a safe manner and that good housekeeping standards are maintained,
- (iii) Use personal protective equipment as necessary (students are required to provide their own PPE, i.e., laboratory coats, safety glasses etc.),
- (iv) Promote safe work practices,
- (v) Report any accident, dangerous occurrence, defective equipment or potential safety hazard to the Head of Department or departmental safety advisor and co-operate fully in any accident investigation,
- (vi) Take reasonable care of their own safety and not endanger others by their acts or omissions,
- (vii) Refrain from misusing anything that is provided in the interest of health and safety.

**Members of the Public**

In general, persons visiting a department of the University may do so only with the permission of the relevant Head of Department and must follow all University and departmental safety procedures pertaining to their visit. Children are not permitted to access laboratories and other high-risk areas. Every person entering the grounds of the University is required to exercise reasonable care and ensure that children under their care are adequately supervised.

## **Management of Contractors**

The University recognises its duties to contractors carrying out works on the campus. Contractors must have a safety statement in place that names the responsible persons who manage the activities on campus, addresses the nature of work being carried out and where necessary is supplemented by method statements. Where a contractor fails to provide the necessary documentation or who fails to comply with current safety, health and welfare legislation the University has the right to terminate the contract.

All maintenance and minor construction works should be channelled through the Campus Services Office, to ensure the work is effectively managed. The Campus Services Office will advise the Safety Office and the relevant Head of Department on the work to be carried out by the contractor to ensure that all safety procedures and practices are adhered to.

Where the work is of a substantial nature the Campus Planning & Development Office shall appoint, in writing, a project supervisor at the design and/or construction phase(s) for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the project is designed, constructed, and can be maintained safely and will comply in all respects, as appropriate, with the relevant statutory provisions.

Contractors are prohibited from using any University plant or equipment, specifically ladders and raising platforms owned by the University except in the event of an emergency to ensure the safety of the person(s).

Contractors must not engage the services of University staff without the express permission of the manager of the service or the Head of the Department for whom the work is being done.

*Contractors working for the University must:*

- (i) Take reasonable care of themselves and others who maybe affected by their activities,
- (ii) Comply with the University Safety Statement where appropriate,
- (iii) Provide a copy of their Safety Statement to the University;
- (iv) Provide copy of public liability insurance and employers liability insurance before the contract is awarded,
- (v) Only work in the areas designated for that purpose or for the purpose of discharging the contract.

## **Safety Information**

The University will provide information on relevant safety, health and welfare issues. The information may be provided through the Health and Safety Office/Head of Department, Supervisor or other competent person. It will also be provided in a manner, form and language that is reasonably likely to be understood by members of staff.

## **Employee Co-operation and Consultation**

Departments, where appropriate are encouraged to form a safety advisory committee with representatives of staff and students. The committee should meet at least once per term, and staff and students should be encouraged to bring to the attention of their committee any unsafe work practices or equipment in the department. The departmental safety advisory committee will be involved in the identification of unsafe work practices and equipment, reviewing accident statistics for the department, determining safety training requirements for staff and students, developing safety work procedures and gathering information from the University Safety Office, the Health & Safety Authority and other competent bodies. The committee will keep a record of its meetings and decisions.

## **Safety Representative**

The employees at a place of work are entitled to select and appoint one of their number to act as a Safety Representative. Safety Representatives have no extra duties as a result of their appointment beyond their normal duties under the Act as employees. They may, however, consult with and make representations to the University on safety, health and welfare matters.

## **Safety Training**

It is the policy of the University that all staff will receive appropriate safety training. Information is provided to students as part of the student induction programme at University and departmental level. Training is not only concerned with imparting facts but also with notifying staff and students of their responsibilities and with equipping them to deal with emergencies. The on-going safety training needs of staff will be identified by the Head of Department in conjunction with the Health and Safety Office. When identifying training needs, due regard will be paid to the review of current legislation and accident/incident analysis. All safety training received will be monitored and updated as required. The Department will keep training records to include the content of the training session, duration of session, name of trainer and trainee, date and signature of trainer and trainee. Copies of these records should be sent to the Health & Safety Office.

## **Emergency Planning**

The University will establish and maintain procedures for responding to accidents and emergency situations, and for preventing and minimising the occupational health and safety impacts associated with them.

*The recommended elements of the emergency plan will include:*

- (i) Installation or availability of suitable warning and alarm systems, tested at regular intervals;
- (ii) Organisation and responsibilities of key personnel, together with details of emergency services (e.g. fire brigade);
- (iii) Internal and external communication plan;
- (iv) Training plans and testing for effectiveness (of which written records will be kept);
- (v) The availability of emergency equipment, maintained in good working order.

The University will periodically test, review, and revise where necessary its emergency preparedness and response procedures, in particular, after the occurrence of accidents or emergency situations.

The University Health & Safety Sub Committee will approve the Major Emergency Plan and this will be supported by each Departmental Safety Statement. Fire drills, assembly points, evacuation procedures will be incorporated in the departmental safety statement. All records relating to emergencies should be forward to the Health and Safety Office.

## **First-Aid**

Departments should appoint “occupational first-aiders”. The distribution of trained first-aiders within the University is based upon a number of factors including numbers employed, geographical size, location, and relative degree of risk. The names and phone numbers of departmental first-aiders will be included in each departmental safety statement and displayed on the first-aid box.

## **Reporting of Accidents, Dangerous Occurrences & Occupational Ill-Health**

An accident is an unplanned occurrence, which causes or has the potential to cause injury to a person or persons and may cause damage to property, equipment or the environment.

### **Statutory Notification**

*The University is required by law to report the following to the Health and Safety Authority:*

- (i) An accident causing loss of life to any employee if sustained in the course of their employment,
- (ii) An accident sustained in the course of their employment, which prevents an employee from performing the normal duties of his/her employment for more than 3 consecutive days, not including the date of the accident,
- (iii) An accident to a person not at work caused by a work activity, which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment,
- (iv) Major injuries including fracture, amputations, loss of an eye, electric shock or other injuries resulting in hospitalisation for a twenty-four hour period or longer.

Certain occupational illness must be reported: these include poisoning caused by exposure to toxic substances, occupational lung disease, occupational asthma, fibrosis of the lungs, infectious diseases including hepatitis and occupational cancer where it has been identified as work related.

An accident report form must be completed and sent to the Health and Safety Office, which will then forward the information to the HSA, where required. Each department must keep records of all accidents requiring first-aid. Accident statistics will be reviewed annually. Accident investigation and follow up remedial action is the responsibility of the Head of Department.

### **Application to Contractors and Visitors**

All cases of injuries and ill health affecting contractors, and visitors to departments of the University should be reported to the relevant Head of Department and the Health and Safety Office

## **Personal Protective Equipment**

It is the policy of the University to eliminate all hazards where reasonably practicable and to assess what PPE is required only when further risk reduction is not reasonably practicable.

### **Control Measures**

- All safety equipment purchased by Departments must be to approved standards.
- Wherever possible, manufacturers guidance will be followed. In cases where this is inadequate, the Department will provide additional information.
- Staff members (as appropriate) will inform any person in the workplace observed not wearing protective equipment as required, of Departmental policy requirements in this regard and such persons will be instructed not to continue working until PPE is obtained and used. This applies to all staff, students and to contractors.

## **Welfare Facilities**

*The University will ensure that adequate welfare facilities are provided for staff and students and in particular that:*

- (i) Adequate toilet facilities are provided and maintained in a clean and hygienic condition,
- (ii) Adequate washing facilities and washing and drying materials/equipment are provided and maintained,
- (iii) Arrangements for eating foodstuffs are provided on campus,
- (iv) Adequate cloakroom facilities are provided for storage and changing of clothes,
- (v) Appropriate facilities are provided for pregnant women and nursing mothers.

Eating, drinking and smoking are not allowed in the University laboratories and Lecture Rooms. Smoking is prohibited under current Irish legislation.

## **Health Surveillance**

Where it has been identified as part of the risk assessment health surveillance will be made available to staff who maybe affected by the substance.

A member of staff while at work shall ensure that he/she is not under the influence of an intoxicant to the extent that he/she is in such a state as to endanger his or her own safety, health or welfare at work or that of any other person.

## **Departmental Safety Statements**

### **Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment**

It is the policy of the University to identify hazards in the place of work, to assess the risk to safety and health, and to control risks as far as is practicable, so that they are reduced to an acceptable level. Written risk assessments will be carried out for work practices in each department and will form the basis of the departmental safety statement. Figure 2 sets out the steps to be taken in each department. Assistance in drawing up the departmental safety statement will be provided by the Health & Safety Office.

Hazard inspections should be carried out within the department at least every six months. A record of the inspection should be kept by the Head of Department and be available to the Health & Safety Office. An up to date copy should also be kept with the departmental safety statement.

A 'hazard' is a source or situation with a potential harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

'Risk' is a combination of the likelihood and the consequences of a specified hazardous event (accident or incident).

Risk always has two elements:

- (i) the likelihood that a hazard may occur;
- (ii) the consequences of the hazardous event.

Risk assessment is based on the process of evaluating risk to health and safety arising from the circumstances of the occurrence of a hazard at the workplace. Risk is categorised as "high" "medium" and "low."

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