

# Control of Noise at Work Policy

June 2021

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## Version Control History

Version Number	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions Made
1	November 2016	To develop a Control of Noise Policy that will clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure compliance with current legislation.
1.1	December 2018	Change of role to Quality Manager and other job titles to adhere to the new structure.
1.2	April 2020	Change of footer to reflect version status, change of owner, lead author, lead editor and next review date. 5.1 Change Chief Operating Officer to Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development. 5.2 Change Sector Development Managers to Sector Development Directors. 5.6 Carry out or arrange a noise survey and risk assessments of all relevant areas and keep records of all noise surveys undertaken. Provide survey findings and risk assessments to the relevant Head of Department and Senior Management Team, and provide advice on any necessary remedial actions.
1.3	May 2021	Review by Health and Safety Committee. No changes required, policy current.

# Control of Noise at Work Policy

## 1 Purpose

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 (Noise Regulations 2005) require employers to prevent or reduce risks to health and safety from exposure to noise at work.

This document will outline responsibilities and how this will be managed.

## 2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all College employees and any person who may be affected by the work activity conducted by the College. This includes students, visitors, contractors and the general public.
- 2.2 This document applies to the control of noise levels in the workplace to prevent damage to the hearing from noise exposure, by considering the Exposure Action Values and Exposure Limit Values where long term exposure will cause noise induced hearing loss.
- 2.3 The Regulations do not apply to:
  - Members of the public exposed to noise from their non-work activities, or making an informed choice to go to noisy places;
  - Low-level noise that is a nuisance but causes no risk of hearing damage.

## 3 Definitions

### 3.1 Exposure limit values and action values:

- The lower exposure action values are:
  - A daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 80dB (A-weighted) and a peak sound pressure of 135dB (C-weighted), taking **no** account of hearing protection.
- The upper exposure action values are:
  - A daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 85dB (A-weighted) and a peak sound pressure of 137dB (C-weighted), taking **no** account of hearing protection.
- The exposure limit values are:
  - A daily or weekly personal noise exposure of 87dB (A-weighted) and a peak sound pressure of 140dB (C-weighted), taking **into** account hearing protection.

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**Title:** Control of Noise at Work Policy  
**Version/Status:** 1.2/Final  
**Approved By/Date:** H&SC/June 2021  
**Impact Assessment Status:** Approved  
**Effective Publication Date:** June 2021

**Owner:** Depute Principal  
**Lead Author:** Head of HR and OD  
**Lead Editor:** Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser  
**Review Timing/Date:** 2 Years/June 2023

### 3.2 Decibel (dB):

Is the unit of measurement for the intensity of a sound, an increase of 3dB will double the intensity of the sound.

## 4 Key Principles

The College will:

- 4.1 Assess the risks to employees and others that may be affected by noise that is created by its work activities.
- 4.2 Take appropriate action to reduce the noise exposure that produces those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 4.3 Provide employees and students with hearing protection if noise exposure cannot be reduced sufficiently by using other methods ie layout of workplace, replacing noisy equipment, fitting anti vibration mounts to machines, reducing employee exposure times.
- 4.4 Give suitable training and instruction on the correct fitting, maintenance and storage of hearing protection when it is provided.
- 4.5 Provide employees and students with information, instruction and training on the risks from noise exposure and the control measures being implemented.
- 4.6 Provide health surveillance to employees where there is a risk to health from noise exposure.
- 4.7 Label noisy machines where operators are required to wear hearing protection.
- 4.8 Display appropriate signage in areas where the wearing of hearing protection is mandatory.
- 4.9 Consider noise levels when installing or relocating equipment or activities, and where possible make adjustments to minimise noise production.
- 4.10 Consider noise levels when purchasing new equipment and where possible specify and purchase quieter equipment.

## 5 Responsibilities

The organisational structure for the implementation and management of the College's statutory health and safety duties are described in detail in the Health and Safety Policy.

Specific duties relating to this policy are detailed below.

### 5.1 Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

It is the responsibility of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development to review and update this policy and ensure an EIA is carried out on this policy.

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## 5.2 Sector Development Directors, Managers

It is the responsibility of all Sector Development Directors, and Managers to:

- Ensure that their staff are aware of this Policy.
- Ensure compliance with the Policy.
- Ensure that noise is taken into account in risk assessments.
- Consider noise levels when purchasing new equipment and where possible specify and purchase quieter equipment.
- Seek advice from Estates and/or the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor when installing or relocating equipment or activities, so that noise levels can be considered.
- Make hearing protection available to employees/students if the lower exposure action values are reached or exceeded ie 80dB (A-weighted) and peak sound pressure of 135dB (C-weighted).
- Designate hearing protection zones and ensure that hearing protection is used and maintained if the upper exposure action values are reached or exceeded ie 85dB (A-weighted) and a peak sound pressure of 137dB (C-weighted) by providing adequate supervision when appropriate.
- Consider alternative processes/working methods which will make the work quieter or mean peoples exposure is reduced.
- Provide suitable information, instruction and training about noise risks, any control measures in place and safe working practices to staff and students.
- Refer employees to the Occupational Health Service for health surveillance (hearing checks) if they are likely to be regularly exposed above the upper exposure action values, or are at risk for any reason eg they already suffer from hearing loss or are particularly sensitive to damage.
- Report any concerns they have regarding noisy machinery to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor so that appropriate action can be taken eg noise measurements.
- Report defective/faulty equipment to the Estates department so that appropriate action can be taken. **Note:** You must ensure no one uses faulty/defective equipment that is under your control.
- Seek advice from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor on noise related matters.

## 5.3 Head of Estates

Head of Estates will ensure:

- That this policy is brought to the attention of any contractors he/she engages to conduct College business and make them aware of any noise 'hazard' areas.

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- Arrange suitable timings to carry out 'noisy' work with contractors to ensure minimum disruption to employees, students and members of the public.
- There is a programme of planned preventative maintenance on machinery to limit the increased noise emissions due to wear.

#### 5.4 Human Resources

Human resources will:

- In conjunction with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor identify and arrange any training as is necessary.
- When notified by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor arrange health surveillance as is necessary via the College's Occupational Health provider.
- In conjunction with the Occupational Health Provider advise and support employees that are referred onto specialists as a result of the findings of health surveillance.
- Advise and support managers on disciplinary and other proceedings when required.

#### 5.5 Occupational Health Provider

The College Occupational Health Provider will:

- Carry out health surveillance as agreed with HR.
- Provide HR with the results of health surveillance and highlight any concerns they may have on employees health as soon as practicable.
- Advise the employee to attend their GP for referral onto specialists when necessary.

#### 5.6 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor will:

- Carry out or arrange a noise survey and risk assessments of all relevant areas and keep records of all noise surveys undertaken.
- Provide survey findings and risk assessments to the relevant Head of Department and Senior Management Team, and provide advice on any necessary remedial actions.
- Give appropriate training and/or advice on noise related issues.
- Notify Human Resources of employees (groups of employees) that require health surveillance due to exposure to noise.
- In conjunction with Human Resources identify and arrange any training as is necessary.

#### 5.7 All College Employees

- Shall familiarise themselves and comply with this policy.
- Shall use hearing protection provided for mandatory use in designated hearing protection zones.
- Attend health surveillance (hearing checks) if requested to do so by HR and/or the College's Occupational Health Provider.

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All persons **shall** make 'full and proper use' of any personal hearing protectors or any other control measures provided to reduce exposure to noise. Additionally if a person discovers any defect in any personal hearing protectors or other control measures, they **shall** report it to their line manager/supervisor as soon as is practicable.

## 5.8 Students

- Use hearing protection provided for mandatory use in designated hearing protection zones and when instructed to by their lecturer/technician etc.

## 5.9 Contractors and their Staff

People working with or on behalf of the College are also required to comply with this Policy.

- Contractors and their staff must operate in accordance with College Health and Safety standards, and all appropriate health and safety legislation.
- They must use the controls measurements identified by their risk assessments, this includes the wearing of personal protective equipment eg ear plugs, muffs.
- Arrange suitable timings to carry out 'noisy' work with Estates Department to minimise disruption to employees, students and members of the public.
- Failure to comply with policy will mean immediate suspension of work activities until such time appropriate controls are in place.

## 5.10 Quality Manager

Quality approval check of the policy is the responsibility of the Quality Manager who will arrange for the policy to be posted on the website.

## 6 Linked Policies/Related Documents

Health and Safety Policy

HSE publications:

Noise – Don't Lose your Hearing! INDG363 (rev2)

Sound advice – Control of Noise at Work in Music and Entertainment HSG260

Controlling Noise at Work

Myth-buster – Noise in Music and Entertainment Sectors (HSE)

## 7 Relevant Legislation

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 L108

Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992(as amended) – compatibility of PPE

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

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