

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy

July 2021

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Version Control History

Version Number	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions Made
.0		
.1	August 2016	Footer updated to reflect new template model.
1.2	April 2020	Change of footer to reflect version status, change of owner, lead author, lead editor and next review date. Delete reference to Health and Safety Officer, insert Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser throughout. Correct all reference to CoSHH to read COSHH. 2.1 Amend paragraph to include processes. 5.1 Change Vice Principal of Human Resources and Communications to Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development. 5.2 Change Heads of Curriculum, insert Sector Development Directors.
1.3	July 2021	3.2 Addition of Viruses (Coronavirus), etc. 7. Updated EH40/2005 Workplace Exposure Limits (Fourth Edition).

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out how the College will comply with the general duties of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the more specific requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended).
- 1.2 This document will outline responsibilities and how the risks from substances hazardous to health will be controlled as per the requirements of the COSHH regulations.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all activities, processes and work places under the control of the College which involve substances within the general definition of substances hazardous to health ie chemicals, products containing chemicals, fumes, dusts, vapours, mists gases and specifically those with special risks such as carcinogens, mutagens, biological agents (germs*), respiratory sensitisers and nanomaterials. This also includes *germs that cause diseases such as leptospirosis or legionnaires disease and germs used in laboratories.
- 2.2 It applies to employees, agency staff, contractors, visitors and members of the public.
- 2.3 This policy **does not** apply where specific regulations apply, such as: the Control of Lead at Work Regulations, Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations, Ionising Radiation Regulations and Dangerous Substances Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR).
- 2.4 This Policy **does not** cover a situation where, for example, one employee catches a respiratory infection from another. This is because COSHH only applies in those circumstances where risks of exposure are work related, and not those where they have no direct connection with the work being done.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 **Substance Hazardous to Health** – are substances and/or preparation (mixtures of two or more substances) which have the potential to cause harm to health if they are ingested, inhaled, or are absorbed by, or come into contact with, the skin, or other body membranes.

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- 3.2 **Biological Agent** – is any micro-organism, cell culture, or human endoparasite, whether or not genetically modified, which may cause infection, allergy, toxicity or otherwise create a hazard to human health eg bacteria, fungi, protozoa, viruses (coronavirus) etc.
- 3.3 **Carcinogen:**
- 1 Any substance or preparation which is classified as carcinogenic (category 1A, 1B or 2 under the Classification, Labelling and Packaging regulations;
 - 2 Any substance or preparation listed in Schedule 1 of the COSHH regulations or;
 - 3 Any substance arising from a process specified in Schedule 1 of the COSHH regulations which are a substance hazardous to health.
- 3.4 **Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulations** – European Regulation Number 1272/2008 Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Substances and Mixtures.
- 3.5 **Mutagens and Substances Toxic to Reproduction (STR)** – a substance or preparation which is classified as mutagenic (category 1A or 1B of the CLP Regulations). Mutagens are substances that cause heritable genetic changes (mutations). Most mutations are harmful and most mutagens are carcinogens and vice versa. Substances that are known to impair fertility or to cause developmental toxicity in humans are defined as STR. This definition covers a broader range of health effects than the earlier "teratogenic" which applied only to substances that adversely affected the developing foetus.
- 3.6 **Control Measure** – means a measure taken to reduce exposure to a substance hazardous to health (including the provision of systems of work and supervision, the cleaning of workplaces, premises, plant and equipment, the provision and use of engineering controls and personal protective equipment).
- 3.7 **Fumigation** – an operation in which a substance is released into the atmosphere so as to form a gas to control or kill pests or other undesirable organisms and "fumigate" and "fumigant" shall be construed accordingly.
- 3.8 **Nanomaterial** – defined by the European Commission (EC, 2011): a natural, incidental or manufactured material containing particles, in an unbound state or as an aggregate or agglomerate and where, for 50% or more of the particles in the number size distribution, one or more external dimensions is in the size range 1nm – 100nm. In specific cases and where warranted by concerns for the environment, health, safety or competitiveness, the number size distribution threshold of 50% may be replaced by a threshold between

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1% and 50%. By derogation Fullerenes, Graphene Flakes and single wall Carbon Nanotubes with one or more external dimensions below 1nm should be classed as nanomaterials.

- 3.9 **Workplace Exposure Limit** – the approved exposure limit for that substance hazardous to health in relation to the specified reference period and calculated by an approved method, as contained in HSE publication EH40, Workplace Exposure Limits, as updated from time to time.
- 3.10 **Health Surveillance** – the assessment of the state of health of an employee, as related to exposure to substances hazardous to health, and includes biological monitoring.
- 3.11 **Inhalable Dust** – airborne material which is capable of entering the nose and mouth during breathing.
- 3.12 **Respirable Dust** – is airborne material which is capable of penetrating to the gas exchange region of the lung.
- 3.13 **Hazard Statements** – a hazard statement is a phrase that describes the nature of the hazard in the substance or mixture. A hazard statement will be determined by the application of the classification criteria. Examples of hazard statements include: Causes serious eye damage, Toxic if swallowed, Toxic to the aquatic life with long lasting effects.
- 3.14 **Precautionary Statements** – a precautionary statement is a phrase that describes recommended measure(s) to minimise or prevent adverse effects resulting from exposure to a hazardous substance or mixture due to its use or disposal. Examples of precautionary statements include:
- Wear eye protection, do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product, avoid release to the environment, In case of inadequate ventilation wear respiratory protection.
- 3.15 **Signal Words** – the Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation introduced 2 new signal words: 'Danger' and 'Warning'. If a chemical has a more severe hazard, the label includes the signal word 'Danger'; in case of less severe hazards, the signal word is 'Warning'.

4 Key Principles

- 4.1 No work involving substances hazardous to health shall be undertaken until a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk created by that work to the employees and others who may be present has been completed and

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recorded. Where steps are needed to meet the requirements of the COSHH regulations these must also be implemented.

- 4.2 Risk assessments will be reviewed where it is suspected that the assessment is no longer valid or there has been a significant change in the activity or results from workplace monitoring identify that it is necessary.
- 4.3 Exposure to substances hazardous to health shall either be prevented, or where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled. Control shall be achieved by applying protection measures appropriate to the activity and consistent with the risk assessment.
- 4.4 Suitable arrangements in writing for the safe handling, storage and transport of substances hazardous to health and of waste containing such substances must be in place and clearly displayed.
- 4.5 Employees will be given appropriate training, records of the training will be kept and reviewed as appropriate.
- 4.6 Information, instruction and training will be provided to employees, students, visitors and contractors on the arrangements for COSHH where necessary.
- 4.7 Procedures for managing accidents/incidents on College premises involving chemicals, substances etc will be in place and reviewed.
- 4.8 Maintenance, examination and testing of control measures that are in place will be undertaken to ensure they are efficient and effective.
- 4.9 Exposure to Substances Hazardous to Health will be monitored.
- 4.10 Health surveillance will be arranged for employees as deemed necessary.
- 4.11 Staff and student disciplinary procedures will be followed for breaches of this policy.

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.

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Head of HR and Organisational Development

It is the responsibility of the Head of HR and Organisational Development.

5.1 To review and update this policy and ensure an EIA is carried out on this policy.

5.2 Heads of Departments, Sector Development Directors, Managers

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

- Ensure that their staff are aware of this Policy.
- Ensure compliance with the Policy.
- Seek advice from Human Resources when required on matters of health.
- Ensure that COSHH risk assessments for their area/s of responsibility are carried out and that they are monitored and also reviewed annually.
- Ensure that staff members that carry out COSHH assessments have received training (seek advice from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser).
- Seek advice from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser on COSHH assessments and adequate controls.
- Notify HR department of any concerns that you may have regarding a staff members health as a result of exposure to a substance hazardous to health.
- Ensure that all staff that work with substances hazardous to health have received adequate training on: its use, hazardous properties, control measures, PPE, emergency arrangements.
- Ensure that control measures to prevent exposure are used and maintained, report any defects to Local Exhaust Ventilation and equipment to Estates as per current procedures.
- Ensure there are suitable arrangements for the safe handling, storage and transport of substances hazardous to health and waste materials are disposed of correctly.

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.
- Request COSHH assessments from contractors as necessary.
- That arrangements are in place for the maintenance, examination and testing of Local Exhaustion Ventilation systems including fume cupboards.

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- Ensure there are suitable arrangements for the safe handling, storage and transport of substances hazardous to health and waste materials are disposed of correctly.

5.4 Human Resources

Human resources will:

- Make arrangements for Health Surveillance for employees.
- Refer employees to Occupational Health when necessary.
- In conjunction with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser identify and arrange training as is necessary.
- Advise and support managers on disciplinary and other proceedings when required ie non-compliance with this policy.

5.5 Occupational Health Provider

The College Occupational Health Provider will:

- Carry out health surveillance as agreed with HR.
- Advise the employee to attend their GP for referral onto specialists when necessary.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Adviser will:

- Provide training and information as necessary.
- Advise employees on COSHH risk assessments and suitable control measures.
- Advise Estates department on suitability of contractors COSHH risk assessments.
- Liaise with HR Department on Health Surveillance.
- Investigate accidents/incidents involving substances hazardous to health and produce a report for SMT.

5.6 College Staff

All College staff must:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with this policy.
- When ordering substances hazardous to health notify the Estates Department eg nature of substance, quantity, approximate date of delivery, so that they can make suitable arrangements.

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- Request the safety data sheet (SDS) from the supplier when ordering substances hazardous to health, the SDS will help when carrying out your COSHH assessment.
- Not use a substance hazardous to health unless an assessment of the substance has been carried out and that they have read and understood the contents.
- Use any control measures, this includes Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE), Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) that has been deemed necessary by the risk assessment.
- Report any failings in the measures put in place to either eliminate or control exposure to substances hazardous to health to their line manager.
- If decanting substances ensure that appropriate containers are used and correctly labelled.
- Attend any health surveillance that has been deemed necessary as part of the College's commitment to ensure their health, safety and welfare.
- Attend any training that has been identified as necessary.
- Report accidents or near misses as per current College procedures.
- Not interfere with or misuse anything provided for health and safety.
- Not use defective equipment and/or PPE/RPE.
- Dispose of waste materials correctly ie as per information on safety data sheet.

5.7 Students

Students will:

- Wear Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that has been identified by the COSHH risk assessment and as instructed by their lecturer.
- Ensure Local Exhaust Ventilation systems are used when provided.
- Bring to the attention of their lecturer any defects to tools, equipment, PPE or RPE which may if not repaired/replaced may result in injury/ill health to self or others.
- Not interfere with or misuse anything provided for health and safety.
- Not use substances hazardous to health unless supervised.
- Report any accident or near miss as per current College procedures.
- Not use defective equipment and/or PPE/RPE.
- Dispose of waste materials correctly ie as per information on safety data sheet.

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5.8 Contractors and their Staff

People working with or on behalf of the College are also required to comply with this policy:

- They must not commence a work activity unless they have submitted the appropriate risk assessments to the Estates department.
- They must control exposure to dusts, fumes etc to both themselves and College employees, students and others.
- They must use the controls measurements identified by the risk assessments ie Respiratory Protective Equipment, Personal Protective equipment, dust suppression methods etc.
- Dispose of waste materials correctly ie as per information on safety data sheet.
- Failure to comply with policy will mean immediate suspension of work activities until such time appropriate controls are in place.

5.9 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 College's website.

6 Linked Policies/Related Documents

Health and Safety Policy
Fire Safety Management Policy and Procedures
Lone Working Policy
First Aid Policy
Working at Height Policy
Driving for Work Policy
COSHH Assessment form HS008
Accident Report form HS016
Student Disciplinary Procedure
Staff Disciplinary Procedure

7 Relevant Legislation

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 (as amended)
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
EH40/2005 Workplace Exposure Limits (Fourth Edition)

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CLP Regulations 2009 (Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Substances and Mixtures)

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