



# Management of Hazardous Substances

## Standard

WELLBEING, SAFETY AND HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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## Introduction:

Across the University people use a wide range of hazardous substances, and the University expects these substances to be managed through their full lifecycle. This information aims to keep people safe and protect them, and the environment, from harm, whilst endorsing our innovative work and study.

## Definitions:

**'Hazardous substances'** are any substances or preparations which are already classified as hazardous and come with a hazard warning label (see examples linked to this protocol) showing that they have any, or a combination of, the following harmful properties:

- very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive, irritant, sensitising, carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic for reproduction, explosive, oxidising, extremely flammable, highly flammable, flammable or harmful to the environment.

Unclassified substances that are received as samples, or collected from the environment, produced or manufactured on-site, where there is a reasonable expectation that they have any of the above harmful properties are considered as hazardous substances.

Also included are any substances or preparations that are:

- an asphyxiant when it is being used – i.e. any substance which is hazardous because it displaces respirable air, e.g. nitrogen, argon, helium etc.
- a dust or powder (that can become airborne and breathed in)

**'Procurement'** is the act of obtaining hazardous substances e.g. purchasing, receiving as a gift, being paid to take them (e.g. for analysis), collecting them from the environment etc. it also includes manufacturing.

**'Delivery'** the process by which hazardous substances are brought to the University

**'Storage'** is the storing or retention of hazardous substances when they are not being used

**'Use'** covers using hazardous substances for a particular purpose or task as well as those tasks that can generate hazardous substances (e.g. sand blasting, or sanding teak wood), and may also include manufacturing.

**'Transfer or Disposal'** is the passing on or getting rid of hazardous substances, e.g. sending samples for analysis, giving to a collaborator, disposal via the University waste contractor, disposal to drain etc.

If you are using **biological agents** or **asbestos** follow the protocols for these particular topics which can be found at [www.leeds.ac.uk/safety](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety).

If you are using **radioactive materials** follow the protocols which can be found at [www.leeds.ac.uk/rps](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/rps). For more information, consult your Radiation Safety Coordinator or University Radiation Protection Officer. Where a radioactive substance has hazardous properties other than radioactivity these need to be assessed as well using this protocol.

If you are using Government-identified controlled substances (e.g. drugs, explosives, chemical weapons, etc.), you should follow this protocol and also speak to your Health and Safety Manager as there are additional requirements placed on staff and students which are currently being developed into a new protocol.

Nano-particles are **not** included in the scope of this protocol – please speak to your Health and Safety Manager for guidance.

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## Standard:

The University takes a management approach based on the adequate control of the risks relating to the full lifecycle of hazardous substances, from procurement through to disposal, backed up by the need for legal compliance, and expects that:

### In general

- People involved in the procurement, storage, handling, transport, use and disposal of hazardous substances are given induction, training (in line with the training matrix) management supervision, and are aware of and follow emergency procedures and reporting systems.

### For procurement

- Hazardous substances are only purchased by authorised people in each faculty/service who use University-approved or Purchasing Office-negotiated suppliers.
- Substances in List-A (substances requiring extreme caution) are only manufactured in or brought onto workplaces controlled by the University into legally compliant facilities. Written authorisation from the Head of Safety and Health is also required.
- An inventory of procured substance identified in list-B (sensitive substances) is kept.
- Substances in list-B have additional security requirements, contact the Health and Safety Services Technical Specialist for more details (a procedure for list-B substances is being developed).

### For delivery

- Designated drop off points are identified as safe to receive hazardous substances.
- Hazardous substances are only delivered to designated drop-off points, which are the only locations to receive and sign them in.
- There are systems in place to deal with the incorrect delivery of hazardous substances.
- Methods are in place for identifying what hazardous substances are present.

### For storage

- Storage is managed so that hazardous substances are: stored safely and securely, labelled properly, have emergency procedures in place and are disposed of when no longer needed. These points are also documented (i.e. risk assessed).

### For use

- Before an activity that includes hazardous substances occurs, a risk assessment process which:
  - a. considers the elements listed in the example form attached is carried out and recorded.
  - b. makes sure that affected people are made aware of and understand the relevant sections of the risk assessment.
  - c. checks that the risk assessment is reviewed regularly or immediately if significant changes occur.
- If health surveillance or workplace monitoring is identified as necessary in the risk assessment, it is organised, carried out and records are kept.
- Equipment used as a control measure is routinely maintained and inspected in line with the work equipment protocol ( <http://wsh.leeds.ac.uk/work-equipment> ), manufacturer's instructions and legal requirements.

### For transfer and disposal

- Hazardous substances moved from one workspace to another (on or off campus) are properly labelled, packaged, and transported by people who understand the relevant emergency procedures and have control measures in place. For transport off-campus, advice from the University Dangerous Good Safety Advisor (Paul Beal) is obtained.
- Hazardous substances are disposed of safely, and the University waste procedures are followed.
- When people in control of hazardous substances leave their role at the University, they complete a full handover of all hazardous substances before they leave.

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