

School of Food and Nutritional Sciences

Postgraduate Student Safety Induction

Version 1, May 2018

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide all postgraduate students with introductory health and safety information for the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences and information on university safety policy and procedures.

Note that it is not intended to be a substitute for: laboratory safety manuals; safety notices; specific advice or guidelines given by your supervisor in relation to your work. You will also be required to undertake local safety training and be familiar with safety arrangements relevant to your work.

University Safety Policy

The university safety policy may be viewed on the Health and Safety Office website and is also included in the appendix:

(<https://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/about/policies/>)

Safety responsibilities

As described in the university safety policy, under current Irish Health and Safety legislation, the university has a legal responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of its staff and students. The president of the university and the governing body are ultimately responsible for health and safety. Day to day management of health and safety is delegated to the individual schools, departments, units and centres that make up the university. At school level, responsibility rests ultimately with the head of school. All students are required to comply with health and safety requirements to assist the school in carrying out its health and safety duties.

All students have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety, health and welfare and that of any other people who may be affected by their actions.
- Co-operate with the university to enable it to comply with its statutory duties.
- Use any safety equipment, protective clothing or other means provided.
- Report all accidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Report to their supervisor any defects in equipment, place of work or system of work which might endanger safety health or welfare of which they become aware.
- Not intentionally misuse or interfere with any appliance, personal protective equipment or any other means provided for ensuring safety.

These responsibilities apply regardless of whether work is carried out in the school, in other university units, or elsewhere (e.g., other institutions, fieldwork).

Emergency procedures

You should know what to do in an emergency, before a real situation arises. Familiarise yourself with the locations of your nearest emergency exit and assembly area, and the locations of emergency eyewash stations, showers and first aid boxes in your work area. Note that while trained staff will administer first aid and operate fire extinguishers, you may be required to help them in an emergency. Therefore, it is also worth noting the locations of fire extinguishers in your area and the location of the nearest automatic external defibrillator (AED).

**When you hear the fire alarm:**

- If working in a laboratory, you should make the area safe before leaving by turning off equipment (if possible), switching off gas taps and closing chemical containers.
- Do not take any personal belongings.
Evacuate the building immediately – use stairs, do not use lift.
- Use the nearest fire escape route or stairway.
- Assemble at the designated ‘Assembly Area’
- Remain at the ‘Assembly Area’ and do not re-enter the building until given permission to do so by a fire brigade officer or services supervisor.
- Fire marshals will assist in the evacuation of the building. Everyone is required to cooperate with marshals in the execution of their duties.

| Location of assembly areas |
|---|
| Outside the glass atrium on level 1 |
| Car park by the processing block |
| Entrance near College road/Gaol Walk intersection |
| Outside Block E |

| Fire marshals |
|----------------------|
| Theresa Dennehy |
| Karen Galvin |
| Johann Scollard |
| Therese Uniacke-Lowe |
| Dave Waldron |

Other emergencies

- Raise the alarm and evacuate the area (as necessary).
- Call the required emergency services (999 or 112)
- Notify General Services on their emergency extension (3111 on internal phones or 021 490 3111 on your mobile).
- Inform the UCC Switchboard (dial 9 on internal phones) of all emergency service calls during normal hours.

**First Aid****First Aiders**

| Name | Location | Extn. no* |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|
| Theresa Dennehy | Room 222 | 2885 |
| Karen Galvin | Room 106 | 3126 |
| Bernice Quinn | Room 106 | 3440 |
| Johann Scollard | Room 222 | 2885 |
| Therese Uniacke | Room 224 | 1385 |
| Dave Waldron | Room 314 | 3531 |

If calling from a mobile: + 021 490

| Location of first aid boxes | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Room 101 | Brewery Food Process Hall |
| Room 115 | Upstairs corridor outside room 047 |
| Room 121 | Room 304 |
| Room 219 | Room 307 |
| Room 232 | Meat Process Hall cloakroom |
| Room 4.26 (Biosciences Building) | Convenience Food cloakroom |

| Location of AEDs (automated external defibrillators) in the Food Science Building |
|--|
| Level 2, Central steel stairs (between block A and B) |
| Level 3, Glass atrium |

Accident reporting

All accidents involving injury must be reported to your supervisor/first aider. Any incident involving a near miss or dangerous occurrence that could potentially lead to injury must also be reported and the relevant accident/dangerous occurrence report forms completed.

Prompt accident reporting is very important for a number of reasons:

- The University is legally required to report certain types of accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Authority. UCC is also required to report all accidents, fires and other dangerous occurrences to the university insurers.
- Staff Safety Representatives have a statutory right to investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences and need to be advised of such incidents.
- Information collected from accident reports helps us to identify potential problems and improve safety.

General safety information

Health and Safety training

- All postgraduate students are required to complete, and sign for, relevant training at local level for individual laboratories or research areas, or the use of specific machinery, equipment, substances or biological agents.



Risk assessment

Under Irish law we are required to identify hazards in the workplace and to assess the risks presented by those hazards.

- A **hazard** is anything that has the potential to cause harm. This could be a substance, a machine, a process or a situation.
- A **risk** is the likelihood that someone will be harmed by the hazard.
- A **risk assessment** is a process to evaluate the likelihood of injury caused during the use of a substance, machine or process at the place of work.

Risk assessments are not just a paper exercise to fulfil a legal requirement. The purpose of conducting a risk assessment is to ensure the hazards associated with the work have been identified and appropriate controls put in place to ensure the risk of harm to you, or others affected by your work, are as low practically possible.

The most obvious activities that involve exposure to hazards are laboratory and other experimental work. However, travel, fieldwork and computer work are just some of the other activities that could potentially expose you or others to harm and also require risk assessment. Even for activities where the hazards and controls required are obvious and the risks are low, this must be formally acknowledged in a risk assessment.

You must carry out a risk assessment before the activity commences. For convenience, risk assessment forms are available on the Health and Safety Office website for the following:

- Work related travel risk assessment
- Chemical health risk assessment
- Biological risk assessment
- Substances with irreversible health effects risk assessment

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/managinghealthsafety/safetystatements/apps/clinks/>

The school has also prepared its own in-house risk assessment forms for academic travel (i.e., travel for conferences, meetings, etc.) (see appendices).

If an assessment for a similar activity has already been completed, you do not have to do carry out a new assessment. However, you must ensure it is adequate for your work or updated to reflect differences. You must read and sign relevant assessments to show you understand the hazards and controls required.



Fire safety

The following general fire prevention precautions are required:

- Keep escape routes clear at all times. Ensure items left for collection (e.g., waste, recycling, computers) do not block escape routes. Ensure cars and bikes do not block fire exits.
- Fire doors must not be kept wedged open.
- Take particular care that potential fire hazards such as portable heaters and fans, kettles, hot plates and ovens are turned off when not in use.
- Lighted bunsen burners must never be left unattended.



Electrical safety

- Ensure the equipment that you use is switched off when you have finished with it or at the end of the day.
- Report all electrical faults, damaged cords, plugs, etc. as soon as possible. Never attempt to repair them yourself.

- Avoid using extension cables wherever possible. If their use is unavoidable, keep the number of attached items to a minimum and never 'daisychain' them (i.e., plug one extension cable into another one).



Manual handling

Manual handling includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving any load, which because of its characteristics (e.g., heavy) or unfavourable ergonomic conditions (e.g., at a height, in an awkward place), involves risk of injury, particularly to the back. As such it is not necessarily limited to lifting very heavy or large objects. While most of these types of activities are dealt with by trained staff, you may be faced with situations where heavy or awkward loads need to be moved. Always use your common sense in these situations. Never attempt to move anything you feel uncomfortable with and always seek advice and assistance.



Computer work

Computers and computer workstations are also referred to as visual display screen equipment (VDSE) or visual display units (VDU). This includes personal computers and displays/computers attached to equipment. Long periods of uninterrupted computer work can lead to eye fatigue and discomfort. Poor posture or workstation layout could result in musculoskeletal complaints.

- Postgraduate students whose work involves long periods of computer work should carry out a VDU risk assessment in consultation with their supervisor.
- The following link provides a useful quick source of information on computer workstation layout, mouse/ keyboard use, correct posture and other useful tips to prevent discomfort.
<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/positions.html>



Office safety

Office areas are usually not regarded as being particularly hazardous, especially by workers based in departments with a large laboratory component. However, hazards are present in offices and accidents do happen. Accidents may be caused by tripping or falling over material or being struck by material falling from an unstable location or unnecessarily high level. Fire and electrical hazards are also found in offices and the fire and electrical safety precautions described above apply to offices as much as to other areas of the school.

Additional precautions to be aware of are:

- Avoid trailing cords, including electrical cables and telephone lines, on the ground where they could be tripped over. Either reposition them, or reorganise the work area setup. If this is not possible, they should be adequately covered.
- Broken and obsolete computers, printers and furniture should be disposed of and not be allowed to accumulate.
- Avoid storing items on top of cabinets or high shelves where they are difficult to reach or could fall on you. Organise storage so that frequently used items or heavy items are at waist levels, and use steps or kick stools for difficult to reach items.
- Keep the floor space around your work area free from obstructions. Keep cupboards and filing cabinets closed when not in use.
- Defective (e.g., flickering) or non-functioning lighting should be reported promptly for replacement (contact maintenance helpdesk extn. 2480).



Travel safety

Most travel activities in the school would be expected to occur without incident, and are generally low risk. However, foreign travel may involve potential exposure to security risks and

even in a 'safe' destination, theft, loss of valuables or illness can be stressful when in an unfamiliar environment away from home. Even domestic travel may involve increased exposure to everyday hazards such as traffic accidents and adverse weather conditions.

- As with other work-related activities, you must complete a risk assessment for all travel, including domestic and foreign trips, to identify the hazards involved and ensure measures are in place to reduce risks. A copy should be placed in the folder provided in the School Office (Room 240).
- You are recommended to carry out the assessment as far in advance of your trip as possible, so you have plenty of time to thoroughly consider any safety issues and discuss these with your supervisor.
- You do not need to carry out a new risk assessment for repeat or routine travel, as long as the original risk assessment remains relevant.
- Pregnant students and those taking regular medication or with pre-existing health conditions should seek the advice of their health care provider or Student Health before travelling.
- Further information is included in the relevant sections of the safety statement (see Safety Statement documents *Fieldwork* and *Travel* in the appendices).

Pregnant students

It is strongly recommended that pregnant students disclose their pregnancy to so that any risks to the health of the mother or baby that may arise as a result of their work are assessed and managed appropriately. Failure to disclose a pregnancy may result in a pregnant student unknowingly putting herself and/or her child in danger. The school may seek permission to consult Student Health, the student's own GP or the student's obstetrician or midwife when completing a risk assessment. If a student is unhappy with the risk assessment she should consult with the Student Ombudsman (see Policies and Procedures document *Support for Pregnant Students*):

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/students/policies/>

Medical conditions

Students with pre-existing medical conditions are advised to inform their supervisor so that any special considerations (e.g., first aid response) can be put in place. Information will be treated in strictest confidence.

Chemical safety

A risk assessment must be carried out for all work using chemicals. Forms for chemical risk assessments can be downloaded from the Health and Safety Office:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/managinghealthsafety/safetystatements/apps/clinks/>

The standard chemical risk assessment form (19.3.17) is suitable for most tasks. Form 19.3.20 (Risk assessment of materials with irreversible health effects) must be used to assess tasks that use carcinogens, mutagens, reproductive toxins or sensitisers. Consult your supervisor when deciding on the most suitable approach.

In a food research environment it is a good idea to think of assessing **substances** rather than chemicals. For example, food ingredients, while safe as they occur in foods, may be a hazard when handled in pure forms or in bulk. Include all substances used in your method when completing a risk assessment.

A hard copy of the assessment with up to date relevant MSDS's must be kept in the lab or area where the work is carried out.

Biosafety

A risk assessment must be carried out for all work using biological agents and potentially biohazardous materials. The biological risk assessment form (19.3.18) can be downloaded from the Health and Safety Office:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/occupationalhealthandsafety/managinghealthsafety/safetystatements/applications/>

If you intend working with biological agents or biohazardous material, you must discuss vaccination requirements with your supervisor. Vaccinations for postgraduate students are arranged through the Student Health.

Special requirements apply to the use of genetically modified organisms and genetically modified microorganisms (GMO's/GMM's). Anyone intending to use either of these is referred to the UCC Biosafety Committee for further information (www.ucc.ie/en/biosafety).

The Biological Agents Regulations require notification of the Health and Safety Authority prior to first use of class 2, 3 or 4 biological agents. There is no requirement to notify the HSA of diagnostic-type work (i.e., involving specimens that are likely to contain biological agents, but where deliberate propagation or concentration of the agent is not involved).

Record of induction training

I have received, read and understood the student safety induction document

Name (PRINT): _____

Signature: _____

Induction date: _____