

School of Life Sciences

Department of Botany



Policies and Procedures

August 2004

# PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

## 1. PREAMBLE

This document sets out the general policies and procedures as adopted in the Department of Botany. These are applicable to all staff and students within the department. The current version of this document is available from the Policies section of the departmental website. It is an evolving document, and will be updated at frequent although irregular intervals. When a significant update is made, staff and students will be notified by email.

Some of the policy areas included here are set down at the School, Faculty or University level. Where there is any discrepancy between the departmental policy and one of these other levels, the higher level policy will take precedence unless specifically noted here. However, in the case of regulations set down by the University, these will always apply.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to explain the policies, procedures and regulations as adopted in the Department of Botany, and to impart useful general information about the department for all staff members, honours and postgraduate students.

The rules and procedures are designed primarily to ensure a safe workplace, and to ensure compliance with University regulations or the law. Secondly they represent an attempt to ensure the most efficient deployment of the Department resources.

University regulations and procedures are covered in the Administrative Handbook, the Business Procedures Manual, and the La Trobe University Act, Statutes and Regulations. Copies of these are available on the University website. Advice on interpretation should initially be sought from the Laboratory Manager of the Head of Department.

Several departmental activities impinge on areas affected by Federal and State Legislation. Copies of most of the relevant Acts and Regulations are held by the Laboratory Manager, whose advice should be sought prior to involvement in any activity likely to be covered by legislation or regulation.

Safety is the most important area covered. It should be the direct concern of all members of the department and requires their active participation. All staff members and students have a direct responsibility to work in a safe manner and to ensure that no action taken on their part impinges on the safety of others or might render ineffective the efforts of the university in the field of safety. Staff and students are requested to report to their supervisor or to the Laboratory Manager any incident or hazard to safety observed in their area.

## 3. SAFETY

The University recognises its obligations to take all reasonable precautions to protect the safety of its employees, students and visitors while they are on campus. Council has adopted the University Safety Policy, which details the responsibilities of the various parties. Full details of all aspects of Safety policy and procedures are provided on the web site for the Occupational Health and Safety Office.

### Accident Reports

All accidents must be reported immediately, and potentially dangerous situations should be reported promptly to enable timely preventative measures to be taken. Reports should be handed to the Administrator for forwarding directly to the Safety Officer. It is a statutory requirement that all accident reports be in the hands of the Safety Officer within twenty-four hours of the accident.

### Safety Officer

The University's Safety Officer is responsible for the initiation and co-ordination of safety programs relating to all official University activities. The Safety Office is located in Room 137 David Myers Building. All members of the University have direct access to the Safety Officer.

### Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Occupational Health & Safety Committee meets quarterly to discuss matters brought before it by its members and by the Safety Officer. Every area of the University is represented on the committee and anyone wishing to present a matter for discussion by this committee may do so, either through their representatives or through the Safety Officer. The Occupational Health and Safety Committee reports directly to Council.

### La Trobe University Medical Centre

The Medical Centre situated at the north end of the campus on Plenty Road is the closest medical facility. This is a bulk billing clinic (dependant on the doctor) and private hospital facility ph.9437 8888. If you need medical assistance but not necessarily an ambulance you can call 9437 8888 at any time 24 hours a day and ask for the triage nurse who will assess the situation and send a doctor/nurse if necessary.

### Personal Safety and Security

The safety of people using the campus is the primary interest of the Personal Security on Campus Committee. Reports of assault or harassment on campus should be made to this committee through the Safety Officer.

During weekends and after 6.00 pm on weekdays, staff and students may bring their cars through the main control gate and park them near the buildings (provided marked parking bays are used) to lessen the risk of assault. Reports of vandalism, theft or suspicious behaviour in the car parks should also be made promptly to Central Security.

### After-hours work on campus

Staff and students working back after hours should:

- complete the after-hours book outside the General Office;
- wherever possible work in pairs;
- ensure that there is someone else in the building, tell them where you will be working and leave together;
- notify someone at home where you will be working, your expected time of return and the telephone number to ring if you are late. At no stage should you change your program without telling that person.

An after hours Security Bus service is provided to transport staff and students to car parks from the Library (please seek advice from the library or check the web for timetable and pickup points).

### Protective clothing and equipment

University regulation 23.2 (1) states that:

- every member of the University shall wear laboratory coats and such other protective clothing or equipment as required by law or recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council or the Australian Standards Association and in particular when handling:
  - corrosive, toxic or harmful chemicals;
  - live or dead animals;
  - microbiological preparations including bacteria, fungi, viruses and body fluids;
  - or such other material considered to be harmful to life or clothing.
- every member of the University shall wear closed shoes and may not be unshod or wear sandals or thongs when working in laboratories or in those areas where harmful chemicals are in use or there is risk of injury.
- members of the University working in workshops or laboratories or other areas of the University using tools or substances which can cause eye injuries shall at all times wear protective safety spectacles.

### Emergency phone number ext. 2222

To simplify emergency procedure, the above extension number has been allocated to be used for all emergencies, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. During normal working hours the number is connected to the central switchboard and staff there will alert the appropriate services. After hours the number is connected to the Central Control gatehouse and a similar service is provided.

Only emergency calls are to be made on this extension.

When reporting an emergency, you should provide as much of the following information as possible:

- the nature of the emergency i.e. fire, flood, life failure, assault, accident;
- the type of assistance you think is required i.e. ambulance, fire brigade, tradesmen;
- the precise location of the trouble - building, level and room number;
- your name and the names of other persons involved.

After hours there are occasions when the Control Box is unmanned. However, the emergency number 2222 is still answered as it is automated; the telephone is answered, you leave the message and immediately you hang up the Security Guard is contacted and your message is relayed automatically to wherever he is on campus.

### Responsibility of first person at scene of emergency

This could be any person on campus. They have initial responsibility for dealing with the emergency, having total control of the situation until a more appropriate authority arrives. It is the action of this person which will determine the extent of injury and damage which could result from any emergency.

### In the event of fire

The first person on the scene should carry out the following procedure, preferably in the order given:

- Break the glass of the nearest fire alarm and press the button.
- Ring emergency 2222, advise the telephone operator nature and type of fire e.g. spreading rapidly, flammable liquid. location: room, floor, building.
- Send someone to the main fire panel in the building (on level two in the Biological Sciences Buildings) to await the arrival of the fire brigade and to guide them to the site of the fire.
- Shut all doors and windows BUT DO NOT LOCK.
- Evacuate building. Obey any evacuation directions from Floor Warden.
- Extinguish the fire, if you know how, by using the correct type of extinguisher.
- When fighting a fire be sure to stay between an unobstructed exit and the fire itself.

### General emergency procedure on campus

If you are first on the scene at an emergency:

- Communicate: Dial 2222 give details
- Contain: Isolate the emergency
- Control: Render appropriate assistance

### Safety Legislation

The University is covered by the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985 which aims at cooperation between the employee and employer to provide a safe, healthy work environment. The Act places specific obligations upon the University and upon its members. These include accident reporting, the provision of specific items of safety equipment and the utilisation of this equipment by employees.

The University is required to comply with legislation concerning the procurement, manufacture, storage, handling, disposal and sale of various materials.

### Poisons

The Poisons Act 1962 (No. 6889) and Poisons Regulation 1963 (No. 158) govern the handling of substances as specified in the eight Schedules to the Act. Under this Act the University and any of its departments wishing to use these substances must possess a Poisons Licence and comply with the regulations relating to storage and handling.

### Radioactive substances

Members of the Department wishing to use radioactive isotopes in the course of their experimental work must:

- obtain their supervisors approval (where applicable).
- obtain the approval of the Department Radiation Officer before taking any steps to commence experimental work.
- inform the Laboratory Manager before any radioactive material is acquired.

Radioactive materials may not be transferred between departments nor be borrowed or loaned without the approval of the Departmental Radiation Officer and the Laboratory Manager [refer to Health (Radiation Safety) Act 1983 & Health (Radiation Safety) Regulations 1984 (ref. Section 10.4)].

The use of radioactive substances is strictly regulated by law and the instruction of the Department Radiation Officer or the University Radiation Officer must be sought regarding all phases of work with such substances. This includes acquisition, storage, application, precautions during use, monitoring of personnel, equipment and laboratory space and the final disposal of radioactive waste material. Penalties for non-compliance with the regulations are severe and the user is, in all cases, held responsible for ascertaining and complying with the regulations.

### Biohazards

Any person intending to experiment with cloned material, or to conduct experiments including recombinant DNA, must first obtain a licence to do so from the Supervisory Technical Committee on Recombinant DNA Studies. In some instances an additional licence may also be required from the Australian Academy of Science. Departments concerned with such requirements should contact the Safety Officer for further information.

### Department Safety Arrangements

The Laboratory Manager, together with the Departmental Safety Officer and the Departmental Radiation Officer, co-ordinate safety arrangements within the department.

Reports of accidents and potentially hazardous situations are normally made through the above, although members of the department may deal directly with the Safety Officer if they wish.

Departmental safety regulations are formulated in an attempt to comply with existing safety and other legislation and with University requirements. They are also tailored to cover the special and varied activities of the members of this Department.

Members of the department are required to familiarise themselves with the locations of fire-alarms, fire extinguishers, fire hoses and spill kits nearest to their work area. They should know the applications of the different types of extinguishers and should always be aware of the quickest escape routes from their work area.

### Material Safety Data Sheets

Before using any chemical substance the user should obtain and study the relevant Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Material Safety Data Sheets should be requested when ordering any new material, and a copy kept in an orange folder in the laboratory workplace. MSDS's are also available from Chemwatch on the web and from suppliers' web sites.

Students and staff must be aware of the hazards connected with the substances, equipment and techniques with which they are working and take the necessary precautions in their work. Protective clothing and equipment is available from the Laboratory Manager and should be

used at all times where necessary. The Laboratory Manager should be notified of any deficiencies in this area.

### Lifting heavy weights

When heavy weights are to be moved the proper lifting technique must be used and assistance sought when necessary. Lifting equipment is available; please consult with the Laboratory Manager.

### Staff and student safety induction

At the commencement of each semester of each academic year the University Safety Officer holds a seminar outlining the proper practices for fire drills and laboratory safety. It is compulsory for all honours, postgraduate and new staff to attend. Following attendance at this seminar participants are required to sign a Health and Safety Introduction checklist.

### Laboratory Rules

The following rules must be followed at all times:

- Food or drink must not be consumed in laboratories.
- Laboratory coats and closed shoes must be worn at all times in all University laboratories.
- Protective clothing and protective equipment must be used when and where appropriate (e.g. safety goggles, gloves, etc.)
- Students must not commence experiments without their supervisor's approval.
- Technical staff and students may not work back after hours without their supervisor's approval, nor may they work back alone.
- Broken glass must not be deposited in rubbish bins; the broken glass bins provided must be used.
- Scalpel blades and hypodermic needles must not be deposited in rubbish bins, but placed in the sharps containers provided.
- Users must adopt the correct procedure for disposal of all waste materials.
- All members of the department should know the location of the nearest fire alarm, fire hose, fire extinguishers and spill kit.
- Tubing must not be removed from gooseneck taps. Where an eyewash station is not readily available this is the best method of dealing with eye injury; rinse gently under running water.
- All users must read the labels on chemicals before using them, know the hazards and rigorously adhere to the proper handling procedures. (Check MSDS).
- All gas cylinders must be secured by a strap or strong chain.
- The volume of dangerous substances in all laboratories must be kept to the minimum necessary for the experiments in progress at the time.
- All members of the department must keep their laboratory areas clean and tidy, and the floor areas clear.
- Spills must be cleaned up promptly.
- Doorways, corridors and escape routes must be kept clear at all times.
- All members of the department must promptly report all accidents and fill out report of OHS.
- Equipment malfunctions must be reported to the Laboratory Manager promptly, e.g. most drain blockages, water leaks, electrical faults etc.

### Poisons

Poisons must be kept locked up in the Poisons Cupboard when not in use, and the volume held in any laboratory should be kept to the practicable working minimum. Users must be aware of, and comply with, the proper safety precautions before commencing work using poisons. Other occupants of laboratories in which poisons are used must be informed of their nature and of the appropriate precautions and antidote. Cyanide users must consult with LTU Occupational Health and Safety for their policy on working with cyanide.

### New Activities

All proposed experimental techniques, which are new to the Department, should be looked at carefully from a safety viewpoint by supervisors before they are adopted. The Laboratory

Manager, together with the Departmental Safety Officer or the Departmental Radiation Officer as appropriate, should be notified of any proposed new Departmental activity prior to its introduction together with the proposed safety measures as required. Experiments may not be carried out in the absence of the proper safety equipment or laboratory set-up. The Laboratory Manager or the University Safety Officer should be consulted to help determine the risks involved when using equipment and chemicals.

### Electrical Safety

The following procedures must be followed in relation to electrical equipment:

- Electrical equipment belonging to the department or being used in the department shall be used only as supplied by the manufacturer or as modified, constructed or electrically checked by a qualified electrician.
- Any experimental electrical equipment built or modified by any member of the department shall be checked by a qualified electrician before power is applied to it.
- Equipment shall not be operated without the correct safety covers being installed over live conductors. Safety standards shall not be relaxed simply because equipment is experimental.
- Faulty electrical equipment must not be tampered with, but should be reported promptly to the Laboratory Manager. It should be labelled 'Faulty - do not switch on' and disconnected from the power mains.
- In the event of a fire starting within electrical equipment, the equipment should be switched off and disconnected if possible before attempting to fight the fire. The correct type of fire extinguisher should be used on any electrical fire.
- Users of any equipment within the department must familiarise themselves with the correct operating procedures before attempting to operate it.
- Electrical equipment which is left operating after hours must be labelled 'Please leave switched on' and should carry the name of the user, and instructions as to the procedure to follow in the event of an emergency. At least two emergency telephone numbers should be included to enable Central Security to contact the user if necessary. Unattended power apparatus notices are available from Laboratory Manager.
- Persons working on electrical equipment must read and comply with Australian Standard 2243 'Safety in Laboratories' part seven - 'Electrical Aspects', available from the Laboratory Manager.

### Computers

All users of computers and similar visual display units must familiarise themselves with the proper procedures necessary for the safe long term use of these units. The Laboratory Manager can provide advice and appropriate literature which must be read before using a computer and monitor. Vital factors in the avoidance of long term health problems include the proper layout of the equipment, and the adoption by the user of the correct working position and posture in relation to the equipment. This requires the use of special, ergonomically designed chairs and the careful use of all of their adjustments. The illumination levels within the room and of the display are important, as are the correct adjustment of the screen brightness and the frequency of rest breaks.

### Workshop Safety

Only qualified and authorised staff may use the equipment in the department workshop. All others are specifically prohibited from using the equipment.

### Safety Information

Various publications relating to safety are held by the Laboratory Manager and these should be consulted if there is any doubt regarding the safety of any materials or methods used in any of the department's activities. Other safety publications are held in the University Safety Office and may be consulted during normal hours by arrangement with the Safety Officer. Chemical reference books should also be consulted to ensure that hazards inherent in the substances and methods to be used are fully understood before work commences. Further chemical information is available from Chemwatch and from suppliers' web sites.

### First Aid

There are several trained First Aid personnel in the department.

### Emergency Equipment

First Aid Kits are located in a number of places around the department. Staff and students should ensure that they are aware of the location of the nearest first aid kit for any location in which they work.

Users should notify the Laboratory Manager of any shortages or impending shortages.

### Breathing apparatus

Two self-contained breathing apparatuses belonging to the Faculty of Science and Technology are kept permanently in the Foyer of level 2, Biological Sciences 1 Building. The apparatus is to be used when it is necessary to enter an area where toxic fumes are present, e.g. after a large scale spill of a toxic solvent. Only trained personnel should use this equipment. Untrained personnel must not use the equipment. Training courses are run frequently and staff wishing to participate should consult the Laboratory Manager.

### Fire fighting Equipment

Fire hoses, extinguishers and fire blankets are provided at various locations within the department. It is vital that all members of the department know the whereabouts and applications of the fire fighting equipment closest to their area. Fire extinguishers, available from the store, must also be taken on all field trips.

### Safe Waste Disposal

Waste materials must be disposed of safely and in accordance with EPA regulations. If uncertain as to the correct method of disposal, advice should be sought from the Laboratory Manager.

Most waste materials can be divided into the following categories and disposed of as described below:

- Harmless dry waste like food and paper scraps can simply be left in rubbish bins and waste paper recycle bins for disposal by the cleaning staff.
- Hard dangerous waste such as broken glass, hypodermic needles, scalpel blades etc. must be deposited appropriate containers. On no account may these items be placed in normal rubbish bins.
- Dilute aqueous waste may be poured down laboratory sinks. Strong acids and alkalis should be greatly diluted and neutralised before disposal in this fashion. Dilution should be carried out slowly and by adding the substance to water not the other way around. Do not pour solvents down sinks.
- Solvent waste (non radioactive) should be accumulated in bottles for collection, and the Laboratory Manager notified. This solvent waste should be collected in separate containers as follows:
  - Water soluble solvents e.g. alcohol
  - Chlorinated hydrocarbons e.g. Carbon tetrachloride.
  - Highly flammable solvents e.g. ethers
  - Acetone
  - Mixed classes; e.g. Methanol/Chloroform solvent system.

All bottles should be appropriately labelled and a note should be made on them whenever benzene is present.

- Radioactive waste must be disposed of according to the instructions given by the Department Radiation Officer. In his absence the advice of the University Radiation Officer should be sought through the Safety Officer.
- More information regarding safe disposal of waste is available through Hazardous Waste Disposal/Removal Procedures at Occupational Health and Safety web site.

### Safety on Field Trips

Before leaving the campus to carry out fieldwork, staff and students must:

- Where appropriate, obtain their supervisors approval.

- Inform the Laboratory Manager in writing of the details of their proposed trip. This information should include:
  - the purpose of the trip, destination, and means of transport;
  - the names of all participants;
  - the times and dates of departure, return and periods to be spent at specific sites;
  - the name(s) of any third party with whom contact will be maintained;
  - the nearest field contact point where available;
  - the mobile phone numbers or other contact details of participants
  - in remote areas further details of the proposed itinerary and contact points.

The names and addresses of any non-university personnel must be given to the Laboratory Manager in writing at least three days before departure to enable an insurance policy to be taken out in lieu of worker's compensation insurance.

Field First Aid Kits and a fire extinguisher must to be carried on all field trips.

Anti-tetanus injections are recommended and are available free of cost through the University Medical Centre.

Scuba Diving on official University field trips is strictly controlled, and can only be undertaken by qualified personnel with all the appropriate safety precautions.

Further information relating to Fieldwork Safety Procedures can be obtained from LTU web site.

#### Vehicles

Staff and students using University vehicles must read and comply with the 'Rules for the Use of Department Vehicles' set out at the front of each log book.

## 4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

There are a number of legal requirements on staff and students resulting from State and Commonwealth legislation.

#### Regulations

The activities of the University are regulated by a large number and variety of Commonwealth and State Acts of Parliament and Municipal by-laws and regulations. Members of the Department are not required to familiarise themselves with all of the details of such legislation, as the University has, over the years, created regulations in an attempt to ensure that the activities of individual staff and students do not contravene existing legislation. Compliance by staff with the published University and departmental rules and regulations will ensure that the more common activities of staff and students are carried out within the law. Staff intending to supervise or undertake new or unusual activities, in research or teaching, should inform the Laboratory Manager and Head of Department well before commencing, so the proper procedures can be adopted.

If any doubt exists regarding the legality of any current or planned activity the affected staff members should consult the Laboratory Manager or Head of Department without delay. The department will not tolerate non-observance of laws or regulations by any of its members for any reason whatsoever.

#### Legislation

The following is a list of some of the more important Parliamentary Acts affecting the University as a whole and the activities of this department in particular.

##### Commonwealth Legislation

Copyright Act, Customs Act, Freedom of Information Act, Health Act, National Parks Act, Quarantine Act, Wildlife Protection Act, Equal Opportunity Act

## Victorian State Legislation

Agricultural Chemicals Act, Dangerous Goods Act, Forest Act, Industrial Safety, Health & Welfare Act, Health Act, Inflammable Liquids Act, Labour and Industry Act, Local Government Act, National Parks Act, Pharmacy Act, Poisons Act, Wildflowers & Native Plant Act, Vermin & Noxious Weeds Act, Wildlife Act, Workers Compensation Act

This section cannot be exhaustive in its cover as the subject is a specialist one and legislation is constantly being updated (check State and Federal Government web sites). It is included to act as a reminder to staff and students to carefully check all of the legal ramifications of any new projects well before they commence any field or laboratory work. If the Laboratory Manager or Head of Department cannot provide up to date advice then the University Solicitor is available to do so. There is absolutely no excuse for non-compliance, by staff or students, with any legal requirement.

## Permits

Under some Acts of Parliament permits are required to carry out particular activities. Several permits are held by the department which give a blanket cover for specific activities, for example to possess poisons, to purchase ethanol duty free and to buy biological derived products. Some regulations however demand the possession of personal permits to undertake certain activities whilst others are highly specific in their cover and require regular renewal. Applications for permits should be made early, to ensure that they are issued in sufficient time.

Research work involving the genetic modification or manipulation of organisms, including plants, requires approval by the University Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee (GMSC). This committee will authorise specific research projects and personnel provided they meet the regulatory requirements. Staff and students must undergo instruction and training prior to working with Genetically Modified Organisms. Honours and postgraduate students must consult with their supervisor or with the departmental GMSC representative before planning to undertake any research work that might involve genetic manipulation or modification.

The importation of any plant material, especially including genetically modified organisms, requires permits from the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service. Staff and students planning to import any plant material should consult with the Laboratory Manager in the first instance.

## 5. DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION and STRUCTURE

The Head of the Department is responsible, through the Head of School of Life Sciences and the Dean of the Faculty, to the Vice-Chancellor for the overall financial and academic administration of the department. He/she may delegate authority to members of this staff to manage specific department activities or expenditure.

Academic staff in the department are given access to funds through the Laboratory Manager, acting for the Head of Department. Routine expenditure for teaching or research may be taken straight to the Laboratory Manager. However unusual or expensive items must first have the approval of the Head of Department.

The Laboratory Manager is responsible to the Head of Department for the management of the department's finances and the day to day general functioning of the department. Together with the Head of Department, the Laboratory Manager is responsible for departmental property and technical resources, and for ensuring the legality and safety of the department's activities.

Specialist general staff responsible to the Head of Department and Laboratory Manager provide services in the following areas:

- Plant growth and collection facilities
- Photographic and computer graphics facilities

- Electronics workshops facilities
- General workshop facilities

Access to these facilities must be through the general staff member in charge of the area, if necessary with the prior approval of the Head of Department or Laboratory Manager.

Postgraduate and Honours students are responsible in the first place to their supervisor, and can operate in the department only with their supervisor's approval. Such approval must be sought for all activities to be undertaken by the student in pursuance of an Honours or Higher Degree. Requisitions for goods or services must be approved and signed by the supervisor before being given to the Laboratory Manager. The student must obtain the permission of the supervisor and, if necessary, the Laboratory Manager before making use of the specialist departmental facilities.

Students as a general rule are expected to carry out all of their own technical work. They may approach the various technical areas in the department for advice regarding techniques, or to borrow equipment at the discretion of the technical staff concerned.

If it is necessary for any equipment to be taken off-campus, then the written approval of the Laboratory Manager must be obtained, and insurance arranged where necessary.

All members of the department, both academic and general, have full access to the Head of Department for advice if they have problems that they have been unable to resolve through the normal channels.

## **6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

The financial management of the Department on a day to day basis is handled by the Laboratory Manager, under the auspices of the Head of Department. Any queries concerning expenditure should be addressed to the Laboratory Manager in the first place.

### **Authority to incur expenditure**

No expenditure may be incurred without the prior permission of the Head of Department or Laboratory Manager.

Departmental expenditure requires a written requisition form signed by the member of academic staff. Honours and postgraduate students must approach their supervisor in the first instance.

Grant expenditure requires the grantee's signature and the account number. Recipients of grants should make every effort to charge all pertinent purchases and mileage claims against their grants and not against general departmental funds

### **Requisition Forms**

With the exception of petty cash and mileage claims, a completed requisition form must be submitted for the supply of all goods, services, cheque requisitions, etc which utilise departmental or university resources.

The standard Department Requisition Forms should be used for all requirements except for photographic and computer graphics services, electronics workshop services, or general workshop services. Separate, special purpose forms are available for these requests.

Requisitions must be accurately and legibly entered with all of the necessary details (including delivery charges and GST) to enable the correct goods or services to be supplied. The fund source must be specified and must be under the control of that staff member.

### **Purchase Orders**

Purchase of goods using an official University Purchase Order is initiated by completing a requisition form with all of the relevant details and submitting it to the Laboratory Manager.

Current prices and specification of goods must be clearly listed (use suppliers' catalogue number where applicable) together with unit/rate details. Do not forget to include GST and delivery fee where applicable.

Purchase orders are legal documents which commit the university to the specific expenditure. The cancellation of an order may involve the University in a compensatory payment to the supplier; this payment will be charged to the department.

Please allow plenty of time for the supply of the goods or services; SAP and the university system move exceedingly slowly.

### Cheque Requisitions

Reimbursement for cash purchases of over \$100 made on behalf of the department is paid by cheque requisition. A properly authorised requisition form giving all details of the purchasers and giving the name and address of the payee and BSB and bank account number should be submitted to the Administrator, along with all receipts. The payee's signature will later be required on the typed requisition form. Payment, by cheque, will usually be received 7 to 10 working days after the cheque requisition is submitted by direct banking or at the address specified on the cheque requisition. Reimbursement for travel is made through the payroll system and attracts payroll tax. Travel will not show as an allowance on group certificates if fully acquitted. Staff members should submit original receipts together with Travel Diary and the counterfoil of the airline ticket(s).

Grants-in aid, advances for field work etc are also made via cheque requisition accompanied by an Advance Declaration Form. University staff travelling overseas are required to keep a travel diary to comply with the Fringe Benefits Tax Legislation. All monies advanced must be fully reconciled by the date stated on the Advance Declaration Form. Advance funds may show on group certificates.

### Petty Cash

Petty Cash forms are available in the general office and should be entered by the claimant, signed by the supervisor where applicable. Petty cash claims must be under \$100 and be accompanied by original receipts. Students require their supervisor's signature on each claim. If petty cash is to be claimed from a grant it must be claimed from the university cashier. Mileage claims are no longer paid via petty cash but must be submitted on the appropriate form. The claimant will receive reimbursement with their salary payment.

### Cash Advances

If an item is required for which reimbursement would normally be claimed from petty cash, it can be purchased using a cash advance. The procedure is for the claimant to enter a petty cash voucher with the claimant's name, purpose of advance, date of advance and amount required. The supervisor should sign the voucher and it should be presented to the petty cash custodian during normal petty cash hours. If approved, the voucher will be clearly marked 'ADVANCE' and the cash will be paid to the claimant. Once the purchase has been made, another petty cash form is completed replacing the advance voucher. The advance voucher is subsequently destroyed.

The limit for cash advances is \$100 and it is expected that, where an advance is made, it will be acquitted within 24 hours. Repeat advances will not be made to persons not fully complying with these requirements.

### Credit Card

It may be easier to purchase an item using a credit card. These purchases must be made by the Laboratory Manager who will decide if it is appropriate to purchase the item using this method. Any item purchased in this manner must be the subject of a requisition form, signed by the supervisor where applicable.

### Travel at University Expense

#### Air Travel

Please see the Laboratory Manager for advice. The University is working on new guidelines for travel. See new web page for details.

#### Travel Diaries

Diaries are required when claiming costs. See new web page at LTU finance.

#### Taxis

Staff using taxis should obtain a Cabcharge voucher from the General Office. If this is not possible then a receipt for the fare should be obtained from the driver, and the money claimed on petty cash.

#### Department Vehicles

Department vehicles may be used for travel on official University business only, and must be approved by the supervisor where applicable. Prospective users of Departmental vehicles must read the 'Rules for the Use Department Vehicles' (in front of vehicle log book) before making a booking or driving any of the vehicles.

#### Private Vehicles

Mileage allowance for use of private vehicles on University business is paid at the official rate. The current rate is 50 cents per kilometre. Applications should be made on appropriate form. Reimbursement will be received with next payment of salary. Please keep record for taxation purposes. Reimbursement cannot exceed cost of economy air fare to destination. Students who use their own vehicle for their project need to make arrangements with their supervisor about the level of funding for mileage.

#### Field and Capital City Allowance

See new travel guidelines at LTU web page.

## 6. OFFICE FACILITIES

There are a number of office facilities available in the department.

#### Typing and other office duties

The departmental office staff comprise the departmental Administrator / Secretary, who acts primarily as the secretary to the Head of Department, and the General Office secretary, who acts primarily as the secretary to the Laboratory Manager. They are available, at the discretion of the Head of the Department and the Laboratory Manager, to undertake typing, photocopying and office duties for academic staff for teaching purposes only. Academic staff should hand such duties to the departmental Administrator / Secretary only, who will allocate these duties to even the workload. Academic staff are expected to undertake all research-related office duties themselves, as are Honours and postgraduate students.

#### Photocopying

The departmental photocopier is located in room 401, and is available for use by departmental staff, postgraduate and honours students for official university business. All faults should be reported to the Laboratory Manager.

## 7. TECHNICAL SERVICES and FACILITIES

There are a number of technical services and facilities available in the department. These are generally under the control of an Officer-in-Charge in each case, although final responsibility and control will rest with the Laboratory Manager and the Head of Department.

#### Plant growth cabinets and glasshouses

Various facilities are available for plant growth, including growth cabinets and glasshouses. The latter include normal, environmentally-controlled and PC2 glasshouses. These are all under the direction of the Officer-in-Charge of the glasshouses. Use of any of these facilities

must only be undertaken with the permission and authorisation of the Officer-in-Charge. As usage is often high, prior booking through the Officer-in-Charge is necessary.

#### General workshop

There are a number of workshop facilities and tools present in the departmental workshop. Use of these is restricted to those qualified and authorised to use them. Any staff or student with a requirement here should consult with the Officer-in-Charge of the workshop in the first instance.

#### Electronics workshop

There are a number of instruments and tools present in the Electronics workshop. Use of these is restricted to those authorised to use them. Any staff or student with a requirement here should consult with the Officer-in-Charge of the Electronics workshop in the first instance.

#### Photographic facilities

There is a range of equipment, from cameras to darkroom facilities available in the department. Any staff or student with a requirement here should consult with the Officer-in-Charge of the Photographic area in the first instance.

#### Computer graphics facilities

There is a range of equipment, including computers, slide scanners and colour printers, present in the computer graphics area of the department. Use of these is restricted to those authorised to use them. Any staff or student with a requirement here should consult with the Officer-in-Charge of the computer graphics area in the first instance.

### 8. GENERAL DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

The general department facilities are under the control of the Laboratory Manager and the Head of Department, generally following policies set down by the Head of Department in consultation with the staff meeting.

#### Department Vehicles

The Department operates a number of vehicles. Intending users of all vehicles must read the 'Rules for the Use of Vehicles' prior to booking out a vehicle. Honours and postgraduate students require their supervisor's permission before making a booking. Booking diaries for the first vehicles are located in the General Office.

A general policy on the use of departmental vehicles has been adopted. This should be consulted by staff and students before using a departmental vehicle.

All vehicles carry RACV service tags (reciprocal arrangements exist with other State motoring organisations) and Mobil and Shell Petrol Cards. Please notify the Administrator immediately should any of these items be lost.

#### Seminar Room

This room is a multi-function room, available for use as a lecture room, seminar room and tea room. Staff wishing to use the room for any teaching or research purpose should first check with the Laboratory Manager, and then notify other members of staff that the room will be used at the stated times.

#### Third Year Teaching Laboratory

This laboratory is under the control of the Facilities and Services Division, and may be allocated as a teaching laboratory to any teaching department within the university. However, first priority is given to the Department of Botany, and in general the third year practicals Botany are held here. Outside of allocated practical times, the laboratory is available for use by third year Botany students. The laboratory should not be used for any other purpose without the prior approval of the Head of Department, and this must in no way conflict with its use by third year students.

### Honours desks

Honours students are allocated desk space in one of the Honours Carrels areas, and may not use space not allocated to them. Experimental work should be carried out in the supervisor's laboratory. Laboratory space must be maintained in a clean, tidy and safe condition throughout the year and areas used by students must be left clean and empty at the end of the honours year. Security deposits on keys will not be refunded until this requirement has been met, and all keys returned to the Administrator.

### Postgraduate Rooms

Postgraduate students are allocated desk space, with computer access, in a shared office or carrel area as available. They are expected to keep their area clean, tidy and safe and not to spread their belongings into space that is not allocated to them. Experimental work should be carried out in the supervisor's laboratory.

### Computer Equipment

The department provides a number of computing facilities for general use by staff, honours and postgraduate students. Academic staff are provided with a computer for teaching and research purposes. Honours and postgraduate students are provided access to a range of computers for research purposes. All use of computers and the network within the department must be for university use only. Use of these facilities must follow the departmental computer policy, the University Computer Regulations, and the Internet Code of Practice.

Several networked laser printers are provided for use by staff and honours and postgraduate students in the department. These should be used in preference to inkjet and similar printers in order to reduce cost.

The department runs its own website to assist its teaching and research activities. Material on departmental policies and procedures is placed on this website, and should be consulted by all staff and students within the department. This website will also contain lecture notes and other teaching material, which may be password-protected to ensure access by enrolled students only.

All users in the department require accounts to be able to access any of the computer facilities. These accounts are administered by Personnel (for staff) and Student Administration (for honours and postgraduate students).

### Equipment

All equipment purchased by the University, either with departmental funds or grant money, remains the property of the University and must be accounted for on the Central Equipment Asset Register.

In general, equipment purchased for a staff member remains under the control of that person, and other students or staff must request permission before using or moving it.

**Equipment can only be removed from the department with the written permission of the Laboratory Manager or the Head of Department. Where necessary this equipment should be insured against loss or theft.**

Any item of equipment that is damaged or stolen, or even misplaced should be reported to the Laboratory Manager as soon as possible.

## 9. OTHER UNIVERSITY AREAS

There are a number of other areas in the university that may prove useful for teaching or research.

### Wildlife Reserves

The University has two wildlife reserves, the Campus Reserve and Gresswell Forest, both of which may be used for field experiments or undergraduate teaching. Please contact the Head Ranger for further information.

### University Library

The University Library, located on the north side of the Agora, publishes its own handbook and runs short courses on the use of all of its facilities. Staff and students should ask at the Library inquiry desk for information. Many journals are now available online, via the Library website.

### Central Mail Registry

Mail is delivered to and collected from the Department once a day on normal working days, usually at 11.30 am, although this time may vary. Deliveries are made to the General Office and distributed to the mail boxes next to the office. Special arrangements for mail collection and delivery are made over the Christmas break.

All outward mail should be placed in the box outside the General Office. Private mail may be posted through this system, but only if it bears the correct postage. The mail is collected by registry staff and is taken to Central Registry, where official external University mail is franked. Registry will return to the Department mail that they believe is not official. Mail that does not bear the sender's department is not sent, and an attempt is made to return it to the sender. Internal mail is sorted and redistributed. Reusable internal mail envelopes are provided for this purpose.

Registered and Priority Paid mail are charged out to the user. Please make sure the mail room nominates the sender's name and department on the internal charge sheet.

The Mail Room is located at the eastern end of campus within the Maintenance/Purchasing Compound.

### Insurance Office

All dealings with the University's Insurance Office should be carried out through the Laboratory Manager. This office is responsible for the University's fire and flood policy, worker's compensation insurance, accident insurance, the insurance of equipment taken off campus and the insurance of voluntary workers.

An excess of each claim is required and can vary from \$1000 to \$10,000.

### Security Services

Security staff employed by the University are based at the central control gate. They control access to the inner campus, carry out regular patrols on campus and make security checks on all buildings. Security staff have master keys to all departments for use in emergencies. Members of the department working late are permitted to enter the inner campus after hours, via the central control boom gate, to enable them to park close to the building.

Staff and students issued with University keys are responsible for the security of the areas to which the keys give them access. To maintain a reasonable level of security all unoccupied rooms should be kept locked after hours. Particular care should be taken to keep the external doors of the building locked at all times outside normal working hours.

University keys should not be transferred or loaned to another person. The loss of keys should be reported promptly to the Laboratory Manager. All keys must be returned to the Laboratory Manager when an individual ceases to be a member of the department. The cutting of duplicate University keys, or permitting duplicates to be cut, is not permitted, and is regarded as a serious infringement of University regulations.

### Telecommunications

For all telecommunications e.g. telephones, tieline and paging systems refer to the University Telephone Directory.

### **Cleaning Services**

Cleaning of the Biological Sciences Buildings is carried out early in the morning on working days. The cleaning staff empty waste paper bins and clean floors. Requests for specific rooms to be cleaned on particular days should be made, well in advance, through the Laboratory Manager. Cleaners will not enter rooms with "Prohibited" signs showing, and users will be responsible for keeping these areas clean.

### **Maintenance Branch**

The University's Maintenance Branch is located at the northeast side of the campus. Services available include electricians, plumbers, painters and carpenters. In emergencies, during normal working hours they can be contacted on extension 2017. Routine maintenance requests should be made on a Maintenance Request form available via the Laboratory Manager.

## **10. Links to university web pages**

Administrative Handbook (<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/personnel/manual/>)

Business Procedures Manual (<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/finance/bpm.html>)

Incident and Hazard Report ([http://www.latrobe.edu.au/hr/forms/incident\\_report.pdf](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/hr/forms/incident_report.pdf))

Internet Code of Practice ([http://www.latrobe.edu.au/its/code\\_practice.htm](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/its/code_practice.htm))

Occupational Health and Safety Office (<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ohs/>)

University Computer Regulations ([http://www.latrobe.edu.au/its/comp\\_regulations.htm](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/its/comp_regulations.htm))

University Safety Policy ([http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ohs/manual/OHS\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ohs/manual/OHS_Policy.pdf))