

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

**PROTECTIVE CLOTHING
AND EQUIPMENT PROCEDURE**

1. INTRODUCTION

Personal Protective clothing and equipment can be defined as any item of clothing or equipment which is used by employees and students to reduce their exposure to hazards in the work place.

It is important to note that personal protective equipment (PPE) should only be used when other measures are not practicable in protecting employees against the hazard or risk of exposure to the hazard. The measures, which can be used to control hazards in the workplace, are (in order of effectiveness):

Elimination - removal of the hazard or process to eliminate the risk will also eliminate the risks associated with the hazard. Substitution - if the process cannot be eliminated, substitute the hazard with one known to be safer.

Engineering Controls - redesign processes, equipment or tools.

Isolation - Isolate the hazard by some form of boundary or enclosure.

Administration Controls - introducing work practices, which reduce the exposure to a particular hazard

Personnel Protective Equipment - Short term control measure until a higher order measure can be provided.

Working through the above control measures will usually effectively control a hazard. The use of PPE may be necessary in the following instances:

- as an interim measure, before more effective controls can be established
- if other controls are impossible or not completely effective
- during maintenance or clean up
- in emergencies

Before using PPE's a risk assessment must be completed to ensure that the most effective PPE is to be used for the specific application. Where PPE is used steps must be taken to ensure that it fits the employee correctly, training is provided in its use and that the equipment is maintained and serviced regularly.

2. RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

The Head of School, Department or Research Centre shall designate such work situations where protective or safety clothing or equipment is required to be worn or used. The person with management and control (supervisor) is responsible for daily determination of the reasonable standard of protective clothing or equipment, and for the provision and supervision of the wearing of the equipment. The supervising person (in charge of an undergraduate class, or a research laboratory, or any other work group) may require any standard of protective clothing, which is reasonably necessary for the safety of the persons for whom they have management and control.

Although it is the head of the areas responsibility to determine when PPE is necessary and to provide the PPE these decisions should be achieved in conjunction with the employees who will use the PPE and relevant Health and Safety Representatives. It is extremely important that employees who use the PPE are comfortable when using the equipment and understand the reasons for its use to ensure that any PPE is used correctly, consistently and is maintained to provide maximum protection.

Any person working in or entering such designated areas shall wear the PPE required by a supervisor, or recommended by a community standard (regulation, code of practice, award etc) approved by the Occupational Health and Safety Section.

3. STIPULATING WHEN PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT IS TO BE USED

Designation of the areas may be by displaying in a clear and appropriate position a sign, or by the inclusion of the requirement in course printed notes (laboratory manuals), or by daily verbal notification. Signs shall comply with AS1319 Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment. Further information relating to appropriate signage can be obtained from the OH&S Section

4. TYPES OF PROTECTION

PPE is available for almost every part of the body and the type of equipment purchased will depend on the protection that is required. Listed below are the common areas which require protection and examples of how the areas maybe protected:

- Head Protection - safety helmets, caps, hats, hoods
- Hearing Protection - ear plugs, ear muffs, helmets
- Eye and Face Protection - safety spectacles, goggles, shields, visors
- Foot Protection - steel capped boots, non slip shoes, waterproof boots
- Body Protection - laboratory coats, heat resistant aprons, waterproof jackets, sunscreen, insect repellent
- Hand Protection - gloves (wrist or elbow length, cotton, rubber, PVC leather, stainless steel mesh)
- Respiratory Protection - face masks, half face respirators, air filter units, self contained breathing apparatus
- Fall Protection - belts, harnesses, laynards, pole straps, supports, tennis elbow braces

5. SELECTION OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Please note that the types of PPE specified above are only examples of equipment, which can be purchased. The most appropriate equipment, which should be used for a specific task, must be determined through completion of a risk assessment, suitability of equipment for individual employees and adherence to regulations, standards and codes of practice. A list of Australian Standards, which should be referred to before purchasing specific equipment, are stated in Appendix A.

Once it has been determined that a particular type of PPE is required advice maybe sought as to how and where the equipment can be purchased. Advice maybe obtained by suppliers, external consultants, the Victorian WorkCover Authority, Australian Standards and the Occupational Health and Safety Section.

The OH&S Section has a number of catalogues which maybe of assistance when attempting to determine what is the most suitable type and brand of equipment to purchase.

6. REQUIREMENTS WHEN USING PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Once appropriate items of PPE have been selected there are a number of requirements which have to be followed both by the supervisor in charge and those who must wear the clothing or equipment. The following requirements must be adhered to:

Individual Use

Wherever possible and appropriate, each item of PPE shall be provided for the exclusive use of an individual. Shared use of clothing and/ or equipment is to be discouraged to provide employees with equipment which is properly fitted, is readily accessible and to maintain personal hygiene standards.

Training

Before any PPE is used those users must be properly trained to ensure that they are aware of the reasons for using the PPE and that they use the PPE in the correct manner.

Testing

Before any PPE is used the equipment should be tested to ensure that it fits the user correctly and is suitable to be used for the hazards it is attempting to control.

Maintenance

All PPE should be regularly cleaned and maintained to ensure that the PPE provides the level of protection it is designed for. The correct manner of cleaning and maintaining the PPE should be provided by the manufacturer when purchased. Regular inspection of the PPE should be completed on an on going basis and any repairs should be completed immediately a fault is detected.

Storage

When not in use PPE must be stored in an accessible, clean and dry designated storage area.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information and advice can be obtained from the Occupational Health and Safety Section, Room W230, David Myers Building, Bundoora Campus (Telephone 9479 1186). The OH&S Section also has copies of various legislation and publications including Australian Standards listed in Appendix A, Codes of Practice published by Victorian WorkCover Authority and product catalogues. Policies in the OH&S Manual also state if specific PPE is required to be used.

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APPENDIX A

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS RELATING TO PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Protective Clothing

- 1558 (1973) Protective Clothing for Welders (incorporating Amdt 1)
- 2013 (1989) Cleanroom Garments
- 2161 (1978) Industrial Safety Gloves and Mittens (excluding electrical and medical gloves)
- 2210 (1994) Occupational Protective Footwear
- 2225 (1994) Insulating Gloves for Electrical Purposes
- 2375 (1980) Guide to the Selection, Care and Use of

Clothing for Protection Against Heat and Fire

- 2919 (1987) Industrial Clothing
- 3765 (1990) Clothing for Protection Against Hazardous Chemicals
- 4011 (1995) Examination and Procedural Gloves for General Medical and Dental Use
- 4179 (1994) Single Use (Sterile) Rubber Surgical Gloves
- 4399 (1996) Sun Protective Clothing - Evaluation and Classification

Head, Face, Noise Protective Equipment

- 1067 (1990) Sunglasses and Fashion Spectacles
- 1269 (1992) Hearing Conservation
- 1270 (1988) Acoustics - Hearing Protectors
- 1336 (1982) Recommended Practices for Eye Protection in the Industrial Environment
- 1337 (1992) Eye Protectors for Industrial Applications
- 1338 (1992) Filters for Eye Protectors
- 1698 (1988) Protective Helmets for Vehicle Users
- 1800 (1981) The Selection Care and Use of Industrial Safety Helmets
- 1801 (1981) Industrial Safety Helmets (incorporating Amdt 1)
- 2063 (1996) Pedal Cycle Helmets
- 2512 (Set) Methods of Testing Protective Helmets
- 3957 (1991) Light Transmitting Screens and Curtains For Welding Operations

Respiratory Protective Devices

- 1715 (1994) Selection, Use and Maintenance of Respiratory Protection Devices
- 1716 (1994) Respiratory Protective Devices

Other Protective Equipment

- 1891 (1995) Industrial Fall Arrest Systems and Devices
- 2626 (1983) Industrial Safety Belts and Harnesses - Selection, Use and Maintenance
- 1319 (1994) Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment

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