Introduction to Policy Statement

Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) is subject to requirements of the Health, Safety and Welfare Act and Regulations. The University provides guidelines to ensure safe management practices in relation to hazardous chemical substances and mixtures (henceforth known collectively as chemical agent(s)) and their associated risks that are used and stored in areas over which it has control.

Effective chemical agent management requires professional consideration of the safe, responsible, sustainable and economical use of chemical agents throughout the chemical lifecycle – from procurement, storage, transport, use, through to disposal. All aspects of hazardous chemical use are governed by a comprehensive set of legislation to ensure the risks posed by chemical agents that may be harmful to health or to the environment are suitably controlled.

Purpose:

This policy has been developed to assist the TU Dublin to:

- Ensure the safe management of hazardous chemical agents and their associated risks in line with current regulatory requirements.
- Establish safe management and working practices for staff, students and others (e.g. contractors, visitors) who work with hazardous chemical agents at TU Dublin and assist in the implementation of same.

Scope and Associated Chemical Substances and Mixtures

This policy applies to

- All staff, students and personnel (e.g. contractors, visitors) who work or are present in workplaces under the control of the TU Dublin.
• All chemical substances and mixtures (Chemical agents) classified as hazardous under the EC Regulation 1272/2008 Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Substances and Mixtures.


• Hazardous substances and mixtures that are subject to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Part 6 (Sensitive Risk Groups) and Part 8 (Explosive Atmospheres at Places of Work) (as amended).

• Hazardous chemical agents used in, or generated as a result of, work activities that are hazardous to health or the environment.

• Regulated substances which are substances whose manufacture, possession and use are governed by additional specific legislative controls. This includes substances identified within the:-
  
  
  ▪ Controlled drugs as outlined in Schedules of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1977 and the Control of Drugs Regulations 2017.
  
  ▪ Schedules 1 to 3 of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) 1997. Storage of quantities of materials specified in the 3 schedules to this Act imposes duties, including licensing, annual declarations, and potential for inspection by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The policy does not apply to the following substances as they are covered by separate specific policies which are established or in development.

• Radioactive chemical agents.

• Biological Pathogens and Toxins (TU Dublin Biological Safety and Genetic Modification policy). (In development)

• Asbestos (Asbestos Management Policy) (In development)
Responsibilities
General Responsibilities

Management Structure

Roles and general health and safety responsibilities relating to those roles are defined within the TU Dublin Safety Statement (https://www.dit.ie/healthsafety/).

Line management (academic/function) have responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of staff, students and others who may be effected by activities involving hazardous chemical agents in work areas over which they have control. In accordance with this document 'Head of School' refers to the head of an academic school whilst 'Head of Function' refers to the head of a department, unit or subdivision within services or facilities. Additional responsibilities relating to the management of hazardous chemical agents are outlined below.

Head of School/Function

The Head of School/Function is accountable for the health and safety of the staff they line manage, areas over which they have control and for others who may be affected by the activities of the School/Function.

Heads of School/Function should be aware of the provisions of the TU Dublin Hazardous Chemical Agent Management Policy and, as a minimum, the requirements of legislation relating to the activities including use, storage and transport of hazardous chemical agents and hazardous waste within their School/Function.

The Head of School/Function should ensure each of the following:

- The implementation of this Hazardous Chemical Agent Management Policy is realised and supervised;
- That adequate and appropriate procedures, resources and arrangements are in place to implement this policy in the work area over which he/she has control;
- That roles and responsibilities for the safe use and management of hazardous chemical agents within their School/Function are clearly defined and allocated and that this is recorded in writing;
- That they attend all safety training as directed and fulfil responsibilities outlined in section 4.2.2 (as applicable) and section 4.2.4;
- That procedures are in place to assess the physical, health and environmental risks posed by the use or generation of hazardous chemical agents within the School/Function activities;
- That safe operating procedures and effective control measures are in place to prevent or control exposure to hazardous chemical agents and safe systems of work are implemented to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation relating to the use of hazardous chemical agents within their School/Function;
- That a safety audit and inspection programme is in place to ensure compliance with local rules, legislative requirements and relevant standards;
- That critical safety equipment is in place and operational in conjunction with their campus Estates Manager;
- That local emergency procedures are in place to manage accidents that may arise following the unintentional release of hazardous chemical agents;
- That a local procedure is in place to ensure that exposure to category (1A or 1B) carcinogens or mutagens or reproductive toxins is at the lowest possible level and that exposures are recorded and that this record is maintained and available for up to 40 years;
- That security arrangements are in place to control unauthorised access to hazardous and regulated chemical agents;
- That hazard warning signs are displayed where appropriate;
- That any accident or dangerous occurrence involving hazardous chemical agents is reported to the Health & Safety Office (H&S Office) and is adequately investigated;
- That line managers that report to them (Academic and Function) and Academic (Laboratory and Research) Supervisors are made aware of their responsibilities as outlined in section 4.2.2 and are held accountable for compliance;
- That a system is in place to ensure that relevant chemical risk assessments and Safety Data Sheets are available in the place of work over which they have control;
- That arrangements for activities where hazardous chemical agents are used are outlined within the local rules, Health and Safety Manuals and related documentation associated with the School or Function and are communicated to staff, students, visitors and others who may be effected by the activities undertaken in work areas over which they have control.

**Line Managers (Academic and Function) and Academic Laboratory and Research Supervisors**

Staff who have a particular role in managing the activities carried out by students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) or visitors (for academic purpose) are considered Academic Supervisors.

Function/facilities line managers are responsible for their staff, contractors/service providers and visitors.

As such, all have a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the people they supervise and have particular responsibilities, where personnel for whom they have responsibility, handle hazardous chemical agents.

Line managers are responsible for areas over which they have control and the health, safety and welfare of the staff they manage, and others who may be affected by their work.
Line Managers (Academic and Function) and Academic Laboratory or Research Supervisors will ensure:

- All hazardous chemical agents, on their own or within an article (e.g. ink in an inkjet printer) are identified for all activities over which the line manager or supervisor has responsibility;
- A REACH compliant Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is available in the place of work for all hazardous chemical agents (substances and mixtures) used, synthesised, stored and associated hazardous waste products generated for any processes undertaken under their supervision or direction. Where a SDS is unavailable he/she will ensure that the precautionary principal is applied;
- The risks posed by the storage, handling, use and transport of hazardous chemical agents and associated hazardous waste are assessed before starting to work with these chemical agents and that action is taken to prevent or control exposure so far as is reasonably practicable in a chemical risk assessment;
- This chemical agent risk assessment is process based and is collated utilising the Chemical Risk Assessment Template available from the Health and Safety Office;
- Chemical agent risk assessments are available for all processes undertaken under their supervision in line with local protocol (and on https://TU Dublin (City Campus).ie.agreed provider.net if available). Where a SDS is unavailable the precautionary principle will apply and documented in the chemical risk assessment;
- All risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly by the School/ Function in liaison with the H&S Office, or when significant changes occur and following an accident or near miss or dangerous occurrence;
- That personnel they manage/supervise are competent to work with hazardous chemical agents and have been provided with sufficient information and training on the risks posed by the hazardous chemical agents they use and the control measures in place and that adequate competent supervision is provided;
- That they attend all safety training as directed and fulfil responsibilities outlined in section 4.2.4;
- The TU Dublin Hazardous Chemical Agents Management Policy and local safe systems of work and procedures are followed to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation relating to the use of hazardous chemical agents within their activities;
- Measures are employed to ensure that the Occupational Exposure Limit Values (OELVs) as outlined in the most recent Code of Practice (COP) 2018 to the SHWW (Chemical Agents) Regulations 2001 (as amended) where applicable are not exceeded for airborne hazardous chemical agents (TWA). Where an OELV is not available an equivalent occupational exposure limit value must be employed if available (e.g. TLV, OES, or MAK). The lower the OELV the more hazardous the chemical substance is to health;
- That exposure to category 1A and 1B carcinogens or mutagens or reproductive toxins is reduced to the lowest possible level and that all exposures of people who work under their direction to these hazardous chemical agents is recorded in an exposure logbook;
- That suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided free of charge to employees who report to them when appropriate, is maintained in good order and reusable items are regularly examined for faults, damage, wear and tear. Non-employees must be supervised to provide and wear their own PPE which is of an appropriate standard. All people working with hazardous chemical agents are supervised to wear PPE as instructed;
• In liaison with the Head of School or Function that health surveillance is arranged by the H&S Office where required;
• In liaison with the Head of School or Function that workplace monitoring is carried out, where appropriate, to demonstrate compliance with the OELV (or equivalent) or where the effectiveness of control measures is uncertain;
• That all accidents and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Head of School/Function and to the Health & Safety Office and the accident report form is completed (forms are available from the front desk/reception of the main campus buildings and online. The H&S Office will instigate investigation where appropriate;
• That a ‘permit to work’ system is put in place and supervised when appropriate and determined by the risk assessment;
• That any additional safety training, identified in the chemical agent risk assessment, is provided by the academic/research supervisor to any student working under their direction;
• That on completion of a project or when staff/students leave the School/Function, all hazardous chemical agents that they were responsible for are either disposed of appropriately using TU Dublin (Dublin City Campus) procedures or that responsibility is transferred to another responsible person. Transfer must be documented and items identified and labelled to prevent retention of ‘abandoned, unknown’ chemical agents; and
• To ensure that on completion of any work involving hazardous chemical agents that employees, contractors, students and visitors remove or dispose of the hazardous chemical agents and products and their containers as outlined in the chemical risk assessment.

Technical Staff

Members of the Technical Staff will ensure that:-

• Materials (containing hazardous chemical agents) for practical classes as requested by academic staff are prepared in a safe manner, giving due regard to the chemical agents risk assessment for the particular task. This may include the use of additional safe systems of work or supplementary PPE where necessary;
• Chemical agent risk assessments are undertaken by the member of technical staff and in place for any preparative work undertaken where hazardous chemical agents in the preparation for practical laboratory work and projects in areas in which they have control.
• www.dit.ie/safework;
• Appropriate warning signage is in place where hazardous chemical agents are stored and used (e.g. laboratories and storage areas) in work areas for which they have responsibilities;
• In liaison with the academic supervisor that equipment is used correctly, maintained in an efficient state and is in good working order where hazardous chemical agents are used;
• Hazardous chemical agents are stored in suitable, appropriately labelled (in line with CLP 2008 as amended), containers;
• Critical safety equipment is in place and tested and maintained in good order (Fumehoods, eye-wash, spill kits) in work areas for which they have responsibilities;
• In liaison with academic and research supervisors maintain exposure records to CMRs (Category 1A and 1B);
• Equipment and work areas for which they are responsible are decontaminated and appropriate clearance permits are completed prior to decommissioning or transferring to alternative locations (clearance forms in development); and
• They attend all safety training as directed and fulfil responsibilities outlined in section 4.2.4.

Employees, Students and Visitors

All Employees, students and visitors have a responsibility to:-

• Take care for their own safety and that of people working with them;
• Understand the hazards and risks associated with the chemical agents they use and take appropriate precautions;
• Familiarise themselves with the label.=, SDS, Chemical Agent Risk Assessment, Chemical Safety Manual and any other safety information provided in relation to the use of hazardous chemical agents at any workplace of TU Dublin;
• Comply with the safety requirements associated with the area in which they are working;
• Comply with control measures outlined in the risk assessment and subsequent safe systems of work;
• If safe to do so, report and clean up a chemical agent spill in accordance with the spill protocol as outlined in the chemical agent risk assessment;
• Follow instructions as outlined in practical manuals and other relevant operating procedures;
• Use equipment in accordance with instruction;
• Observe and follow ‘permit to work’ requirements;
• Wear personal protective equipment as indicated in the chemical agent risk assessment;
• Report unintentional exposure to hazardous chemical agents to their line manager or supervisor;
• Report defects or difficulties with equipment used in conjunction with hazardous chemical agents to their line manager or supervisor;
• Report defects in personal protective equipment to their line manager/ supervisor;
• Attend all safety training as directed;
• Report to their supervisor/line manager when they are pregnant or have an underlying health issue that may be exacerbated by exposure to hazardous chemical agents; and
• Co-operate with Health Surveillance programmes where they are required to attend.
Occupational Health

The TU Dublin Health & Safety Office is responsible for:

- Providing access to competent advice for staff and students on aspects of health and safety relating to the use of hazardous chemical agents within TU Dublin;
- Auditing Schools and Functions for compliance with legislation governing the management of health and safety relating to hazardous chemical agents within the workplace in liaison with the Head of School/ Function;
- Instigating accident/incident investigation where appropriate and reporting to enforcing authorities as required;
- Providing access to general chemical safety training via Staff Development to TU Dublin;
- Arranging health surveillance and communication between the occupational health surveillance provider and TU Dublin in relation to any health surveillance undertaken. School/Function risk assessments will determine if health surveillance is required in relation to the work activities. Health surveillance is made available to employees appropriate to the health and safety risks present and is facilitated by an external Occupational Health Service Provider. Employees are encouraged to avail of any health surveillance provided. Health surveillance records and records relating to potential exposure to carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxins are maintained by this Service Provider for employees referred to the service;
- Employees and students may be referred to an external Occupational Health Service Provider for a health assessment in relation to their work/studies where necessary to ensure their safety, health and welfare;
- Notifying the Line Manager/Academic Research supervisor of health surveillance results and any resulting recommendations; and
- Individual staff or students who have developed health conditions will be assessed by a specialist occupational practitioner and advised on the risks from further exposure.

Contractors/Service Providers

TU Dublin City Campus managers/supervisors engaging the services of contractors/service providers must require that contract staff are compliant with all regulatory requirements. The Area/Function Department Supervisor where the work will be undertaken should be furnished with relevant information relating to any hazardous chemical agents they intend to use and bring on site by TU Dublin person engaging the services of the contractor/service provider in advance.

REACH compliant Safety Data Sheets and chemical agents risk assessments must be supplied in advance where hazardous chemical agents are used by contractors/service providers in the TU Dublin.
It is the responsibility of the contractor/service provider to ensure and to provide evidence of their employees’ chemical safety training.

Similarly when hazardous chemical agents are used by contract staff within a work area, all TU Dublin staff and students should be made aware of the activity and have access to the contractor’s Safety Data Sheets and chemical agent risk assessments. It is the responsibility of the contractor/service provider to remove excess hazardous chemical agents, hazardous chemical waste and hazardous chemical waste containers for any chemical agent that they bring or generate on site. It is the responsibility of the TU Dublin staff member responsible for the contractor/service provider to ensure that contractors/service providers comply with all requirements.

Chemical Working Group

The Chemical Safety Working Group is the expert group regarding hazardous chemical agents at TU Dublin. They can provide advice to Schools/Functions and may be called to meet and review issues if required. The membership of this group is drawn from the staff of TU Dublin with specific competencies, training and experience in aspects of hazardous chemical management.

Resources

TU Dublin is committed to provide adequate financial and staff resources to support this policy.

Communication Consultation, and Participation

Communication, consultation and employee participation in the delivery of a safe and healthy workplace is an integral part of our safety management system. TU Dublin is committed to meeting its obligations under Section 26 of the 2005 Act to ensure adequate, appropriate and timely consultation and welcomes the views of all employees on issues relating to health and safety.

There are a number of elected safety representatives who will aid in consultation. The name and contact details of your local safety representative is available on the TU Dublin H&S website or directly from the H&S Office. Employees who wish to raise a safety concern should in the first instance contact their Line Manager.

A hard copy of the TU Dublin (City Campus) Safety Statement is kept at each front desk/reception area of each main campus building. The Safety Statement in addition to School/Function risk assessments are available on the Health & Safety website.
Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and communicated to all staff, students and campus users.

Support for the Implementation of this Policy

This policy is supported by:-

- Infographic flow diagram where specific responsibilities of line management, employees and others can be identified easily
- Detailed information relating to specific requirements of this policy. This information can be found in the ‘Supplement to the TU Dublin Policy for the Safety Management of Hazardous Chemical Agents’ at the University.
- Chemical Safety Manual where details of hazard identification and hazardous chemical risk assessment is outlined.
Appendices