

EYE PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Statement

The policy of the University is to act in accordance with the eye protection regulations of the Law of Hong Kong¹ which requires suitable eye protective equipment be provided to employees who may be exposed to risk of eye injury. Furthermore, it is the intention of the University to extend this policy to staff, students, contractors and visitors of the University.

Responsibility of Heads of Department

It is the responsibility of Heads of Department, aided by the Departmental Health and Safety Officer/workplace supervisors, to assess the need of eye protection for their staff, students, contractors and visitors and to provide suitable eye protection to those affected personnel. Areas of potentially high eye injury risk in the department should be designated as eye protection areas where all users must use suitable eye protection equipment for protection.

Responsibility of Departmental Health and Safety Officer

As co-ordinator of departmental health and safety matters, the Departmental Health and Safety Officer should arrange with the workplace supervisors and project leaders to identify potentially high eye injury risk areas and activities of their responsible area so that eye protection areas could be demarcated and proper safety precautions to be set up for the area/task.

Responsibility of Supervisors²

The supervisors should satisfy themselves that the risk of the activities and the workplace have been evaluated and appropriate action has been taken to control the risk. In practice, they should ensure that:

- (a) eye protection equipment is used by all affected personnel in designated eye protection areas,
- (b) users of eye protection equipment are informed, instructed or trained on the proper use and maintenance of the equipment.

¹ *Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Protection of Eye) Regulations (Cap. 59 S1)*

² *Supervisors here means the in-charge of a workshop/laboratory and those supervising an experiment/a research project/a task.*

Responsibility of Personnel in Designated Eye Protection Area

All personnel in the designated eye protection area must use suitable eye protection equipment provided by the department. Users should report to the supervisor any case of damage/defect/loss of the eye protection equipment.

Responsibility of Health and Safety Office

The Health and Safety Office will act according to the University Health and Safety Policy for central control and ordering of prescribed eye protective equipment.

Provision of Suitable Eye Protection

An eye protection equipment, in order to be considered suitable, should be appropriate to the risks, and should fit the wearer correctly.

Assessment of Eye Injury Risk

Each activity of the department including those of contractors needs to be assessed and the hazards be identified. Based on the estimated level of risk, the correct type of protection is to be selected.

The best way to achieve this objective is to require project leaders and supervisors of workshops/laboratories to perform risk assessment of their work and workplace. While the supervisors and project leaders should take immediate action to protect the affected people, the findings should go to the Departmental Health and Safety Officer as well. The Departmental Health and Safety Officer should gather all information with regard to areas or task that impose high potential of eye injury risk within the department and then advise the Head of Department on designation of eye protection areas and issuance of eye safety precautions.

Consideration must be given not only to the person engaged in the process or activity but also to any other person who may come into contact with and be at risk from the hazards. Such information should be make known to the affected personnel.

Examples of High Potential Eye Risk Processes/Activities

The following are examples of the types of processes or activities found in the University that could present risks to the face or eyes and where appropriate protection would be required.

The examples are:

- (a) work with power driven tools where chippings, particles or abrasive materials are likely to fly
- (b) work with hand tools where chippings or particles are likely to fly
- (c) work with chemical substances of any form which are likely to cause injury or irritation
- (d) work with molten metal or other molten materials or substances
- (e) work with cryogenic materials
- (f) welding operations where intense light or other optical radiation is emitted at levels likely to cause injury, or other activities with similar risks
- (g) work with any risk of exposure to light radiation from instruments that produce light amplification or radiation
- (h) using any gas or vapour under pressure

Standards of Eye Protector

British Standards, Australian Standards and American National Standards of eye protection have been accepted by the Government as approved specifications for the selection of suitable eye protection equipment. Most of them are listed at the end of this document. The department should make sure that the eye protection equipment issued is up to standard.

Issue and Maintenance of Eye Protectors

Eye protector should usually be issued on a personal basis and then used only by that person. If eye protector is re-issued to another person it should first be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized. A suitable record of issue should be kept.

For employees having eye sight deficiency who have to work long hours in workplaces requiring eye protection, prescription lenses need to be incorporated into their safety spectacles and the cost falls on to the department which is responsible for providing suitable eye protective equipment.

Eye protectors should be protected by being kept in suitable cases when not in use. Larger items such as visors may need to be kept in lockers. Proper storage should be seen as an investment as every piece of eye protector will last longer when being handled and stored with care.

All users should be shown the correct method of cleaning their own eye protectors and of minor component replacement.

Eye Protection Training Programme

Training should take account of the types of eye protectors in use, the hazards they are protecting against and the likely exposure to dirt and contamination. The programme should include theoretical and practical training and important aspects as follows:

- (a) limitations of protection
- (b) the hazards the wearer may be exposed to
- (c) adjustment of side frames of spectacles, retaining straps or headbands
- (d) use of specialized equipment such as flip up welding goggles
- (e) recognizing wear, tear and defects
- (f) correct cleaning
- (g) storage
- (h) the need for prompt reporting of loss or damage to allow speedy replacement

Standards

Many British Standards will eventually be replaced by harmonized European Standards. Where this is likely the future reference is given in brackets.

Relevant standards on eye protection include:

- BS 1542: 1982 “Specification for equipment for eye, face and neck protection against non-ionizing radiation arising during welding and similar operations”
- BS 2092: 1987 “Specification for eye protectors for industrial and non-industrial uses” (BS EN 166, 167, 168)
- BS 6967: 1988 “Glossary of terms for personal eye protection” (BS EN 165)
- BS 7028: 1988 “Guide for selection, use and maintenance of eye-protection for industrial and other uses”
- BS EN 169 “Personal eye protection: Filters for welding and related techniques: Transmittance requirements and recommended use”

Australian Standard Specification AS 1337: Industrial eye protectors

AS 1338: Protective filters against optical radiation in welding and allied operation

American National Standard Institute Z87.1-1968: American National Standard Practice for Occupational and Educational Eye and Face Protection.