

# Personal Protective Equipment Procedure

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure outlines requirements for the provision and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at The University of Queensland (UQ) and applies to all UQ workers whose workplace activities require the use of PPE to mitigate risk of injury or illness. The use of PPE should not be relied upon as the only source of risk control and should be used to compliment higher order controls such as substitution or engineering.

(2) For the purposes of this Procedure, the definition of UQ workers is broad and is intended to ensure UQ meets its responsibilities under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#). The definition of UQ workers is provided in Section 6, 'Appendix'.

### Context

(3) UQ is legally obliged under the [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(WHS Regulation\)](#) to implement appropriate control measures in the workplace (e.g. mandatory use of PPE) if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate a health and safety risk.

## Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(4) Organisational Units must undertake risk assessments of hazards present in the workplace, proportionate and relevant to the activities being undertaken, and taking into account the duties and work of the group as a whole.

(5) According to the [hierarchy of risk control](#), the use of PPE should always be considered in combination with more effective, higher order controls (see [How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2021](#)).

(6) Where PPE is determined to be an appropriate control measure, either in combination with other controls or as a stand-alone measure, through the risk assessment process or where stated in regulations:

- a. UQ must provide relevant UQ workers with the correct PPE and information, training and instructions in its proper use and maintenance;
- b. UQ workers must use the PPE in accordance with this Procedure and any information, training or reasonable instruction from the Organisational Unit; and
- c. the PPE must comply with the relevant [Australian Standard](#).

## Section 3 - Key Requirements

### Workplace Risk Assessment

(7) Organisational Units must conduct risk assessments in accordance with the [Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure](#) to determine the necessity for the use of PPE for specific tasks. Risk assessments should be proportionate and relevant to the activities being regularly undertaken in their workplace.

(8) Further information and guidance on risk management is available from local health and safety staff, [Workplace](#)

## **Certified Spaces - Biosafety and Biosecurity**

(9) Facilities certified by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) or the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) may have specific PPE requirements, which must be adhered to by UQ workers. These requirements are detailed in OGTR and DAFF guidelines and/or facility certification documentation (refer to UQ's [Biosafety Policy](#) and procedures).

(10) It may be possible to remove the need for certain PPE under specific conditions. In such cases, the UQ worker must submit a request to the Biosafety Advisors in the UQ HSW Division outlining the proposal and include a documented, approved risk assessment. Work must not be undertaken with the modified PPE requirements before approval from the Biosafety Advisors is provided.

## **PPE Standards in the Workplace**

(11) Organisational Units must establish PPE standards in the workplace. UQ workers must comply with these standards and supervisors must enforce compliance.

(12) The supervisor must exclude the worker from the work area until they are able to comply with the PPE requirements.

## **Provision of PPE**

(13) Organisational Units are responsible for ensuring that all necessary PPE required for a task is available to UQ workers. It will remain the property of UQ except in certain circumstances – e.g., prescription safety eyewear which may be provided or subsidised by the Organisational Unit.

(14) Undergraduate students are expected to provide their own laboratory coats and safety glasses that must comply with the relevant Australian Standard for their on campus laboratory practicals. For further information on eye protection see the [Eye Protection Guideline](#).

(15) Where the PPE is not supplied by UQ, work must not commence until the appropriate PPE is made available. Privately purchased PPE must be fit for purpose, compliant with the relevant Australian Standards and comply with this Procedure. Any queries for the provision of PPE within the Organisational Unit are to be discussed with the relevant supervisor and with reference to the relevant risk assessment(s).

## **Use of PPE**

(16) If PPE is required, it should be stated in the workplace's local area Safe Work Method Statement, Standard Operating Procedure, risk assessment or other local protocol.

(17) Where PPE is to be used or worn in the workplace, it must be:

- a. selected to minimise risk to health and safety;
- b. suitable for the nature of the work and any hazard associated with the work;
- c. a suitable size and fit for the person wearing or using it;
  - i. tight-fitting respirators must be fit-tested to the user. For further information see the [Selection, Use and Maintenance of Respiratory Protective Equipment Procedure](#) and the [Use of Respiratory Protective Equipment Guideline](#).
- d. maintained, repaired or replaced as required so it continues to minimise risk; and
- e. used or worn by the UQ worker, so far as is reasonably practicable.

# Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

## Executive Deans and Institute Directors

(18) Executive Deans and Institute Directors are responsible for ensuring that strategic planning and budgeting provides for a safe working environment that minimises or eliminates risk to a point where lower order controls (such as PPE) are not solely relied upon in the workplace. Specifically, budget allocation should be provided to ensure that infrastructure is upgraded and maintained as required to ensure a safe and healthy work environment, and that higher order controls are in place where reasonably practicable.

## Heads of Organisational Units

(19) Heads of Organisational Units must ensure:

- a. they visibly and actively promote the effective use, monitoring and enforcement of PPE standards;
- b. supervisors in the workplace have adequate time to induct, train and supervise UQ workers in the correct use of PPE;
- c. UQ workers have access to the required PPE and are provided adequate information, training and reasonable instructions in the use and storage of PPE;
- d. risk assessments are completed for the activities and tasks within the workplace and the use of PPE is considered in combination with higher order controls; and
- e. UQ workers are completing PPE training and risk assessment requirements.

## Supervisors

(20) Supervisors (including academic supervisors of Higher Degree by Research students) are responsible for:

- a. completing risk assessments in consultation with relevant UQ workers (considering the requirement for PPE in combination with higher order controls):
  - i. risk assessments for undergraduate activities are to be completed by the person responsible for supervising the undergraduate activity, who must explain the requirements to the students and provide access to the risk assessment;
- b. providing clearly written information and procedural guidance that is circulated to all relevant UQ workers on the correct use and maintenance of PPE in their work area;
- c. ensuring UQ workers are provided adequate information, training and reasonable instructions in the use of PPE;
- d. ensuring the appropriate and required use of PPE; and where PPE is not being used where it should be, or not being used correctly, the UQ worker is directed to cease the activity until the correct PPE is used; and
- e. ensuring that PPE in their work area is sufficient, appropriate, in good condition and stored appropriately, e.g., away from sources of contamination and damage.

(21) Supervisors of undergraduate students are responsible for overseeing the health and safety of students in teaching and learning activities. Refer to the [Laboratory Safety Guideline](#).

## Health, Safety and Wellness Managers (HSW Managers) and local Work Health and Safety Coordinators (WHSCs)

(22) HSW Managers and WHSCs are responsible for:

- a. providing UQ workers with education, advice and support regarding the safe and correct use of PPE in the workplace;
- b. assisting UQ workers to perform risk assessments as required;
- c. assessing whether Organisational Units and UQ workers are able to demonstrate compliance with this Procedure and that any compliance issues that are identified are rectified in a timely manner; and
- d. seeking specialist advice from the HSW Division on PPE that may be required (such as hearing protection, respiratory protection masks and breathing apparatus).

## UQ Workers

(23) UQ workers are responsible for:

- a. complying with this Procedure, any PPE requirements identified by a risk assessment and any local safe operating procedures regarding the correct fit, use and maintenance of PPE in the Organisational Unit;
- b. completing risk assessments for the tasks and activities undertaken including any requirements for PPE in combination with higher order controls prior to commencing tasks; and
- c. checking the condition and cleanliness of PPE prior to commencing a task and reporting any defective, inadequate or damaged PPE to the supervisor immediately.

## Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(24) Heads of Organisational Units and supervisors should regularly review the effectiveness of PPE particularly following incidents and near misses and after changes to processes, procedures, personnel, storage systems and physical changes to PPE products.

(25) The HSW Division will review this Procedure as required to ensure its accuracy and relevance, and will conduct periodic audits of Organisational Units' compliance with this Procedure, which may include:

- a. existence and adequacy of workplace risk assessments;
- b. UQ workers' compliance with PPE requirements in the workplace; and
- c. UQ workers' awareness of compliance obligations associated with this Procedure.

(26) Local health, safety and wellness managers and coordinators will conduct regular inspections (at least annually) to review appropriate risk controls, including the appropriate use of PPE.

(27) Supervisors and/or Health, Safety and Wellness Managers and WHSCs will report in [UQSafe](#) non-compliance with PPE requirements or improper use of PPE in the workplace.

## Section 6 - Appendix

### Definitions

Terms	Definitions
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Clothing or equipment designed to be worn by someone to protect them from the risk of injury or illness.

Terms	Definitions
UQ Workers	<p>For the purposes of this Procedure includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff - continuing, fixed-term, research (contingent funded) and casual staff;</li> <li>• contractors, subcontractors and consultants;</li> <li>• visiting academics and researchers;</li> <li>• affiliates - academic title holders, visiting academics, emeritus professors, adjunct and honorary title holders, industry fellows, and conjoint appointments;</li> <li>• Higher Degree by Research students; and</li> <li>• volunteers and students undertaking work experience.</li> </ul>

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	23rd January 2025
<b>Review Date</b>	23rd January 2030
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Director, Health Safety and Wellness
<b>Approval Date</b>	10th January 2025
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Jim Carmichael Director, Health, Safety and Wellness
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Health, Safety and Wellness Division