Laboratory Decontamination and Decommissioning Guideline

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) This Guideline applies to all laboratories and auxiliary spaces serving laboratories at The University of Queensland, including off-site premises and host organisations such as hospitals and Queensland Government buildings. This guide is for all Principal Investigators, Group Leaders or Chief Investigators who are moving laboratories, renovating or refurbishing laboratories or are no longer working in the University's premises.

Section 2 - Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
Biological Materials	Includes, but is not limited to blood, blood products, tissues, body fluids and any derivatives produced by chemical or physical means; micro-organisms – wild type or GM; plants and plant material.
DAgWRB	Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Water Resources - Biosecurity (formerly DAFF Biosecurity, formerly AQIS)
Decommissioning	A withdrawal process to ensure a facility meets environmental health and safety standards prior to its next use.
Decontamination	A process whereby Hazardous or infectious material are removed and neutralised from laboratories and laboratory equipment.
Hazardous Materials	Materials that can harm people, other living organisms, property, or the environment.
IBC	Institutional Biosafety Committee
Principal Investigator (PI)	Individual who receives funding to perform a study.
QAP	Quarantine Approved Premises
RPA	Radiation Protection Advisor
RSO	Relationship Manager
WHSC	Work Health and Safety Coordinator

Section 3 - Guideline Scope/Coverage

(2) This Guideline is for all staff participating in safe laboratory decommissioning and closure.

(3) This Guideline may also apply to decommissioning of a specific project within a laboratory.

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Section 4 - Guideline Statement

(4) Prior to relocation or refurbishment of a laboratory, or when a Principal Investigator is vacating, relocating, or renovating a laboratory space, or when a specific project is being shut down, safe decommissioning is essential to ensure that the vacated space is safe for any authorised personnel to enter and handle equipment, fittings and fixtures without risk of contamination or harm.

(5) All transport, storage and disposal of laboratory biological, chemical, radioactive, quarantine and genetically modified items must be in compliance with the regulations and licences applicable to the laboratory and its functions. Permission or notification may be required prior to transferral of material to a new laboratory. Specific disposal methods must be adhered to and documented.

Section 5 - Overview and Responsibilities

Deans, Heads of School, Institute Directors

(6) Deans, Heads of School and Institute Directors must ensure that Principal Investigators (PI) using hazardous materials and equipment within the organisation are working in compliance with the various regulatory bodies governing their work including safe shutdown of laboratories and disposal of substances, materials and equipment.

Principal Investigator, Group Leader, Chief Investigator

(7) The PI is responsible for the complete and safe decommissioning of their laboratory space prior to vacating, relocation or refurbishment. The PI is also responsible for compliant disposal and decontamination procedures to ensure the safety of their staff and any vendors, contractors, and removalists involved in removal of materials (including equipment) from the laboratory. The PI may delegate tasks to suitably competent staff members and give appropriate instructions and support to complete the decommissioning task. Written approval for the move should be obtained from the Dean or Head of Organisational Unit prior to any action being taken.

(8) In addition, permission from regulatory authorities governing the laboratory may be required prior to disposal or transfer of material from the laboratory. Consultation and advice should be sought from the Health, Safety and Wellness Division before any action is taken.

Work Health and Safety Coordinator

(9) The WHSC is responsible for providing assistance regarding policies, procedures and regulatory issues during decommissioning in consultation with UQ Health, Safety and Wellness Division Advisors.

(10) They will provide support and advice to the PI and Facilities Manager/Project Manager throughout the decontamination/decommissioning process.

Properties and Facilities Project Manager

(11) All refurbishment and renovation projects of spaces owned or operated by the University of Queensland are assigned a dedicated Property and Facilities Division (P&F) Project Manager. The P&F Project Manager liaises with the host administrators and contractors, as well as with representatives from the organisational unit.

(12) The P&F Project Manager inspects the facility before any final handover to contractors or the host contact person and before any demolition or renovation begins, providing a copy of any host required premises release form. The P&F Project Manager should inspect the space to ensure it is safe for contractors. If any form of contamination is found at handover, the P&F Project Manager will inform the host contact and no building works will commence prior to a full

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clearance being given.

Contractors

(13) It is the responsibility of any contractor to:

a. complete Contractor Safety Induction with P&F and host organisation;
b. ensure all contractor staff are informed of the risks and hazards;
c. provide safe operating procedures or safe work method statements and personal protective equipment (PPE) fit for purpose and to ensure PPE compliance when working;
d. obtain authorisation from the P&F Project Manager to enter the laboratory before entry;
e. sight documentation (e.g.PF306) and check decontamination labelling prior to handling equipment and other items; and
f. comply with all federal, state, and local regulations for the movement of laboratory equipment, supplies, dangerous goods, and hazardous materials.

Section 6 - Decommissioning Process

Part A - Planning

(14) Consult with the personnel responsible for space management within the organisational unit and external host organisations and coordinate the move with them.

(15) Decommissioning Plan must take into consideration:

a. All processes must be conducted in a safe manner in line with UQ policies and procedures.
b. Obtain all permissions and notify all governing and regulatory bodies prior to taking any action in consultation with the UQ HSW Division, for example:
    i. Radioactive material – UQ Radiation Protection Advisor;
    ii. Drugs – Occupational Hygiene Advisor;
    iii. Dangerous goods – Occupational Hygiene Advisor;
    iv. Chemical – Occupational Hygiene Advisor;
    v. Quarantine – Biosafety Quarantine Advisor;
    vi. OGTR – Biosafety Advisor.

(16) Ensure that premises where licenced materials are to be housed is also licenced to the appropriate level and compliant with the appropriate regulatory authorities to the appropriate standard.

(17) Ensure all transportation complies with UQ policies and procedures and any regulatory authority specifications.

a. Ensure all materials are labelled and packed as specified by regulatory authorities.
b. Ensure the removals contractor is equipped and licenced to transport the types of material being transferred.

Part B - Prioritising Tasks

Waste Disposal

(18) Dispose of all waste material not to be moved must be in accordance with the regulatory requirements for the material (including decontamination of equipment prior to disposal through UQ waste streams).

(19) Hazardous waste must be identified and disposed of in accordance with UQ policy.

a. Radioactive waste – Management and Disposal of Radioactive Waste Procedure.
b. Drugs – UQ Cytotoxic Drugs and Related Waste Operating Procedure.
c. Chemical waste – Chemical Waste Operating Procedure.
d. Biological waste – Clinical and Related Waste Operating Procedure.
e. Quarantine waste - Contact Biosafety Quarantine Advisor, Health, Safety and Wellness Division.
f. Animal waste – Animal Wastes Operating Procedure.
g. Sharps glassware – Clinical and Related Waste Operating Procedure.
h. E-waste – Recycling Operating Procedure.
i. Gas Cylinders - return to the Vendor.

Decontamination

Radiation

(20) Any laboratory surfaces where work with radiation sources has been conducted must be assessed by Radiation Safety Officers and decontaminated using an appropriate decontaminant if required. Areas contaminated with radioactive isotopes have additional decontamination requirements. See Management and Disposal of Radioactive Waste Procedure or contact the local Radiation Safety Officers (RSO) or the University's Radiation Protection Advisor and Radiation Safety Officers in the Health, Safety and Wellness Division for clarification.

Biological

(21) All laboratory surfaces must be decontaminated using appropriate detergent/disinfectant (appendix F of AS2243.3). All laboratory equipment, including Class II Biosafety Cabinets and CO2 incubators must also be decontaminated prior to removal to a new laboratory. Any staff involved in this process must be suitably trained and conduct all activities wearing appropriate PPE. Equipment must be labelled with a PF306 form once decontaminated.

(22) A completed PF306 form must be affixed to all equipment that has been decontaminated. This will allow the removalist to safely handle and move the equipment to the new laboratory space.

Packing and Removals

(23) The Principal Investigator is responsible for establishing safety and emergency procedures for all phases of the move.

(24) Trained laboratory staff are responsible for collecting and packaging items compliant with Dangerous Goods, Biosafety and other regulatory packing procedures. Spill kits may need to be supplied to the couriers and removalists and be sufficient for the quantities being transported. Each container or piece of equipment must be labelled as per regulatory requirements.

(25) Removalists must be trained and licenced to transport potentially hazardous material or laboratory equipment and must pack equipment (which has been decontaminated) with adequate padding and packaging and restrain in transit, to eliminate the risk of damage whilst being transported. Adequate insurance must be secured prior to removal of items from the lab space and inventory of items recorded by the sender and checked off by the receiver on arrival at the new site to minimise the risk of loss.

Special Considerations

Radioactive Isotopes and Lasers

(26) All class 3b and 4 laser devices used for cosmetic or health related procedures are registered with the

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Queensland Government and UQ for a specified location. If you are relocating laser devices, UQ OHS Division must be notified of the new location of the laser device, contact the Health, Safety and Wellness Division, Radiation Protection Advisor for application to Queensland Health approval prior to the relocation. Note also, work in any new location must not be undertaken until the new premises are certified. If premises are longer used for certain radiation practices (e.g. unsealed sources) then specific procedures must be followed to have the space decertified. Contact the Health, Safety and Wellness Division Radiation Protection Advisor for more information.

Biological Material and Quarantine

(27) Biological Materials must be appropriately packed as per Transport of Biological Materials Procedure.

(28) Some biological material may also have special quarantine requirements prior to movement including movement of material within the state (e.g. moving sugarcane from UQ St Lucia to northern Queensland). See Working with Biosecurity Goods Procedure and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for more information.

(29) Material Transfer Agreements (MTA) are sometimes used when materials and equipment are transferred from one institution to another. For more information, see the Research Management site of standard and pre-approved research contracts.

Liquid Nitrogen and Dry Ice

(30) If liquid nitrogen or dry ice is used during transport of materials then consideration must be given to the quantity of liquid nitrogen or dry ice, the transport vehicle and the containers used. See Working Safely with Liquid Nitrogen and Dry Ice Guideline for more information.

Section 7 - Contact for Additional Information

(31) Health, Safety and Wellness Division:

a. Phone: 336-52365
b. Email: hsw@uq.edu.au.

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