

University Occupational Health and Safety Information Sheet

GENERAL CONTROL MEASURES FOR LABS AND ANIMAL ROOMS

The table below details general control measure that are required under the COSHH regulations.

MEASURE	NOTES
Displaying suitable and sufficient warning signs, including the biohazard sign.	For example, displaying the containment level on the laboratory door.
Putting in place appropriate decontamination and disinfection procedures.	Consider the spectrum of activity, presence of inactivating agents and contact and duration of exposure to the biological agent.
Putting in place the means for the safe collection, storage, and disposal of contaminated waste. This includes the use of secure and identifiable containers after treatment if appropriate.	Waste needs to be segregated at source, e.g. clinical and non-clinical, and arrangements need to be put in place to ensure that exposure to clinical waste is controlled both when being stored and when being transported within and from the premises.
Testing, where it is necessary and technically possible, for the presence of biological agents outside primary physical containment.	For example, Aperture Protection Factor test for microbiological safety cabinets, testing of the integrity of seals and filters.
Setting out the procedures for working with (and on-site transport of) biological agents or material that could contain them.	Work with biological agents could be covered in local codes or practice, departmental safety arrangements, standard operating procedures in the form of verbal instruction. Where transport of biological material needs to be considered it will need to be in accordance with the relevant standards in the carriage of dangerous goods regulations.
Where appropriate, making effective vaccines available to employees who are not already immune.	COSHH requires that if the risk assessment shows there is a risk of exposure to biological agents for which effective vaccines exist, then these should be offered if the employee is not already immune.
Putting in place good occupational hygiene measures including the provision of appropriate and adequate washing and toilet facilities. Eating, drinking, or smoking is prohibited in any workplace where there is a risk of contamination with biological agents.	Very high standards of good occupational hygiene will be required in any laboratory setting. These are the central, basic measures to control infection in any work setting. General guidance on the provision of welfare facilities can be found in the Approved Code of Practice that accompanies the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.