

University Occupational Health and Safety Standard

NOISE

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1. PURPOSE

The University is committed to meeting its legal obligations by ensuring that it has adequate arrangements, facilities and trained personnel to reduce the risk of injury or ill health from exposure to noise whilst undertaking University activities.

This document sets out the minimum requirements to control risk associated with noise at the University of Strathclyde, in order to comply with relevant legislative obligations and University requirements.

2. SCOPE

This document applies to all staff, post graduate students and visitors (for example visiting academics) who either work with noise or work in areas where noise is generated, or have managerial responsibilities for such activities at the University of Strathclyde.

3. ABBREVIATIONS

dB	Decibel
DSC	Departmental Safety Coordinator
EAV	Exposure Action Value
ELV	Exposure Limit Value
LEAV	Lower Exposure Action Value
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations
SHaW	Safety, Health and Wellbeing
SIRIS	Strathclyde Incident Reporting and Investigation System
UEAV	Upper Exposure Action Value

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Decibel (dB) – a unit used to measure the intensity of sound. Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale, where for every increase of 10 decibels results in the sound intensity increasing by a factor of 10. The decibel scale is used to measure the ratio between two values.

4.2 Exposure action value - levels of daily or weekly personal noise exposure or of peak sound pressure that, if reached or exceeded, require specified action to be taken to reduce risk.

4.3 Near Miss – An event or situation that could have resulted in exposure to a hazardous level of noise, but did not do so.

4.4 Noise - means any audible sound.

4.5 Noise Exposure – means any person who experiences noise which arises while they are at work or arises out of or in connection with their work and could apply equally to staff, students or contractors.

4.3 Lower exposure action value - means the lower of the two levels of daily or weekly personal noise exposure or peak sound pressure, which if reached or exceeded requires specified action to be taken to reduce risk. The LEAV for daily or weekly personal noise exposure is 80 dB (A-weighted) or a peak sound pressure of 135 dB (C-weighted).

4.4 Upper exposure action value - means the higher of the two levels of daily or weekly personal noise exposure or peak sound pressure, which if reached or exceeded requires specified action to be taken to reduce risk. The UEAV for daily or weekly personal noise exposure is 85 dB (A-weighted) or a peak sound pressure of 137 dB (C-weighted).

4.5 Exposure limit value - means the level of daily or weekly personal noise exposure or peak sound pressure which must not be exceeded. The daily or weekly limit value is 87 dB (A-weighted) or a peak sound pressure of 140 dB (C-weighted).

4.6 Peak sound pressure - means the maximum sound pressure to which a person is exposed. This is measured in dB (C-weighted).

4.7 Weekly (or daily) personal noise exposure - means the level of weekly (or daily) personal noise exposure of a person taking account of the level of noise and duration of exposure in one week (or day) and covering all noise. This is measured in dB (A-weighted).

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The University [OHS Standard for Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities](#) document defines the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities necessary to implement the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy at each level of the organisation.

The roles and responsibilities specifically in relation to the management of noise are detailed as follows:

5.1 Executive Deans

Responsible for performance monitoring of this Standard within their area of responsibility including the University's significant partnerships, collaborations and wholly owned companies. They must ensure that departments are resourced such that this Standard is fully implemented.

5.2 Heads of Department/Heads of School/Professional Services Directors

Responsible for ensuring compliance with this Standard throughout their area of responsibility through provision of adequate resources and performance monitoring. They will be assisted by the DSC or other nominated person(s) to carry out delegated tasks as deemed appropriate. Specifically, they will ensure:

- Appropriate management, administrative and technical arrangements are in place to effectively control risks arising from activities involving noise, and ensure that these are regularly reviewed;
- Activities involving intrusive (nuisance) or loud noises are identified within the department and have been risk assessed and significant findings are recorded;
- Appropriate plans are established to control newly identified areas of high or intrusive noise;
- A person(s) is nominated to coordinate the programme of occupational hygiene monitoring and health surveillance where required, and this programme is monitored, maintained and reviewed;
- Where a formal programme of noise control is required, that this is implemented effectively;
- Engagement with SHaW regarding the Occupational Hygiene Programme;
- Engagement with the Occupational Health Service regarding recommended health surveillance;
- Mechanisms are in place to monitor, audit and review OHS performance in relation to noise;
- Incidents (including near misses) are reported and investigated appropriately with corrective action taken where required.

5.3 Departmental Safety Coordinator

The Departmental Safety Coordinator (or other nominated person) is responsible for ensuring that:

- Line Managers/Principal Investigators/Academic Supervisors implement the requirements of their risk assessments;
- Information in relation to the implementation of this OHS standard is made available to SHaW for audit purposes as required;
- Where noise monitoring is required, maintain an Occupational Hygiene Monitoring Programme, liaising with the Line Managers/Principal Investigators/Academic Supervisors and SHaW to co-ordinate advice and visits from the Occupational Hygienist;
- Where health surveillance is required, liaise with Occupational Health Service to establish a surveillance programme, keep records of personnel who have attended and where recommendations are made by Occupational Health Service to co-ordinate any action as necessary.

5.4 Line Managers/Principal Investigators/Academic Supervisors

Responsible on a day-to-day basis for ensuring that risks associated with noise are managed within their area of responsibility. Specifically, they will ensure:

- Working safely with noise generating equipment is considered as part of work planning;
- Departmental safety arrangements are implemented within their area of responsibility as they apply to the work being done;
- An up-to-date knowledge of the risks associated with the work under their control is maintained;
- The identification and assessment of the risks to personnel under their supervision / management from possible exposure to hazardous noise;
- Occupational noise monitoring is arranged through SHaW, via the DSC (or other nominated person);
- Recommendations / additional control measures identified by the Occupational Hygienist as a result of monitoring are implemented, including the requirement for health surveillance;
- Hearing protection is provided if noise exposure cannot be reduced sufficiently by using other methods;
- Where hearing protection is required, the provision of suitable storage and regular checks and maintenance of the protection;
- Spot checks are undertaken for the wearing of hearing protection, where necessary;
- Legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded;
- The provision of adequate information, instruction and training.

5.5 Safety, Health and Wellbeing

In relation of this OHS Standard, SHaW are responsible for:

- Setting the requirements of this Standard, and reviewing at appropriate intervals;
- Liaising with the Occupational Hygienist to discuss department needs and to arrange noise monitoring when required;
- Liaising with departments to arrange noise monitoring based on their needs;
- Co-ordinating the dissemination of the occupational hygiene report from the Occupational Hygienist to departments and to the Occupational Health service;
- Liaising with the Occupational Health service where health surveillance is recommended as an outcome of noise monitoring;
- Storing occupational hygiene monitoring reports for the necessary retention period;
- Managing the reporting of incidents through SIRIS, including RIDDOR;
- Implementing the Occupational Health and Safety Management System audit to ensure monitoring compliance with this standard.

5.6 Occupational Hygienist

In relation of this OHS Standard, the Occupational Hygienist is responsible for:

- Assisting HoDs to meet their statutory obligations by providing occupational hygiene monitoring (noise monitoring) where identified by risk assessment;
- Liaising with SHaW to arrange both scheduled and non-scheduled noise monitoring for departments;
- Providing the occupational hygiene report to SHaW following noise monitoring, and providing additional information as required;
- Providing information / assessment of potential noise exposure prior to work commencing and prior to any occupational hygiene monitoring being undertaken;
- Recommending a referral to the Occupational Health Service to discuss health surveillance requirements if there is a risk of significant exposure, or if an individual is vulnerable and may need health surveillance whether exposure is significant or not.

5.7 Occupational Health Service

In relation to this OHS Standard, the Occupational Health Service is responsible for:

- Assisting HoDs to meet their statutory obligations by providing health surveillance where identified;
- Liaising with departmental staff to implement a programme of health surveillance where required;
- Receiving and reviewing Occupational Hygiene Monitoring reports where health surveillance is recommended;
- Providing information on occupational health related issues;
- Keeping medical records in a suitable form for at least 40 years from the last date of entry.

5.8 All Staff

All workers must:

- Complete all required relevant training for the work being done;
- Ensure that they use all equipment in line with departmental instruction;
- Wear all hearing protective equipment in line with departmental instruction;
- Ensure the appropriate handling of all safety equipment provided;
- Report defective hearing protective equipment immediately;
- Where appropriate, engage fully in an occupational hygiene monitoring programme and occupational health surveillance where required.

6. THE MANAGEMENT OF NOISE AT WORK

The following sections provide information on the management of noise at work. Comprehensive guidance is provided in the HSE publication L108 [‘Controlling Noise at Work – Guidance on the Regulations’](#). Within L108 there are numerous practical examples of noise control that can be referred to when undertaking the risk assessment.

6.1 Risk Assessment

Where significant noise exposure, whether intrusive / nuisance noise, at or above LEAV (see section 6.1.1) is likely then it **must** be included in a risk assessment. Typical examples of noise generating equipment that should be considered when undertaking a risk assessment are:

- Chain saws
- Hammer drills
- Hand-held grinders
- Impact wrenches
- Pedestal grinders
- Powered hammers and chisels
- Powered lawn mowers
- Powered sanders
- Ride on grass cutting machines
- Strimmers / brush cutters
- Musical instruments
- Bands, orchestras etc.
- Amplified music
- Machinery and plant
- Vibrating equipment. Noise is typically a vibration risk, so equipment which generates high levels of vibration will also generate high levels of noise.

To assist in the risk assessment process, the following guidelines can be used. This list is not exhaustive, and where there is doubt over the need to include noise in the risk assessment or arrange for noise monitoring, guidance can be sought from the DSC, or SHaW:

- The noise is intrusive but normal conversation is possible, e.g. as noisy as a busy road, a vacuum cleaner or a crowded restaurant or worse, and is present for most of the working day;

- Employees need to raise their voice to conduct a conversation at a distance of approximately 2m for at least part of the day;
- The work involves the use of powered tools or machinery for more than 15 minutes of the day;
- The work involves noisy tasks, for example construction, demolition, woodworking, engineering, forging etc.;
- Noises generated by impact (hammering, forging pneumatics, hydraulics etc.);
- The presence of symptoms which may indicate a risk of exposure e.g. ringing in their ears, difficulty in hearing in a social setting etc.

Any risk assessment must be undertaken by a trained and competent person using the University of Strathclyde [eRISK](#) system. The risk assessment must:

- Identify those who may be exposed to noise in excess of the relevant exposure action value;
- Identify the level, type and duration of noise exposure;
- Identify where there may be a risk to health to those identified who may be exposed, and what the risk to health may be, including those whose health is at particular risk from noise exposure;
- Identify indirect effects of noise such as interaction with audible warning systems (e.g. fire alarm);
- Consider information provided by manufacturers of noise generating equipment;
- Identify the requirement for noise monitoring and further to this include the outcome of the noise monitoring (see Section 6.1.2);
- Identify the measures necessary to eliminate the risks / exposure, or reduce them to as low as is reasonably practicable, including the requirement for hearing protection (see section 6.2);
- Identify the need for health surveillance (see Section 6.6) and consider information obtained following health surveillance;
- Identify the need for any ongoing noise monitoring that may be required to ensure that the controls in place remain effective (see Section 6.1.2);
- Record the significant findings of the risk assessment;
- Be reviewed at regular intervals and where significant change occurs.

Where exposure to noise has been considered as part of the risk assessment process but no action is required (e.g. the LEAV is not likely to be exceeded), this should still be recorded in the risk assessment.

6.1.1 Noise Exposure Action Values

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 sets noise exposure values over which action must be taken to eliminate or reduce exposure, and noise exposure limits which must never be exceeded.

Exposure action values (EAVs) define the levels at which action must be taken to reduce the risk from noise. These values do not consider the reduction of noise provided by hearing protection.

- **The Lower Exposure Action Value (LEAV).** If exposure is likely to be above the LEAV (and below the UEAV) then hearing protection should be provided upon request by the person(s) exposed to the noise. Information and training must also be provided. Noise exposure must be eliminated or reduced to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.
- **The Upper Exposure Action Value (UEAV).** If exposure is likely to be at or above an UEAV a formal programme of noise control measures must be implemented. Hearing protection **must** be provided and **must** be used. Information and training must also be provided. Hearing protection zones must also be identified (see Section 6.2.4).

The Exposure Limit Value (ELV) defines the level of noise that employees **must not** be exposed to at any time. The ELV considers the reduction of noise provided by hearing protection (see section 6.2)

These levels are further divided into two categories, A-Weighted and C-Weighted.

- A-Weighted noise - are noises that will be experienced over a working day, which have a frequency of 20Hz to 20kHz.
- C-Weighted noises - are short lived noises, such as hammering or explosions, with a peak pressure of between 31.5Hz to 8kHz.

These levels are defined in the table below:

	Lower Exposure Action Value	Upper Exposure Action Value	Exposure Limit Value
Daily / Weekly personal noise exposure (A-Weighted)	80dB	85dB	87dB
Peak sound pressure (C-Weighted)	135dB	137dB	140dB

Departments must, as far as is reasonably practicable, reduce noise to as low a level as possible. Any planned activity that may expose personnel to noise levels in excess of the ELV are not permitted until such action is taken to reduce the noise levels to below at least the ELV.

Departments must, wherever practicable, use the daily limit for assessing a worker's exposure to potentially dangerous levels of noise. The weekly limit is only to be used where the noise levels in a person's work area vary markedly over a working week, and where the level of noise that someone may be exposed to is expected to be in excess of 5dB higher than the other days being assessed.

When deciding on whether an assessment should be made on a daily basis or whether a weekly average is more relevant, departments should:

- Ensure that there is no increased risk to health from using a weekly average. For example, the worker spends 4 days of a 5-day week in an office, and the remaining day exposed to very high noise levels with no protection.
- Consult the worker and discuss whether a weekly average is appropriate for the work that they are doing.
- Ensure that the workers who may be exposed are aware of the potential issues with using a weekly average.

The Occupational Hygienist will advise on noise monitoring requirements and make recommendations dependent on the results of the monitoring (see Section 6.5).

6.1.2 Noise Exposure Monitoring

Once it has been determined that the levels and / or duration of noise exposure may be at or near the LEAV, it must be determined what actual level of noise is present in the area. This will determine if / what action is required to reduce the noise level / duration of exposure to noise. This can be done by either:

1) Referencing available documentation, such as:

- Other similar noise measurements made in your workplace;
- Manufacturers provided information;
- Other published documentation from reliable sources.

If this method is used, then the risk assessment must provide thorough justification for why this information accurately reflects the noise that may be found in the area.

2) Local noise monitoring. If noise exposure is likely to be at or above the LEAV, noise monitoring must be arranged to determine the level and duration of noise. An externally appointed Occupational Hygienist carries out noise monitoring on behalf of the University (see section 6.5).

The Occupational Hygienist will conduct on site measurements for each activity or piece of equipment generating potentially harmful levels of noise as identified by the Department to establish:

- The level of noise produced, which may differ from the specifications in the manufacturer's handbook when the equipment is in actual use;
- The length of time it takes to reach the exposure action value and exposure limit value;
- Whether additional controls are required to eliminate or reduce the risk; and
- Whether health surveillance is required for staff and student.

Noise monitoring can be arranged by completing the [Request for Occupational Hygiene Monitoring Form](#), and submitting this to SHaW who will engage the Occupational Hygienist.

Further information on occupational monitoring can be found in the [OHS Standard - Occupational Hygiene](#).

For further information on Occupational Hygiene Monitoring see Section 6.5.

6.1.3 Controlling Noise Exposure

To ensure that the risks from exposure to noise is either eliminated or reduced to as low a level as is reasonably practicable (whether or not EAVs are exceeded), consideration should be given to the following at either the planning or review stages:

- Other working methods which reduce exposure to noise;
- Choice of appropriate work equipment emitting the least possible noise, taking account of the work to be done;
- The design and layout of workplaces, work stations and rest facilities;
- Suitable and sufficient information and training for employees, such that work equipment may be used correctly, in order to minimise their exposure to noise;
- Reduction of noise by technical means;
- Appropriate maintenance programmes for work equipment, the workplace and workplace systems;
- Limitation of the duration and intensity of exposure to noise; and
- Appropriate work schedules of work with adequate rest periods.

During the risk assessment process, when deciding on controls to put in place, departments must follow the established hierarchy of control ([Guidance Note – Undertaking a Risk Assessment – Section 7](#)) to ensure that the correct approach is taken in reducing the likelihood of harm.

The hierarchy of control, from most to least effective, is as follows:

Eliminate - Remove the source of noise entirely. Elimination of the source of noise is the most effective method of controlling the risk presented by sources of hazardous noise. This can involve a reassessment of the work process to be done that utilises a different method of achieving the same results without the use of noise generating equipment or processes.

Substitute - Identify quieter equipment or a different, quieter process to complete the task. When considering equipment for use in a process, departments must consider using equipment that will achieve the same results, but that generate less noise as a result of their operation. Considering purchasing equipment with lower noise characteristics can be a simple method of reducing the level of noise that is likely to be encountered.

Isolate - Move the equipment to allow for remote operation. Where it is not possible to replace the equipment with lower noise versions, then isolating the equipment from operators will provide a level of protection. This does not require the equipment being in a separate room, but can require barriers to be established between the operator and the device, providing a level of sound insulation.

Engineering - Use engineered measures designed to reduce the noise. Engineered controls are physical modifications that can be made to equipment to reduce its noise profile. This includes proper maintenance of devices to ensure they are in good working order. It can also mean the use of vibration mounting plates, silencers or other physical controls.

Administrative and Organisational - The use of written arrangements to reduce the exposure to noise. Administrative controls are written documents detailing the correct required processes to work in the noisy area. This can include written processes, health monitoring, signage and training.

The way that work is planned and organised can affect noise exposure. Examples of organisational controls include:

- Job rotations and limiting the time spent in noisy areas – every halving of the time spent in a noisy area will reduce personal noise exposure by 3 dB;
- Regular maintenance of machinery and equipment is essential as it will deteriorate with age and become noisier;
- Introducing a positive purchasing and hire policy.

PPE - the provision of hearing protection when all other options have been exhausted. PPE is always considered as a last line of protection for personnel. The use of PPE requires that the risk still be present, and direct protection of the person is required. This will include the use of Hearing protection, such as ear plugs or ear defenders. See Section 6.2 for further information on Hearing Protection.

For further information on measures that can be taken to eliminate, reduce or directly protect users from the effects of loud noises, see the [Guidance Document – Controlling Noise at Work \(L108\)](#) issued by the Health and Safety Executive.

6.1.4 Formal programme of noise control

If exposure is likely to be at or above an UEAV a formal programme of noise control measures must be implemented. The programme will depend on the work activities, processes, and the possibilities for control. In developing a programme of noise control consideration should be given to:

- Identifying what is possible to control noise exposures, how much reduction could be achieved and what is reasonably practicable;
- Establishing priorities for action and a timetable;
- Assigning responsibilities to individuals to deliver the various parts of the programme;
- Ensuring that the work involved in implementing the noise-control measures is carried out;
- Checking that what you have done has been effective in reducing noise exposures.

Some controls may take time to put in place, particularly where equipment must be replaced or new processes developed. Other controls may be considered to be not reasonably practicable but may become so over time as circumstances change. The feasibility of further noise reductions should be considered periodically during risk assessment review.

6.1.5 Reviewing the risk assessment

The risk assessment should be reviewed if:

- There is any reason to think that it does not reflect the current noise risk, for example: change in the work or process; purchase of new machinery; decommissioning of older machinery; altered shift patterns;
- New ways of working or improved noise-control techniques that could be applied become known;
- Health surveillance shows that hearing is being damaged, suggesting that noise risks are not being properly controlled;
- Control measures that were not reasonably practicable when originally conducted the risk assessment (probably on the grounds of costs) become reasonably practicable, e.g. because of changes in technology and cost.

6.2 Hearing Protection

When noise control measures have been put in place, and noise is reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable, hearing protection may be required to provide additional protection beyond what is described in Section 6.1. Hearing protection must never be used as an alternative to controlling noise through technical or organisational means.

6.2.1 Provision and Use of Hearing Protective Equipment

The requirement to provide hearing protections will depend on the level of noise, following the implementation of all other controls.

- **If the level of noise is between the LEAV and the UEAV**, then hearing protection must be provided whenever this is requested by the persons who will be exposed to the noise.

- **If the level of noise is equal to, or above, the UEAV**, and where nothing else can be done to reduce the level of noise to below the UEAV, then departments **must** provide hearing protection to any person(s) who will be exposed to the noise.

Hearing protection should be:

- Used wherever it is provided for the intended purpose only, with no exceptions;
- Compatible with any other PPE;
- Used and stored in accordance with information, instruction and training provided;
- Stored and maintained appropriately;
- Inspected regularly for defects and taken out of use and replaced immediately if faults are found.

Hearing protection records should be kept which includes details of the issue of hearing protectors, arrangements for ensuring users know where and how to use them, and any problems people encounter when using them and what was done to rectify the problem.

6.2.2 Selection of Hearing Protective Equipment

The selection of protective equipment for hearing will be determined by a number of factors, such as the level of noise to be protected against, and the area in which the equipment will be used. It should at least reduce exposure to below the ELV, and eliminate the risk to hearing where possible ideally achieving a noise level between 70 and 80dB. Over protection should be avoided as this can cause additional risks such as inability to hear warning alarms (e.g. the fire alarm).

The following factors will impact on the equipment to be chosen:

- The level of noise reduction required;
- The environment in which the equipment will be used;
- The need to communicate with others;
- The need to hear / understand warning alarms / sounds;
- The cost of obtaining and replacing the equipment;
- The users who will be wearing the equipment;
- Compatibility with other PPE;
- Environmental factors such as heat etc.

Given the variety of equipment available, departments must ensure that appropriate information is used when deciding on the hearing protection to be used.

The Occupational Hygienist can provide advice on the appropriate hearing protection based on the noise monitoring and the activities being undertaken.

6.2.3 Maintenance and Storage of Protective Equipment

Equipment provided for the protection of hearing must be suitably maintained and protected from damage to ensure that it is able to function as expected. Departments must properly maintain all hearing protection in an efficient state and good state of repair. This can be through the use of an asset register or other such administrative program. They must also have a written process for the reporting of defective equipment. Where disposable hearing protection is used, this must be stored and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Hearing protection must be stored in such a manner that it is protected from damage and any effects of the environment that they are used in. Examples include storage bags that are marked for individual users or clean storage lockers for users to keep their protectors with their other work equipment when not in use.

All personnel are required to report any defective hearing protection to their line manager as soon as possible.

6.2.4 Hearing Protected Zone

Where a department has an area in its control where the noise level cannot be reduced to below the UEAV, and where hearing protection **must be worn**, then they are required to:

- Designate the area a Hearing Protected Zone (fixed or temporary);

- Display the hearing protection zone sign (Fig.1), which must be displayed at all entry points to the area at all times, as well being in prominent positions throughout the area (e.g. on machines);
- Restrict access to the area as far as practicable to only those who require access;
- Provide written and verbal instruction on how to recognise where and when hearing protection should be worn.

Departments must not allow any personnel into a Hearing Protected Zone without hearing protection.

Figure 1. Hearing protection zone sign.



6.3 Procurement of Noise Generating Equipment

Before purchasing any new tools or equipment that may be a potential source of noise, Departments must obtain information from the supplier or manufacturer about the noise levels emitted.

Where possible only equipment with low levels of noise (daily or weekly personal exposure less than or equal to 80dB (A-weighted) or a peak sound pressure of 135 dB (C-weighted)) should be considered for purchase.

Where there is an opportunity to trial equipment before purchase, noise monitoring can be requested to check that the noise levels specified by the manufacturer are reflected when the equipment is in use.

Any new equipment purchased must be added to the departments record of noise generating equipment and subject to a risk assessment.

6.4 Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision

6.4.1 Information and instruction

All persons who may be exposed to noise which is likely to be at or above a LEAV on University property, or as a result of University work, must be provided with sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that they are aware of the risks that noise may present and what measures are in place to protect them from these hazardous effects.

Departments must ensure that the information and instruction provided is recorded and includes (but is not limited to):

- The significant findings of the risk assessment;
- The nature of the risks from exposure to noise;
- The likely levels of noise that they may be exposed to;
- What measures are in place to protect them;
- How to use the equipment provided correctly and safely;
- How to request hearing protection if they require it;
- How to wear and use hearing protection correctly and any limitations it possesses;
- How to report defects in equipment or hearing protection;
- What their duties are under the control of noise regulations;
- What health surveillance is available and how to request this;
- What hearing related symptoms to be aware of, what to do if they are experienced and who to report to;
- How to identify noise related injuries and how to report these.

Assistance in determining the appropriate level of training required can be sought from SHaW.

6.4.2 Training

Staff and students must be provided with relevant instruction and training on how to use noise generating equipment correctly and the correct use of hearing protection where required. This may be delivered in-house or by the manufacturer or supplier of the equipment.

6.4.3 Supervision

Where there is a risk of noise-related ill health, departments must provide adequate supervision to monitor that risk control measures required to eliminate or reduce the risk are being implemented and remain effective.

6.5 Occupational Hygiene Monitoring

The Occupational Hygienist may be required to provide specialist advice/or undertake monitoring and, where required, to measure levels of exposure to potentially hazardous levels of noise. They may carry out a pre-monitoring visit to assess the area and processes to determine if monitoring is necessary. The Occupational Hygienist will employ suitable sampling techniques to appropriately assess a person's exposure to noise within a given area and where carrying out a specific task.

Upon completion of monitoring, the Occupational Hygienist will provide a written report to the department via SHaW. Departments must ensure that any recommendations from the report are reviewed within the department, and appropriately implemented and considered within the risk assessment. The Occupational Hygienist will make recommendations on hearing protection and the requirement for health surveillance dependent on the outcome of the noise monitoring.

Further information can be found in the [Occupational Hygiene Service Guidance](#) document, or assistance can be sought from SHaW.

6.6 Health Surveillance

Health surveillance is a programme of periodic and suitable health checks, performed and interpreted by a competent person, to identify early signs and symptoms of work-related ill health and to allow action to be taken to prevent its progression (and protect others). It is also an important factor in monitoring the effectiveness of noise control measures (although it is not a substitute for controlling risk at source). Suitable health surveillance typically includes regular hearing checks (audiometric testing) and is provided by the University's Occupational Health Service.

Departments are required to implement a program of Health Surveillance where:

- Personnel experience levels of noise or peak sound levels at or in excess of the UEAV. This can also include the weekly average;
- Where personnel are, or may be concerned, that preventative measures that are in place are not wholly effective;
- Exposures between the LEAV and UEAVs, or occasional exposures in excess of the UEAV, where employees at particular risk are working. Employees at particular risk are those who may have pre-existing hearing conditions, having treatment with certain medications or those who have been exposed to certain chemicals, which can increase the risk of further damage to hearing.

The arrangement of a health surveillance program can be made by contacting the [University's Occupational Health Service](#). The details of the monitoring program will depend on the work being carried out, and the levels of noise to which personnel may be exposed.

When a program has been agreed with the Occupational Health Service, personnel are required to comply with the recommended health surveillance.

The Occupational Health Service will discuss the results of monitoring with individual personnel on completion, and a full, anonymised report will be provided to the relevant department to assist them in ensuring that their controls remain effective, and that they are aware of emerging areas of concern.

It is the responsibility of the Department to keep records of the outcome of the health surveillance and information on the persons fitness to continue to work with noisy equipment or activities. The record should not contain any confidential medical information, this should be kept by Occupational Health Service only.

7. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS

7.1 The requirements to meet the OHS Standard for Noise are described in this document. Some aspects are covered in more detail in other documents which are referenced throughout.

7.2 Written records must be maintained to comply with this standard.

8. COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

8.1 A copy of the latest Standard will be available on the SHaW website.

8.2 Departments are expected to report on compliance with this standard as part of regular OHS performance monitoring, further information can be obtained from SHaW.

8.3 With regard to this Standard, incidents associated with noise must be reported through [SIRIS](#). If more than one person is involved in an incident then a separate report should be completed for each individual involved.

8.4 Some incidents may be reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). These regulations require that certain work-related injuries, cases of ill health and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Health and Safety Executive. SHaW manage the reporting of incidents under RIDDOR.

9. COMPLIANCE

This standard aims to meet the requirements of:

- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
- Managing for Health and Safety HSG65 (2013)
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005)
- Controlling Noise at Work – Guidance on Regulations L108 (2021)
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (2013)
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work (Amendment) Regulations (2022)
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations (1996)

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Recorded changes to this document are maintained in the SHaW Document Control Register.