



Doc. No.	Class of information: The Forensic Science Service® (FSS®) Code of safe working practice	Release date: 30 Nov 2002
 <p>THE FORENSIC SCIENCE SERVICE®</p>	<p>Short Description: Guidelines to staff on complying with health and safety standards. The code covers the employer's duty of care, employee responsibilities, safety signs, use of display screen equipment, manual handling, electrical hazards, lone working, personal protective equipment, first aid and accident reporting, stress, waste disposal, smoking policy, basic office practice, chemical hazards, biological hazards, basic laboratory hygiene, control of biological hazards and control of chemical hazards</p>	

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IMPORTANT!

This booklet is issued to ensure your safety and provides information on a variety of health and safety issues relevant to the Forensic Science Service. Following the advice in this booklet will help you to avoid risks and ensure your safety.

**Your health and safety is vitally important
Read this booklet carefully
Keep it safe
Read it often**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objective

1.1.1 Identifying common hazards, evaluating the risks and providing suitable control strategies are essential for good risk management. This document provides the first essential stage of job safety training for staff in the FSS to ensure the Health and Safety of all employees and others who may be affected by our activities.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This Code of Practice is pertinent to all areas within the FSS and is applicable to all staff working in those areas, whether scientists, support staff or Managers.

1.2.2 Training to achieve and maintain this basic level of safe practice should be completed as soon as possible for new staff, regularly re-enforced for staff already in post and when their job function significantly changes, e.g. on promotion.

1.3 Responsibilities

1.3.1 The Health and Safety Policy Document lists general Health and Safety responsibilities applicable to all employees. **All staff must follow the guidance in this document.** The summary below outlines the main principles:

Employers Duty of care

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HASAWA), section 2, employers have a duty of care to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of all employees. This duty requires:

- the provision and maintenance of safe plant and systems of work
- the safe storage, handling, use and transport of articles and substances
- the provision of information, instruction, supervision and training
- the maintenance of any place of work in a safe condition
- the provision of safe access and egress
- the provision of a safe working environment with adequate welfare facilities

Employees Duties

Employees also have duties under sections 7 & 8 of the HASAWA which include:

- taking reasonable care for their own Health and Safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- to co-operate with the employer to enable him to carry out his duties
- not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of Health, Safety or Welfare

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place further duties on employees:

- to use correctly any equipment, substance, means of production or safety device
- to report any serious or imminent danger
- to report any shortcomings in Health and Safety arrangements

Risk Assessments

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW) place a duty on employers to ensure: suitable and sufficient assessments are made of the risks to the Health and Safety of employees and others who may be affected

1.3.2 **All staff** are responsible for following the safe working procedures detailed in this document. Any difficulties in compliance **must** be clarified with your line manager.

DO familiarise yourself with the location and contents of the Health and Safety Policy Document - available at your site

DO locate and refer to the Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work which should form the basis of your training. Refer to your line manager to discuss further issues arising

DO inform your line Manager if you become pregnant, so Risk Assessments relevant to your work can be reviewed in the light of your condition.

DO report any accident or near miss by completion of the FSS Accident/Incident Report form.

1.3.2 **All staff** have a responsibility to keep their individual work areas clean and tidy.

1.4 Definitions

1.4.1 For the purposes of this document, laboratory areas are defined as all accommodation used to conduct casework.

1.4.2 Desks situated in laboratory areas are not designated as office accommodation.

1.4.3 For the purposes of this document, the following are defined as offices

- all administrative accommodation
- all accommodation attached to operational and customer facing business areas which has been designated as office accommodation.

2 BASIC SAFE PRACTICE

2.1 Fire and other Emergencies

- 2.1.1 Details of emergency protocols are found in the Local Emergency Procedures document produced by each site.
- 2.1.2 A minimum of two fire practice evacuation exercises should be held each year.
- 2.1.3 All staff must have seen the video "How to Use a Fire Extinguisher" by the Fire Protection Association.

<u>DO</u>	ensure you know the location of emergency equipment such as: spillage kits, first aid boxes, eye wash bottles / stations and emergency showers
<u>DO</u>	ensure you know the location of fire call points, fire extinguishers and fire blankets
<u>DO</u>	follow the advice given in the video
<u>DO</u>	ensure you know escape routes and assembly point(s)
<u>DO</u>	ensure you know the sound(s) and the meaning of any alarms.

2.2 Safety Signs

2.2.1 Safety signs are required where there is a significant risk Health and Safety that has not been adequately avoided or controlled by the Risk Assessment process, provided the use of a sign can help reduce the risk.

2.2.2 Make sure you know the meaning of the following Safety signs displayed around the site

Prohibitory signs	-	round shape, black pictogram on white background, red edging with diagonal line
Warning signs	-	triangular shape, black pictogram on a yellow background with black edging
Mandatory signs	-	round shape, white pictogram on blue background
Fire fighting signs	-	rectangular or square shape, white pictogram on a red background
Emergency escape	-	rectangular or square shape, white pictogram on a First aid or green background

2.3 Housekeeping

2.3.1 An untidy work area can be an unsafe one, as hazards may lie hidden under the mess.

<u>DO</u>	clear up spillages immediately
<u>DO</u>	ensure walkways are kept clear of obstructions
<u>DO</u>	dispose of rubbish in the proper bins
<u>DO</u>	change bin liners before they start to overflow
<u>DO</u>	store drawing pins, scissors, knives and letter openers safely to minimise the chance of cuts

<u>DO</u>	locate and use sellotape dispensers in such a way as to minimise the chance of cuts from the serrated cutting edge
<u>DO NOT</u>	place sharp objects in office waste bins. Use designated glass or sharps bins

2.4 Slips and Trips

2.4.1 Slips and trips are often due to inattention but can also be caused by worn, wet and/or slippery surfaces or by poor lighting conditions.

<u>DO</u>	keep gangways free of obstructions
<u>DO</u>	wear appropriate shoes
<u>DO</u>	report any worn, wet and/or slippery surfaces using your Local Defect reporting procedure
<u>DO</u>	keep to recognised walkways
<u>DO NOT</u>	run or walk too fast
<u>DO NOT</u>	jump down stairs or off platforms
<u>DO NOT</u>	climb onto chairs
<u>DO NOT</u>	tilt chairs beyond their point of balance
<u>DO NOT</u>	carry a load which blocks your vision
<u>DO NOT</u>	leave drawers of filing cabinets open
<u>DO NOT</u>	open more than one drawer of a filing cabinet at a time
<u>DO NOT</u>	overload the top drawers of filing cabinets or load top drawers before bottom drawers

2.5 Falls

2.5.1 Falls can be caused by the inappropriate actions of individuals or failure to store items safely.

2.5.2 Stacked materials can cause harm by people bumping into them causing the items to topple over.

<u>DO</u>	use ladders or step stools to reach high level shelves
Before climbing a ladder or stepladder:	
<i>visually check it is in good condition</i>	
<i>report actual or suspected faults</i>	
<i>position it on a firm base</i>	
<i>make sure the stepladder is fully open</i>	
<i>Get someone to hold the base</i>	
<u>DO</u>	plan storage to ensure heavier and/or more frequently used items are stored at or below chest height
<u>DO</u>	leave sufficient space between stacks
<u>DO</u>	report any broken items (e.g. broken boxes or (containers)
<u>DO NOT</u>	stack above chest height (unless using secure racking or shelving)
<u>DO NOT</u>	climb stacks or shelving racks
<u>DO NOT</u>	overfill boxes or containers (they may tear and fall when moved) or present a manual handling hazard

2.6 Use of Display Screen Equipment

2.6.1 The risks associated with the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) are described in the Workstation Assessment Guide.

2.6.2 **All staff** must have seen the video "Health and Safety for Computer Operators - the facts"

<u>DO</u>	read your copy of the Workstation Assessment Guide and complete a workstation assessment form, handing the completed form to your manager
<u>DO</u>	follow the advice given in the video
<u>DO</u>	report any persistent pain or discomfort in the fingers, hands, Wrists, arms, shoulders or neck to your line manager by completion an Accident/Incident Report form
<u>DO</u>	take regular work breaks involving change of activity

2.6.3 If you are classed as a "user" of DSE, (i.e. you work at a display screen for prolonged spells of more than one hour on most working days, or you work for shorter periods totalling 2 or more hours on most working days) the FSS will pay for an eyesight test *specifically for work at a display screen*. If spectacles are recommended for DSE use only, the FSS will pay (up to a published maximum value) for frames and lenses of a basic design only and will not pay for lens treatments unless recommended for a professionally diagnosed eye condition.

2.6.4 If you wish to exercise your right to have an eye test by an optician, you should obtain a copy of the Home Office VDU eye examination record, EYE1, complete Part A and hand the form to your line manager for completion of Part B.

2.6.5 Arrangements for eye tests are made locally.

<u>DO</u>	request an eye test or a further workstation re-assessment if you have any difficulties with your vision whilst working with Display Screen Equipment
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2.6.6 Re-tests are available at reasonable intervals e.g. 2 years or if particular problems with DSE work are experienced.

TIPS FOR WORKING SAFELY WITH VDU's

- Adjust the height and back support of your chair and the VDU to find the most comfortable working position. As a guide, you should sit directly in front of the screen and keyboard with forearms horizontal and minimal deviation of wrists. Eyes should be at approximately the same level as the top of the VDU screen. Your lower back should be well supported
- Make sure there is space underneath your desk to move your legs around. Move such obstacles such as boxes and equipment
- Don't sit in the same position for long periods. Make sure you change your posture regularly
- Adjust your keyboard to provide a comfortable keying position with space in front to support wrists during pauses
- If using a mouse mat make sure you have plenty of room for the mouse mat and ensure your arm is supported

2.7 Manual Handling

2.7.1 Serious injuries and chronic ill-health can result from incorrect Manual Handling techniques.

2.7.2 All staff must have seen the video "Manual Handling - The Facts", which demonstrates correct manual handling techniques.

<u>DO</u>	follow the advice given in the video
<u>DO</u>	use trolleys to move heavy or awkwardly shaped office equipment.
<u>DO</u>	avoid storing heavy items on shelving above shoulder height or on the floor.
<u>DO</u>	get help if you cannot lift a load with ease
<u>DO NOT</u>	struggle with tasks beyond your capability

2.7.3 Staff who habitually move heavy or difficult loads must have been trained in correct manual handling techniques by the local Occupational Health Provider.

TIPS FOR SAFE MANUAL HANDLING

- **Plan your lift –**
remove any obstructions that may be in your path, and make sure you can see over or around your load with your feet slightly apart and with one foot a little in advance of the other
- **Good handling technique –**
 - 1) Stand close to the load with your feet slightly apart and with one foot a little in advance of the other
 - 2) Tuck your chin in and bend your knees, while keeping your back straight – but not necessarily vertical
 - 3) Position your elbows as close to the body as possible and grip the article using the palm of your hand and base of the fingers
 - 4) Now straighten your knees – your thigh muscles do the lifting work, not those in the back – and move
 - 5) Keep the load close to your body, ensuring the heaviest side is nearest to you

2.8 Electrical Hazards

2.8.1 Electrical equipment can be a source of danger if incorrectly used or not maintained properly. Electric shock and/or burns can result.

2.8.2 All electrical apparatus must be regularly inspected and/or maintained.

<u>DO</u>	follow the manufacturers instructions
<u>DO</u>	check regularly for a. damaged leads b. overheating equipment and plugs c. loose connections
<u>DO</u>	report any defects through the local Defect Reporting procedure
<u>DO</u>	make sure that any electrical items you bring in from home, e.g. radios, have been electrically tested by the FSS before you use them at work
<u>DO</u>	route leads so as not to present a trip hazard
<u>DO</u>	use a cable cover secured to the floor to protect leads where they may be trodden on
<u>DO</u>	use only Carbon Dioxide or Powder extinguishers on fires involving electrical apparatus
<u>DO NOT</u>	attempt to investigate or rectify electrical faults unless authorised and competent to do so
<u>DO NOT</u>	use extension leads and adapters as a regular practice

2.9 Lone Working

2.9.1 Lone working is defined as **"any activity where there is no other member of staff present who can take action which may influence you or your activity"**. That is to be able to warn you of impending danger resulting from your activity, or assist you in the event of an accident.

2.9.2 Lone working although NOT prohibited, except for those situations shown at 2.9.5, must be appropriately managed and a risk assessment prepared.

2.9.3 Lone working is most likely to occur at the beginning or end of the working day, or during attendance outside normal working hours.

<u>DO</u>	liaise with your colleagues to avoid, so far as reasonably practicable, a situation of lone working arising
<u>DO</u>	make sure you could summon help by telephone or by shouting if lone working can be avoided
<u>DO</u>	be aware of the hours of manned operation of the switchboard and know where colleagues can be contacted by phone at other times
<u>DO NOT</u>	carry out any task, when alone, that would incapacitate you from calling for help in an emergency

2.9.4 A personal alarm may be provided for wearing in remote garage or workshop locations where it is not always necessary to work with others.

<u>DO</u>	inform others of your intention to use the personal alarm, ensuring that someone will remain in earshot of the alarm alert
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2.9.5 The following activities are prohibited if working alone:

Examining potentially explosive material.
Using phenol chloroform.
Conducting any analyses potentially involving cyanide.
Using mechanical/electrical lifting gear unless wearing a personal alarm.
Using fixed electrically powered tools.
Using oxyacetylene equipment.
Entering a confined space.

2.10 Personal Protective Equipment (general)

2.10.1 Some tasks routinely carried out by FSS staff require the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to control exposure to hazardous substances, micro-organisms or where risk of impact injury cannot be eliminated by other means.

2.10.2 Guidance on the selection and use of PPE is given in the Health and Safety Policy Document.

DO ensure you use PPE as specified in the Risk Assessment or Safe System of Work for the work being carried out, consulting your line manager if in doubt and asking to see the assessment.

2.11 First Aid and Accident Reporting

2.11.1 If you have an accident at work, however trivial, or if you become aware of an accident to a colleague, visitor or employee of another organisation, you must ensure that the incident is reported. Full details of the incident reporting procedure can be found in the Health and Safety Policy Document.

DO report all accidents, near miss incidents, work-related ill health and damage to clothing or equipment to your line manager. This can be done by completing Part I of the Accident/Incident report form.

2.11.2 Reporting of near misses can be anonymous if wished, by completing but not signing Part 1 of the incident report form and sending it to Safety and Environment Group.

REMEMBER reporting a near miss incident could prevent a future injury

2.11.3 Trained first aiders are available on site to provide assistance to the injured if required. First aid facilities are documented in the Health and Safety Policy Document.

DO be aware of who the first aiders are in your area of work and of the location of the first aid boxes
DO be aware of the location of eyewash stations

2.11.4 The FSS is obliged to report certain injuries and occupational diseases to the Health and Safety Executive, in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries,

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Diseases or Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995. These include the following:

1. Injuries received at work resulting in an absence of over 3 days (excludes the day of injury, weekends are considered as working days if normal duties could not be carried out)
2. Cramp of the hand or forearm due to repetitive movements
3. Traumatic inflammation of the tendons of the hand or forearm or of the associated tendon sheaths

If your medical practitioner diagnoses you as suffering from a reportable medical condition you must report it IMMEDIATELY to your Line Manager.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING ACCIDENTS

- PLAN the job before you start
- BE AWARE of your surroundings: look where you are going!
- TAKE CARE and consider the effects your work could have on yourself and others
- ALWAYS use the correct tools and equipment for the job
- ALWAYS follow health and safety rules, procedures, systems of work etc.
- DO NOT attempt to do things beyond your training and capability
- IF you see a health and safety problem or concern – REPORT IT STRAIGHT AWAY TO YOUR MANAGER or SUPERVISOR
- IF you are unsure – ASK!

REMEMBER: If something looks or feels wrong it probably is wrong!

2.12 Stress

2.12.1 The Executive Board has accepted that from time to time business dictates that demands and pressures can increase. It is committed to ensuring that at those times of increased pressure, the health and welfare of staff will not be put at risk.

2.12.2 There is a policy which outlines the procedures in place for reducing the risk of work related stress and, in those circumstances where it arises, for its management.

<u>DO</u>	make sure that you are aware of the policy
<u>DO</u>	take the opportunity to attend stress awareness training
	PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE
<u>DO</u>	everything to ensure that you do not become a victim of work related stress

<u>DO NOT</u>	feel that you have to suffer in silence
<u>DO NOT</u>	subscribe to the falsehood that "a little stress is good for you"
<u>DO NOT</u>	leave it until it is too late!

TIPS FOR DEALING WITH STRESS

- TAKE regular exercise and eat sensibly
- ENSURE you take adequate rest and sleep
- LEARN to relax
- SHARE your concerns with a trustworthy friend or colleague
- DISCUSS your concerns in CONFIDENCE with your supervisor or other manager at work

REMEMBER: If your work is stressful try finding out why and see if there are changes you can make. Tackle stress early to prevent you becoming a victim.

2.13 Waste Disposal (general)

2.13.1 The principles of good waste management are:

Reduction
Recycling
Recovery
Responsible Safe disposal

2.13.2 **All Staff** have a duty of care to ensure that waste is stored safely prior to safe disposal in the appropriate manner.

<u>DO</u>	make sure you understand and comply with the procedures described in the Health and Safety policy document
<u>DO</u>	ensure minimum quantities of material are purchased and used
<u>DO</u>	ensure disposal is via an approved route
<u>NEVER</u>	just dump waste expecting others to take action to ensure safe disposal

2.14 Smoking Policy

2.14.1 All FSS sites operate a smoking policy.

<u>DO</u>	adhere to local smoking & drinking policies
<u>DO NOT</u>	empty ashtrays into wastepaper bins

3 OFFICE SAFE PRACTICE

3.1 Basic Office Safety

3.1.1 Take care that your own actions are not the direct cause of an accident or injury.

<u>DO</u>	follow stated working practices and procedures
<u>DO NOT</u>	leave knives or blades lying around. Store them safely
<u>DO NOT</u>	stand on chairs (particularly swivel chairs) or benches to gain access above head height
<u>DO NOT</u>	run always walk
<u>DO NOT</u>	indulge in "horseplay" or play practical jokes

3.1.2 Maintain a clean and tidy workplace. Contract cleaners are employed to clean floors, handwash basins, windows and any surface not used for scientific work.

<u>DO</u>	maintain your own workspace to a satisfactory standard, regularly cleaning work surfaces after use
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3.1.3 Replace files and other appropriate office equipment in the designated storage areas as soon as possible after use.

<u>DO</u>	return equipment in a condition fit for the next user.
<u>DO NOT</u>	use windowsills, corridors or floor areas for storage
<u>NEVER</u>	block or obstruct a fire escape route.
<u>NEVER</u>	allow combustible materials (such as paper) to accumulate in

3.2 Chemical Hazards

3.2.1 All substances hazardous to health must have a Risk Assessment prepared before they can be used at work. This includes many materials used in the office e.g. cleaning materials, photocopy toner powders, correction fluids

<u>DO</u>	read the Risk Assessments, which relate to office areas
<u>DO</u>	use the safer option where a choice of materials is available; e.g. use moist wipes rather than sprays to clean equipment
<u>DO</u>	take care not to raise dust clouds when loading toner powder into photocopiers
<u>DO</u>	wash hands if you come into contact with a hazardous substance
<u>DO NOT</u>	use any chemical which has not been assessed
<u>DO NOT</u>	bring unnecessary chemicals into office areas

3.2.2 Some photocopiers and laser printers are capable of generating ozone, a toxic irritant gas. All equipment capable of generating ozone should be fitted with ozone filters and the maintenance schedule for the equipment must include the replacement of the filters at the intervals recommended by the manufacturer.

<u>DO</u>	report any unusual smells coming from any electrical equipment to your line manager
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3.3 Biological Hazards

3.3.1 There is a small risk that items and files, which have been in laboratory areas, may have been contaminated with body fluids, which could contain a blood-borne pathogen such as the Hepatitis B virus or the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Staff who are concerned about this risk can be included in the Hepatitis B vaccination programme.

<u>DO</u>	wash your hands after handling casework files
<u>DO</u>	keep separate pens etc. for use in laboratory and office areas
<u>DO NOT</u>	bring casework items into office areas
<u>DO NOT</u>	store casework items in office areas
<u>DO NOT</u>	wear laboratory coats or protective gloves in office areas
<u>DO NOT</u>	eat or drink while handling casework files

TIPS FOR SAFE WORKING WITH HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

- Ensure you have clear instructions on the use of hazardous substances
- Ensure you read the COSHH Assessment for the task
- Ensure you read the product label
- Ensure you know what to do in case of a spillage
- Ensure you know how to dispose of empty containers properly
- Ensure you understand what effects the hazardous substance could have on your health
- Ensure any incident involving a hazardous substance is reported to your manager or supervisor, completing an Accident/Incident Report form as appropriate

4 LABORATORY SAFE PRACTICE

4.1 Basic Laboratory Safety

4.1.1 Take care that your own actions are not the direct cause of an accident or injury.

<u>DO</u>	wear suitable footwear in laboratory areas, avoid open toed shoes.
<u>DO</u>	prevent accidental cuts by disposing of sharps and broken glass in the correct containers
<u>DO NOT</u>	stand on chairs (particularly swivel chairs) or benches to gain access head height. Always use step ladders.
<u>DO NOT</u>	run anywhere in the laboratory
<u>DO NOT</u>	indulge in "horseplay" or play practical jokes

4.1.2 Maintain a clean and tidy workplace. Contract cleaners are employed to clean floors, handwash basins, windows and any surface not used for scientific work. Other laboratory areas and equipment must be cleaned by scientific or support staff.

<u>DO</u>	maintain your own workspace to a satisfactory standard, regularly cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces after use
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4.1.3 Replace casework exhibits and laboratory equipment in the designated storage areas as soon as possible after use.

<u>DO</u>	return equipment in a condition fit for the next user
<u>DO NOT</u>	use windowsills, corridors or floor areas for storage
<u>NEVER</u>	block or obstruct a fire escape route.

4.2 Basic Laboratory Hygiene

4.2.1 Accidental contamination of personnel or equipment with biological agents or chemical substances can be minimised by observing the following guidance.

<u>DO</u>	cover all cuts and abrasions with waterproof plasters before commencing work – suitable plasters can be found in first aid boxes numerous locations in laboratory areas.
<u>DO</u>	avoid scratching skin or biting fingernails.
<u>DO</u>	take notes in such a way as to avoid the contamination of files, pens and telephones.
<u>DO NOT</u>	chew or suck the ends of pens / pencils.
<u>DO NOT</u>	pipette by mouth.
<u>DO NOT</u>	take exhibits into offices, refreshment areas or the library.
<u>DO NOT</u>	eat (including sweets), chew, drink, smoke or apply cosmetics in laboratory areas.
<u>DO NOT</u>	store food or drink in laboratory areas or carry it through such areas
<u>DO NOT</u>	keep outdoor clothing or belongings such as handbags or shopping bags in laboratory areas. Use the locker provided.
<u>ALWAYS</u>	wash your hands thoroughly with soap before leaving laboratory areas

4.3 Control of Biological Hazards

- 4.3.1 Any item submitted to the laboratory may be contaminated with micro-organisms capable of infecting staff. The highest risk of infection is posed by blood and body fluid samples or items stained with them. Infection with Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B or C and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) present the greatest risk to personnel.
- 4.3.2 The recommended procedures for minimising the risks involved in the receipt and examination of such items are described in the Health and Safety Policy Document.

<u>DO</u>	maintain a thorough working knowledge of controls of micro-biological hazards, operating strictly within the guidelines.
<u>DO</u>	wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (see section 4.6)
<u>DO</u>	avoid examining wet items wherever possible. Risks of contamination will be reduced by drying the items in the drying room prior to examination.
<u>DO</u>	take care to avoid generating airborne dust from items contaminated with dried body fluids – use a Class 1 safety cabinet to examine heavily contaminated items.
<u>DO</u>	take extreme care to prevent cuts if it is essential to use scalpels or other sharp implements during an examination. Use a scalpel blade removing device to avoid touching the contaminated blade.
<u>DO</u>	take the opportunity of acquiring immunity against Hepatitis B, Tuberculosis and tetanus which is available free via the Occupational Health Scheme.
<u>DO NOT</u>	use scalpel blades unless attached to a handle
<u>DO NOT</u>	remove tools or writing implements from biohazard areas to other areas without disinfecting them

- 4.3.3 Spillages of biological materials present a serious risk of infection and must be promptly and effectively dealt with following appropriate disinfection procedures. Additional guidance in the form of a Safe System to Work can be found in all appropriate areas.

<u>DO NOT</u>	endanger others by failing to clean up spillages immediately and effectively.
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- 4.3.4 To control the risk of infection or contamination, all equipment used to store or process biohazard material must be regularly disinfected or fumigated as described in the Health and Safety Policy document.

<u>DO</u>	ensure only approved disinfectants are used. These are listed in the Health and Safety policy document
<u>REMEMBER</u>	disinfectant solutions are chemicals and can be hazardous

4.4 Control of Chemical Hazards

- 4.4.1 Many chemical substances are toxic, corrosive or irritant. Exposure by inhalation, ingestion or absorption can cause immediate or long-term harm to health and well-being.

4.4.2 In accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations (1999), all chemicals used by the FSS must be assessed to identify and control risks.

<u>DO NOT</u>	carry out any process involving the use of chemicals without first reading the risk assessment for that process and becoming fully conversant with the required control measures
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4.4.3 Dermatitis can be caused by frequent handling of chemicals such as washing-up liquids and other cleaning fluids that dry the skin, causing cracking. Continued unprotected use can lead to the allergic skin reaction of contact sensitisation. Support staff are particularly vulnerable to the risk of dermatitis.

4.4.4 All staff should be aware of the following safeguards appropriate to the safe handling of chemicals:

<u>DO</u>	recognise the risks associated with the orange and black hazard warning symbols indicating explosive, flammable, corrosive, irritant, toxic or harmful hazards
<u>DO</u>	wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (see section 4.6) when using chemicals which bear hazard warning labels and use a fume cupboard wherever practical
<u>DO</u>	be aware of the locations of emergency showers for use if chemicals are spilled over the body, also of eyewash stations for treatment of chemicals or foreign bodies in the eye
<u>DO</u>	maintain the lowest practical levels of chemical stocks both within the laboratory and the solvent store
<u>DO</u>	replace caps and stoppers on bottles immediately after use to prevent accidental spillage
<u>DO</u>	store quantities of flammable organic solvents over 500ml in solvent cabinets or in the solvent store
<u>NEVER</u>	add water to concentrated acid when preparing solutions, the subsequent violent reaction may generate sufficient heat to crack glassware and will produce liberal splashing of the liquid
<u>DO NOT</u>	carry chemical bottles by the neck, appropriate carriers must be used
<u>DO NOT</u>	store acids and bases in close proximity, accidental spillages could result in a violent reaction

4.4.5 To minimise the risk of chemical spillages, to provide isolation from sources of ignition, and to prevent build up of hazardous vapours within laboratory areas, an isolated, purpose built solvent store is used to hold the stocks of chemicals required to maintain analytical procedures.

<u>DO</u>	ensure that, wherever practicable, all Winchester/Euro bottles containing flammable or hazardous substances are kept in the solvent store unless regularly used to fill up the 500ml working stock bottles kept in laboratory areas
<u>DO</u>	request safe-break or plastic containers when ordering chemicals.
<u>DO</u>	inform a colleague of your intention to visit the solvent store to collect chemicals and also report your safe return. Following this procedure maintains lone working safeguards.
<u>DO NOT</u>	dispense solvents or other chemicals in the solvent store. Bring the bottles into the laboratory and dispense in a fume cupboard
<u>DO NOT</u>	order quantities of solvents or other chemicals in volumes greater than 2.5 litres

4.4.6 Procedures to be followed in the event of a chemical spillage in the laboratory or solvent store are displayed in all appropriate areas in the form of a Safe System of Work.

4.5 Waste Disposal (laboratory)

4.5.1 Laboratory waste must be safely disposed of without placing other people at risk or causing harm to the environment. This is achieved by strict segregation of biohazard, chemical, paper and other general waste.

<u>DO</u>	make sure you understand and comply with the procedures described in the Health and Safety Policy Document
<u>DO</u>	ensure biologically hazardous waste is only disposed of in appropriate yellow clinical waste containers
<u>DO</u>	place all biologically contaminated 'sharps' such as scalpel blades, glass pipettes, microscope slides, pipette tips in yellow plastic rigid clinical waste containers
<u>DO</u>	place uncontaminated sharps in <u>rigid</u> containers for disposal
<u>DO NOT</u>	place anything other than paper or non hazardous waste in the waste paper bins emptied by the cleaners
<u>DO NOT</u>	Pour waste down sinks/drains - unless specifically allowed via a relevant risk assessment or in compliance with legislation

4.6 Personal Protective Equipment (laboratory)

4.6.1 Laboratory coats

<u>ALWAYS</u>	wear a lab. coat whenever there is a risk of contamination or damage to personal clothing. Coats with a high neck and elasticated cuffs must be worn in areas where biohazards are examined
<u>ALWAYS</u>	fasten lab coats
<u>ALWAYS</u>	ensure that coats are laundered regularly
<u>DO</u>	ensure you are aware of areas where the wearing of lab coats is forbidden, i.e. canteen, toilets/cloakrooms, office accommodation
<u>DO NOT</u>	wear lab. coats worn in biohazard areas outside those areas.
<u>DO NOT</u>	store your lab coat in the locker provided for outdoor clothing

4.6.2 Eye Protection

ALWAYS wear anti-splash eye protection when handling liquid body fluid samples outside a safety cabinet and when using chemicals, cleaning materials or disinfectants which bear a hazard warning label on the container.

4.6.3 Gloves

4.6.3.1 As a general guide, Latex gloves will protect against biohazards and liquids which are miscible with water, but Nitrile gloves are required for protection against immiscible liquids. Nitrile gloves will also protect against biohazards. Vinyl gloves are only suitable to protect the work from you. They should not be relied on to protect you from biohazards or chemicals.

ALWAYS use appropriate gloves to protect against biohazards, absorption of toxic chemicals, burns from corrosive materials and sensitisation to detergents and other chemicals

ALWAYS remove gloves before leaving the laboratory to prevent contamination of door handles

ALWAYS remove gloves before answering the telephone, to prevent contamination of door handles

BE AWARE that prolonged wearing of gloves can cause allergic dermatitis. Report any symptoms to your line manager immediately by completion of an Accident/Incident Reporting form.

4.6.4 Respiratory protection

DO NOT use any respiratory protection other than an odour mask unless an assessment of its suitability for the task has been made, and you have received appropriate training for use

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