

# **CANTERBURY COLLEGE POLICY**

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## **CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES**

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**EFFECTIVE DATE:**           **March 2009**

**LAST REVIEWED:**           **March 2009**

**REVIEWED BY:**           **Health & Safety Advisor**

**NEXT REVIEW:**           **As Required**

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The aim of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) is to protect the health, safety and welfare of everyone who works with substances that can cause ill health effects. These substances can be used directly in work processes, like paint or cleaning materials; can be generated by work processes, such as dust and fumes; or may occur naturally, like fungal spores encountered in agricultural work.

1.2 This procedure:

- (a) Establishes a structure for the assessment and management of risk
- (b) Details steps to be taken when performing a COSHH assessment
- (c) Provides guidance to the assessor for evaluating levels of risk
- (d) Defines a standard for use of all college COSHH assessments

## **2.0 Applicability**

2.1 This procedure applies only to activities / areas for which the college has control.

## **3.0 Responsibilities**

3.1 Health & Safety Advisor - Person whose responsibilities include maintaining and reviewing the COSHH assessment system and training content.

3.2 Section/Area Managers - Persons responsible for ensuring that COSHH hazards in their area of responsibility are identified and risk assessed and that competent risk assessors are trained and available within that area.

3.3 Nominated Risk Assessors - Individuals trained to perform COSHH assessments in their own work area on activities with which they are familiar.

3.4 Faculty Heads/Other senior managers – Persons that ensure that the whole COSHH assessment process is embedded and functioning in areas under their operational control.

## **4.0 Methodology**

- 4.1 Only persons who have attended a suitable training course shall be permitted to undertake COSHH assessments. There is a COSHH e-learning module on the staff intranet and this must be completed as a minimum.
- 4.2 A suitable and sufficient COSHH assessment will be undertaken prior to any new or changed substance that falls under the regulations. Any existing assessments will be revised to the new format when they are next reviewed and re-issued.
- 4.3 Managers and Faculty heads shall ensure that all tasks and work areas under their control are adequately COSHH assessed and any actions required are completed promptly.
- 4.4 COSHH assessors shall use the document formats lodged on the college intranet
- 4.5 The process of COSHH assessment consists of 6 main areas:
  1. ensure the hazards are identified
  2. carry out risk assessments
  3. provide controls
  4. maintain controls - monitor exposure
  5. provide information, instruction and training for staff
  6. ensure each step is recorded

Manufacturers and suppliers must indicate on all layers of the packaging or label the contents and hazards; and must supply a Material Safety Data Sheet containing all the relevant safety details for the substance.

Although the COSHH regulations do not apply to the domestic use of such substances in the private household, as soon as they are used on college premises (place of work) they become applicable.

As such it is important therefore that any substances staff or students bring onto the college premises to use must be assessed as above.

- 4.6 Every area must create and maintain a log of all items that fall under the COSHH regulations.
- 4.7 The Estates Department must be contacted to arrange safe disposal of all items that fall under the COSHH regulations.

## **5.0 Records**

- 5.1 Copies of all valid COSHH assessments shall be available at the workplace. Persons performing a task are expected to have read the relevant assessment prior to commencing that task.
- 5.2 Records of the assessments will be retained for a minimum of three years, and shall be readily available for reference.
- 5.3 COSHH assessment records form part of an annual faculty/department HSE audit