



Standard health & safety guidance

Health and safety in practical chemistry in schools and colleges affects all concerned: teachers or lecturers and technicians, their employers, students, their parents or guardians, as well as authors or publishers.

Assumptions

It is assumed that unless the activity is specifically and explicitly designed for use in other situations:

- the practical work is carried out or supervised by a qualified science teacher or other responsible adult with adequate knowledge of chemistry and the equipment used;
- practical work is conducted in a properly equipped and maintained laboratory;
- rules for student behaviour are strictly enforced;
- equipment is regularly inspected, properly maintained and appropriate records are kept;
- care is taken with normal laboratory operations such as heating substances and handling heavy objects;
- good laboratory practice is observed;
- suitable eye protection (and other personal protective equipment eg, gloves) are worn whenever risk assessments require it;
- any fume cupboard used operates at least to the current, nationally-accepted standard (eg, in the *CLEAPSS Guide G9A* or an equivalent international standard) and has been tested in accordance with national requirements;
- students are taught safe techniques for such activities as heating chemicals, smelling them, or pouring from bottles;
- hand-washing facilities are readily available;
- eye wash facilities are readily available;
- first aid facilities and a trained first aider are readily available.

Health and safety checking

As part of the reviewing process for the practical activities on this website, the health and safety check has attempted to ensure that:

- all significant recognized hazards have been identified;
- suitable control measures (precautions) to minimise the risks from these hazards are suggested;
- where possible, the procedures are in accordance with commonly adopted UK model risk assessments (largely those of CLEAPSS, SSERC and ASE);
- health and safety information is communicated in a clear and unambiguous manner.



Videos

This site includes a number of videos of different types, produced for different purposes.

Some of these are intended as **training videos** to show teachers and others appropriate and safe practical techniques. These have been (or are being) checked as above to ensure all the relevant hazards have been identified, appropriate control measures adopted, health and safety information is communicated in a clear and unambiguous manner.

Others, however, are intended more as **demonstration videos**, for example to show activities to students which could not easily or safely be carried out in schools. Although these videos have also been (or are being) checked to ensure they do show safe practice most of them do not identify all the hazards and may not show all the relevant control measures. They are intended to be shown to students to teach chemistry and they may well not give all the relevant health and safety information. For example, they may not give details of how the materials were safely prepared before filming started. In the past, numerous accidents have arisen because teachers copied what they had seen in a demonstration, without being aware of all the relevant precautions.

We aim to maintain the highest level of safety advice on all of our practical chemistry resources. Users should notify SSPCcommunications@ul.ie of any health and safety issues relating to the use of our resources and we will review such resources accordingly.