

# First Aid

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## Policy

The Occupational Safety & Health Regulations (Cap 509A, 1998) specifically require an employer to provide adequate and appropriate

equipment and facilities for rendering first aid to employees if they are injured or become ill at work.

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## Responsibilities

### *The Department Head must:*

- provide at least one first aid box for the Department unless the Head can demonstrate that other arrangements are equally effective.
- carry out a risk assessment to determine how many first aid boxes are required and where they should be located.
- provide at least one member of staff with an approved first aid qualification and carry out a risk assessment to determine if more are required.
- designate at least two individuals, at least one of whom should be a first aider, to be responsible for maintaining the contents of each first aid box.
- carry out a risk assessment for all field trips to determine the first aid provision that is required and ensure that it is available.
- arrange for the names of the first aiders and designated members of staff responsible for the first aid box to be indicated on the first aid box.
- allow time off during working hours for members of staff to receive first aid training.
- notify the Safety Office of any changes of first aid personnel.

### *The Safety Office will:*

- arrange training and refresher training of first aiders with the St. John Ambulance Association or other nominated provider.
- maintain a register of qualified first aiders.
- remind first aiders to renew certificates at the appropriate time.

### *Designated first aiders will:*

- render first aid assistance to the best of their ability whenever called upon to do so.
- ensure the contents of the first aid boxes are fully provisioned.

### *Estates Office will:*

- encourage all security guards to be trained to become qualified first aiders.
- install first aid boxes as requested.

### *The University Health Service will:*

- provide first aid boxes and contents on request at cost.
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## Guidance

This note gives guidance on how the policy should be discharged by University departments.

### 1. Extent of the Provision of First Aid

A wide range of activities are undertaken within the University. As a first step, heads of department should consider the hazards which are associated with activities undertaken in their departments. Following an assessment of the risk which relates to each hazard, decisions needed to be taken as to the nature and extent of first aid provision that is necessary. A department undertaking high risk activities including as diving, fieldwork, workshop and maintenance etc., will require a higher level of first aid provision than an office based department in which there are very few hazards.

### 2. Scope of the Provision of First Aid

The extent of the University's duty for provision of first aid includes not only employees and students working within the University, but also those who are working in University outposts, those in isolated locations (e.g. those on field trips), and visitors.

### 3. First Aid Equipment and Facilities

#### 3.1 First Aid Boxes and Kits

Whilst the legislation requires that a first aid box must be provided for every 100 employees or part thereof, due to the nature of the activity of a University this is unlikely to be adequate.

All departments must provide a sufficient number of first aid boxes. These should be located in convenient and prominent places

throughout the department. In addition, there should be easy access to soap, water and disposable paper towels. Where this is not possible a supply of individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes which are impregnated with alcohol should be available.

Detachable wall mounted, portable First Aid Boxes can be requested by filling in the request form, available from University Health Service web page: <http://www.uhs.hku.hk/download.php>. The cost will be charged to the Department. Installation should be arranged by the Estates Office.



First aid boxes and travelling kits should contain a sufficient quantity of suitable first aid materials and nothing else. A list of contents for first-aid boxes can be found in section 6 of this guidance and at <http://www.uhs.hku.hk/download.php>.

Where a suitable clean water supply is not readily available for eye irrigation, at least 3 x 300 ml sealed disposable containers of sterile water or sterile normal (0.9%) saline should be available.

Containers must not be reused once the seal has been broken. The contents of first aid boxes

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should be replenished as soon as possible after use. Items should not be used after the expiry date shown on packets or bottles and it is therefore important that departments make arrangements to have the contents checked frequently at intervals no long than 3 months to ensure that a sufficient quantity of usable items is held. Responsibility for this task should be delegated to first aiders and/or other designated persons who are based in the area in which the first aid kit is held.

Replacement first aid box contents can be requested by filling in the request form, available from the University Health Service, web page: <http://www.uhs.hku.hk/download.php>. The cost will be charged to the Department.

### 3.2 Other Specialist Items

Depending on the activities undertaken by a department (for example the use of cyanide, hydrofluoric acid), it may be necessary to provide specialist first-aid items. The need should become apparent during the risk assessment process for first aid provision. Where doubt exists, advice may be obtained from Safety Office or the University Health Service. Departments should restrict the use of specialist equipment to personnel who have been trained in its use.

## 4. First Aiders

### 4.1 Numbers Required

Whilst the legislation requires that for every 150 employees at least one of these employees must be trained in first aid, no account is taken of students. Hence it is not possible to indicate the precise number of first aiders that are required. Heads of Department should, therefore,

following consultation with staff and the safety representative(s), determine the numbers required and their most appropriate location based on the activities normally carried out in that area. Safety Office may be consulted for guidance on this. Small departments which are geographically close and where the work is comparatively non-hazardous may choose to share a first aider. Large departments which occupy many floors or several buildings will need to appoint more than one first aider.

As a minimum, each department must designate 2 people to be responsible for the checking and replenishing of first aid boxes on a frequent basis, at least every 3 months, and maintaining and updating first aid signs and notices. The names of these people should be indicated on the label provided on the first aid box provided for this purpose.

### 4.2 Training

The Safety Office arranges training for first aiders on a cost recovery basis during each summer. If demand is high, other dates can be arranged. The certificated first aid course which gives good in-depth training is currently carried out by the St. John Ambulance Association. Individuals who successfully complete the course can then become 'nominated' first aiders. To retain their certificate, every three years these individuals must receive 'refresher' training and assessment of competence.

In addition to the standard first aid course every year, the Safety Office organise half-day certificate courses on cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The courses are particularly suitable for people who are in contact with electrical equipment and who could be exposed to a risk of electric shock and electrocution. CPR

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is an important life saving first aid for electrical accidents.

St. John Ambulance Association also advises that all staff trained in CPR should take an annual refresher course to maintain their CPR knowledge.

### **4.3 Publicising the Location and Names of First Aiders**

It is essential that departments ensure that the names and location of first aiders are made known to people working in their department or on field trips.

Prominently sited notices should be displayed within the department at strategic points and on first-aid boxes.

St. John Ambulance "First Aider" buttons should be worn by qualified first aiders which are available from the Safety Office.

## **5. Keeping and Updating of Records**

The Safety Office maintains a database of names and departments and geographical location of first aiders, together with the expiry date of any certificate of competence that is held by them. Normally, the Safety Office will remind departments of the impending expiry date of certificates and advise on the availability of suitable refresher courses.

Departments that designate individuals who already hold a first-aid certificate should forward a copy of the certificate to Safety Office if they wish to nominate the new member of staff as a first aider. Safety Office will advise on the suitability of the certificate.

When a first aider leaves a department their name and details should be removed from notices that have been posted and the number and location of remaining first aiders should be reviewed to determine the need for replacements.

Safety Office should be notified of any resignation so that the database can be kept up to date.

## **6. Contents of First Aid Boxes**

The required content of first aid boxes is set out in the Occupational Safety & Health Regulation. In addition, it is recommended that all first aid boxes and travelling kits should contain a small number of lightweight disposable protective gloves.

First aid boxes should contain a sufficient quantity of suitable materials and nothing else.

Where mains tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, sterile water or sterile normal saline (0.9%) in sealed disposable containers should be provided. Eye baths/eye cups/refillable containers should not be used for eye irrigation.

The standard contents for a first aid box is:

1. A copy of the leaflet, 'Hints on First Aid', giving advice on first aid treatment.
2. 6 packs of disinfectant solution.
3. A pressure bandage.
4. At least 4 triangular bandages with safety pins.
5. At least 6 packets of absorbent cotton wool each of 30 gram.

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6. 6 pairs of disposable latex gloves.
7. At least 1 roll of adhesive plaster (Micropore).
8. At least 12 small sterilized un-medicated dressings for injured fingers.
9. At least 6 medium-sized sterilized un-medicated dressings for injured hands or feet.
10. At least 24 adhesive wound dressings of assorted sizes (Dressing strip).
11. A pair of scissors.

First Aid Box contents can be requested by filling in the request form, available from University Health Service web page: <http://www.uhs.hku.hk/download.php>. The cost will be charged to the Department.

The First Aid Box Content Checking Form (supplied together with the contents)

<http://www.uhs.hku.hk/download.php> should be posted on the inside of the lid of the first aid box.

## 7. Travelling First Aid Kits

Where staff and students work away from the normal workplace on a field trip, a travelling first aid kit may need to be provided.

These are available at cost from the University Health Service. Details can be found at <http://www.uhs.hku.hk/download.php>.

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