



# **The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury or Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure Policy**



## Table of Contents

Purpose.....	2
Scope .....	2
Policy Statement.....	2
Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
Related Documentation.....	3
Contacts.....	3
Policy Review.....	3
Version Control.....	4



## Purpose

DCU is committed to providing a safe environment for its staff, students and visitors. Included in this is the management of sharps and Blood-Borne Pathogens to minimise likelihood of exposure and subsequent harm.

## Scope

This policy applies to all DCU Staff (including employees, relevant contractors working for or on behalf of the University, visiting staff, and emeritus and adjunct staff), Researchers and Postgraduate Students when they are working within DCU, and when they are working for or on behalf of the University at other establishments or at other locations.

This policy applies to all sharps injuries including, but not limited to, those where any hazardous substance (Biological Agents, Clinical Samples, Biological Toxins, and Chemicals) or article capable of penetrating the dermis of the skin is involved, and where there is a risk of percutaneous injury or direct exposure to a Blood-Borne Pathogen through the use of a Clinical Sample. The process also extends to activities involving the use of animal models, where sharps injuries resulting from bites or scratches may occur.

## Policy Statement

The University is committed to providing all reasonable precautions to guard against sharps and Blood-Borne Pathogen injury. The University recognises that staff in laboratories and grounds / cleaning staff are more likely to encounter sharps. In order to control the risk of exposure the University shall:

- Task the Biological Safety Committee, Biological and General Safety Advisor and DCU Health and Safety Office in overseeing the University response to The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury or Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure Policy.
- Provide guidance in the form of a DCU Standard Operating Procedure – The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury or Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure (DCU/FSH/SOP/018).
- Foster a proactive culture of good sharps practice across the University, through the provision of information, instruction and advice to all staff as appropriate, who in turn may provide access to this content for external contractors, where deemed necessary.
- Provide a process for identifying the risks associated with the use and exposure to sharps and Blood-Borne Pathogens.
- Ensure performance measures and any issues identified are quantified and reported to the Biological Safety Committee, and escalated to the Health and Safety Steering Group as appropriate.



## Roles and Responsibilities

The President and the Governing Authority of the University, as the employer, have ultimate responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of employees, in compliance with the relevant provisions of the 2005 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act and other occupational safety legislation.

The Biological Safety Committee, Biological and General Safety Advisor and DCU Health and Safety Office are responsible for overseeing the university response to The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury or Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure Policy.

The roles and responsibilities of the following individuals are defined in the DCU Standard Operating Procedure – The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury of Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure (DCU/HSO/SOP/018):

- (1) Principal Investigator / Project Leader / Manager / Supervisor,
- (2) Staff Member / Researcher and
- (3) Health and Safety Office are defined in DCU Standard Operating Procedure – The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury or Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure (DCU/HSO/SOP/018).

## Related Documentation

DCU Standard Operating Procedure – The Management of Inoculation (Sharps) Injury or Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure (DCU/HSO/SOP/018).

## Contacts


Biological and General Safety Advisor  
GG08  
[bio.safety@dcu.ie](mailto:bio.safety@dcu.ie)

DCU Health and Safety Office  
CG10 & CG48  
[safety@dcu.ie](mailto:safety@dcu.ie)

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Biological Safety Committee, and approved by DCU Executive.

## Version Control

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**End.**