

1. PURPOSE

In accordance with the CSU Occupational Health and Safety Policy, CSU Risk Management Policy and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 the Faculty of Science & Health shall provide a safe and healthy environment for all workers. Central to achieving this is all workers understand their duty of care responsibilities and the specialised risks associated with the facilities. This procedure details the information required to use and dispose of sharps safely.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all facility users who use and dispose of sharps. A sharp is any object or device capable of inflicting a penetrating injury and includes needles, scalpel blades, wires, trocars, auto lancets, stitch cutters and broken glassware. They pose a high risk to workers as not only can they cause a penetrating injury, they can also be contaminated with blood or body fluids. Great care is therefore needed with their use and disposal.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities and duty of care is outlined in the Faculty of Science & Health Laboratory Management Guidelines:

The Facility/Laboratory Manager (or delegate) is responsible for:

- Managing, documenting and addressing risks associated with sharps.
- Maintaining assets including equipment, spill kits, safety equipment, storage and disposal facilities.
- Ensuring Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and in good condition for use.
- Training facility users.
- Investigating all accidents, incidents and hazards.

Supervisors

Supervisors include people directly responsible for teaching a class or supervising staff and students in research facilities.

- Performing a risk assessment for the use and handling of sharps for activities they are responsible for.

All Facility Users are responsible for:

- Making themselves familiar with this procedure and all related documents.

- Following this procedure including maintaining all documentation.
- Risk assessing sharps used in activities.
- Ensuring PPE is used and stored correctly.
- Reporting all accidents, incidents and hazards using the SCRIM online portal, as well as to the Facility Manager.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- **Minimise** the number of steps handling sharps where possible, such as re-sheathing needles.
- **Eliminate** additional risks where possible. This includes:
 - Using simulated drugs or bodily fluids to eliminate chemical and biological hazards from potential sharps injuries.
 - Using videos or demonstrations by qualified professionals on techniques such as sheathing needles or manually breaking glass vials.
- **Handle** all sharps with care and follow written and verbal instruction provided. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be used at all times.

5. PROCEDURE

Before starting any activities involving sharps.





- Complete a risk assessment of the activities and consider:
 - Is it possible to conduct the work without the use of sharps?
 - Is there a plastic or non-sharp alternative?
 - Are any immunisations required in case of sharps injuries involved with the work?




- Complete training for the use of sharps in the work area. This will include:
 - A safety induction for the work area including location of first aid kits, spill kits and first aid officers.
 - Location of sharps waste containers.
 - Location and use of PPE.
 - Location of safety equipment such as ampoule openers, recapping devices, blade removal devices.



Handling

- Only perform the task required while handling sharps. Do not open doors, move equipment while handling sharps.
- If a sharp is required to be transported within or between facilities, place the sharp in a rigid, puncture proof container. Only uncap or open prior to the task.
- Sharps are not to be passed hand to hand to another person.
- Dispose of sharps after use. Do not leave sharps out.
 - The exception for this is in undergraduate teaching facilities, where students are instructed to leave sharps such as blades in trays provided. Trained technical staff shall dispose of these sharps to reduce the risk of sharps injury.

Item	Disposal and special equipment or procedures	Specific precautions	Exceptions
Needles and Cannulas	Dispose into approved sharps container. On sharps containers there is a needle remover and this works well for luer slip syringes. If the syringe is	No re capping or re-sheathing without an	In some areas, such as veterinary science, there are situations where re-sheathing needles is required. Demonstrations or videos by trained staff

	<p>a luer lock syringe, the needle and the syringe shall both be disposed of into the sharps container.</p> 	<p>approved capping device.</p> 	<p>must be considered to reduce the risk of a sharps injury. Please see the veterinary operation manual in those facilities for more detail.</p>
<p>Lancets</p> 	<p>Dispose into approved sharps container.</p> <p>Please see lancet unistik SWP for more details.</p>		
<p>Ampoules</p> <p>Ampoules are opened by snapping off the top at the neck, which can produce jagged sharp edges and glass chips which can cause minor cuts and more serious lacerations.</p>	<p>Dispose into approved sharps container.</p> <p>An ampoule breaker must be used to break open. An ampoule breaker covers the top of an ampoule in the</p>	<p>Avoid manually opening ampoules.</p>	<p>In some cases, it is necessary to train staff and students to manually open ampoules as this reflects industry practice.</p>

<p>Glass chips may fly into the eye or drop back into the ampoule and contaminate it.</p> 	<p>breaking process which eliminates the potential for injury.</p>  <p>https://www.qlicksmart.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Artboard-1@1.5x.png</p> <p>In the event an ampoule breaker is not available always use protective padding such as thick gauze or use a thick pair of gloves.</p>		<p>This training shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced staff member. Where possible, demonstrations and videos will be used.</p>
<p>Disposable suture cutters and scissors.</p> 	<p>Dispose into approved sharps container.</p>		
<p>Scalpel blades</p>	<p>Dispose into approved sharps container with blade removal.</p>	<p>Do not wash blades.</p>	

		 <p data-bbox="757 512 1189 576">See Scalpel blade assembly and removal SWP.</p>	<p data-bbox="1272 188 1637 284">Broken blades will be removed using pliers by a competent member of staff.</p>	
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Disposal

- Ensure sharps waste containers are available for disposal of sharps. They should be within arm's reach of where the sharp is being used.
- Sharps are disposed of in the container with the sharp end down.
- Never over fill a sharps bin. Only fill to the 'fill line' indicated on the container.
- When the sharps container is full, technical staff will close the container and dispose of in accordance with the Faculty of Science Waste Disposal Procedure.
- Contact technical staff for a new sharps waste container if required.
- Never place fingers in a sharps bin.

Table of amendments

Version number	Date	Short description of amendment	Name	Position
1	Oct 2017	Developed document for Life Science and Health	C Carlisle	Technical Manager – Life Science and Health
2	Dec 2018	Adapted document for Faculty of Science	C Carlisle	Technical Manager – Life Science and Health