



# Welcome Handbook for Occupational Risk Prevention

## WELCOME HANDBOOK FOR OCCUPATIONAL RISK PREVENTION

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

You are now a member of the Universitat de València and, therefore, of its human potential.

The staff of the prevention area of the Health and Safety and the Environment Service at the UV is at your disposal to work together on improving the working conditions of your workplace and environment. This welcome handbook contains the necessary information about the risks you are exposed to, in addition to details of the preventive measures you must adopt.

Contact us if you need advice, training or information regarding prevention.

With this handbook you will:

1. Learn about the Health and Safety and the Environment Service
2. Learn about the rights and duties of workers<sup>1</sup>.
3. Become aware of the prevention plan at the UV.
4. Become aware of the general regulations for health and safety at work<sup>2</sup>.
5. Learn how to apply the preventive measures that affect your performance.



European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

<sup>1</sup> The Occupational Risk Prevention Act uses the term *worker*. In this Handbook, it must be understood as workers at the Universitat de València.

<sup>2</sup> The Occupational Risk Prevention Act uses the terms *company* and *employer*. In this Handbook, these must be understood as referring to the Universitat de València and its various responsible bodies.

## 2. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF WORKERS

Under article 29 of [the Occupational Risk Prevention Act 31/1995](#)

All workers have a right to:

1. Proper protection in terms of health and safety at work.
2. Information about the potential risks affecting the company in general and each type of job or function, in addition to guidelines on the applicable prevention and/or protective measures and activities.
3. Be informed about emergency situations and measures, first aid and evacuation.
4. Advice and participation as regards prevention through their representatives in the Health and Safety Committee.
5. Receive sufficient and adequate theoretical and practical training on recruitment or when functions or technologies to be used change.
6. Have work equipment adequate and suitably adapted to the tasks to do.
7. Receive free personal protective equipment necessary to carry out their duties safely.
8. Health monitoring in their workplace, always concerned with protection of privacy and confidentiality of information.

It shall be responsibility of each worker:

1. To take care of their own safety and health and of other persons whom may be affected by their actions at work.
2. In accordance with their training, information and instructions given by the employer, workers must make correct use of machinery, tools, equipment, dangerous substances and, in general, of any other means used in their activity.
3. Make correct use of the personal protective equipment and means supplied by the institution.
4. Make correct use of the existing safety devices.
5. Inform their direct superior and the designated workers or, where appropriate, the prevention service, about any situation which, in their judgement, implies a risk to the safety and health of workers.
6. Cooperate in the fulfilment of the obligations imposed by the competent authority.
7. Cooperate with the UV to enable the institution to ensure that the working conditions are safe and imply no risks for the safety and health of workers.



Click here to see the [Video](#)

### 3. ORGANISATION OF RISK PREVENTION AT THE UV

Integrating prevention means to work on preventive functions in the activities and on preventive obligations of the staff at all levels of responsibility.

- Integrating prevention in the activities involves planning in the technical processes, in the organisation of work and in the conditions on which it is carried out.
- Integrating prevention in all levels of responsibility at the Universitat de València involves the attribution of preventive duties to all competent authorities and the obligation of including risk prevention in any actions they perform or instruct and in any decisions they make.

The Occupational Risk Prevention Plan is the tool used by the Universitat de València to integrate preventive activity into the general management system of the institution. Besides, the Plan establishes the UV's policy on occupational risk prevention.

The Governing Council of the Universitat de València approved the Occupational Risk Prevention Plan of the Universitat de València, in ordinary session, on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. The Plan can be consulted through the following link:

[Occupational Risk Prevention Plan](#)

#### 3.1. Health and Safety and the Environment Service

The Universitat de València has its own prevention service.

The Health and Safety and the Environment Service (SPMA) was established in 1998. It is the unit in charge of the actions of the UV in terms of occupational risk prevention and the environment. Thus, the unit advises and assists the UV governing bodies, workers and representatives.

The Service works in three main areas: the Environment Area, the Radiation Protection Area and the Occupational Risk Prevention Area.

The Occupational Risk Prevention Area provides proper protection in terms of health and safety at work; it also advises and assists the university community to promote a preventive culture among its members. The Prevention Area is divided into four units: Ergonomics and Psychosociology Unit, Health in the Workplace Unit, Industrial Hygiene Unit and Safety in the Workplace Unit. It is organised at central and local levels.

Each campus has prevention technical staff and medical staff located in the health offices, which are centres for preventive care and assistance at the disposal of the UV workers.

The SPMA provides its services in the three Campus sites of the Universitat de València:

#### **BLASCO IBAÑEZ CAMPUS**

- Health office  
Facultad de Geografía e Historia  
Phone number: 963864287  
46010 Valencia
- Safety in the Workplace Unit & Industrial Hygiene Unit  
4 Amadeo de Saboya St.  
Phone number: 963395017  
46010 Valencia

#### **BURJASSOT-PATERNA CAMPUS**

- Health office & Industrial Hygiene Unit  
Behind Block B of the Facultad de Ciencias Biológicas  
Phone number: 963544321  
46100 Burjassot
- Safety in the Workplace Unit  
Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería  
Phone number: 963544122  
46100 Burjassot
- Radiation Protection Unit  
Facultad de Física  
Phone number: 963543330  
46100 Burjassot

#### **TARONGERS CAMPUS**

- Health office & Safety in the Workplace Unit  
Aulario Norte  
Phone number: 961625481  
46022 Valencia

### 3.2. Consultation and participation of workers in occupational risk prevention

The prevention of occupational risks is an ethical, legal and social requirement for all members of the university community, as stated in article 29 of the Act:

*“It shall be responsibility of each worker to take care, according to their possibilities and in compliance with the adopted preventive measures, of their own safety and health and of other persons whom may be affected by their actions at work, due to their acts and their omissions in accordance with their training and instructions given by their employer.”*

Workers have a right to participate in occupational risk prevention issues in the institution. Their participation is channelled through their designated representatives.

For the above purpose, the designated representatives at the UV are the Prevention Delegates. These are members of the Health and Safety Committee.

- **Prevention Delegates.** They are the representatives of workers, with specific tasks on risk prevention in the workplace. They are chosen by and among the Board of Administrative and Service Staff (PAS), the Board of Teaching and Research Staff (PDI) and the Works Committee (personnel).
- **Health and Safety Committee.** It is a joint and collegiate body of participation intended for regular consultation of the UV's actions on risk prevention. The competencies and duties of this body are stated in article 38 & ff. of the Occupational Risk Prevention Act.

In the exercise of their competencies, the Prevention Delegates will:

- a. Collaborate with the UV management in the improvement of preventive actions.
- b. Promote and encourage the cooperation of workers in the enforcement of the regulations on occupational risk prevention.
- c. Be consulted by the competent body about the decisions gathered in the article 33 of the Occupational Risk Prevention Act (prior to their execution):
- d. Act as watchdog on the compliance of occupational risk prevention regulations.

The Universitat de València, which provides the public service of higher education through teaching, research and cultural dissemination, is aware of the importance of ensuring a high level of protection against the risks involved in its actions and of improving the health and safety conditions of the university community. Occupational risk prevention shall therefore be part of each task, within all hierarchical levels of the institution, with a view to facilitating an efficient management of occupational risk prevention.

## 4. HEALTH SURVEILLANCE



Health surveillance involves the systematic and continuous gathering of data regarding a specific health problem for its analysis, interpretation and use in the planning, development and evaluation of health programmes.

Objectives:

Individual:

- Early detection of health problems.
- Identification of workers particularly sensitive to certain risks.

Groups:

- Assessment of workers' health condition.
- Early warning about potential risk situations.
- Assess the effectiveness of the prevention plan.

Health surveillance will comprise:

- An **initial** assessment of the workers' health, on starting employment or after the assignment of specific tasks involving new health risks.
- A **specific, periodical** health assessment, if workers handle certain products or work under certain conditions regulated by some particular legislation; or under some risks determined by risk assessment; or at the workers' request if they consider that some health problems are the result of their job.
- A health assessment **after a prolonged absence** for health reasons.

### 4.1. Information for workers belonging to particularly sensitive risk groups

- The Universitat de València specifically guarantees the protection of those workers who, due to their own personal traits or known biological condition (including those with a recognised physical, mental or sensory disability), are **especially sensitive** to occupational risks. For this reason, the UV will adapt their workplace in accordance with the necessary preventive and protection measures.
- Underage workers (16-18 years old), due to their incomplete development and lack of experience to identify potential safety hazards.
- Female workers during pregnancy, breastfeeding and postpartum periods.



## 4.2. Assistance in case of occupational accident or disease

The Health Office provides medical consultation hours for common illnesses or minor accidents. Consultation hours are available on the SPMA website and at each health office on campus. In the event of a serious accident:

**1. Teaching and Research Staff (PDI) under MUFACE (mutual insurance company)**

must:

- Go to a public health centre if under the social security scheme.
- Go to a private or subsidised health centre if under a private company scheme.
- PDI members who have suffered an accident must complete the required documents available at the Human Resources (PDI) website:

<http://www.uv.es/uvweb/servicio-recursos-humanos-pdi/en/documentos-gestion/gestion-personal-1285912388508.html>

**2. Administrative staff (PAS) and associate (non-tenured) PDI must go to occupational accidents and diseases insurance company.**

UMIVALE is currently the insurance company that covers occupational accidents and diseases and other eventualities arising from risks at work of all UV workers integrated into the Social Security scheme.

For further information on assistance in the event of an occupational accident or disease:

<http://www.uv.es/uvweb/servei-prevencio-medi-ambient/en/preguntes-frequents/on-anar-cas-accident-malaltia-laboral-1285903024554.html>

## 5. ERGONOMICS AND PSYCHOSOCIOLOGY

Organisation and workload are occupational risk factors closely linked to the ergonomic and psychosocial working conditions.

### WORKLOAD

It refers to all psychophysical demands required from a worker throughout the working day: physical strain, handling of loads, working postures, attention levels.

### PHYSICAL WORKLOAD

It refers to all physical demands required from a worker throughout the working day: This physical activity involves quantitative energy consumption that is called *metabolic rate*.

The qualitative physical load involves physical strains, postures and repetitive movements.

The conception and ergonomic design of the workplace (preventive ergonomics) aims to adapt spaces, equipment and environments to the characteristics of the users and the requirements of their duties. In particular, we examine the following aspects:

- Design of accesses, work areas and spaces
- Body posture
- Design of workstation furniture (chairs, tables, etc.) and work equipment (any machine, apparatus, tool or installation used at work)
- Means of signalling and control
- Design of environment and work organisation (activities and processes)

### 5.1. Correct sitting position in front of visual display units (VDU) workstations



Sit down in front of the screen

Leave a space of minimum 10 cm between the keyboard and the edge of the desk to rest forearms and wrists.

Eye-screen distance (60-70 cm approx.)

Place the top part of the screen at (or a little below) eye level.

Adjust the seat height until knees are levelled with hips.

If it is not possible to adjust height, use a footrest.

Adjust screen contrast and brightness

## 5.2. Handling of loads

The handling of loads is a quite common task in all sectors of activity, and it is oftentimes the cause of physical fatigue or injuries, which can occur suddenly or by a build-up of small traumatisms. Musculoskeletal injuries are the most recurrent ones, most notably in the upper limbs and back, especially the lower-back area.



## 5.3. Organisation and workload: psychosocial risks

### MENTAL WORKLOAD

Mental workload can be defined as the amount of psychological requirements workers are exposed to during their duties.

The factors that influence mental workload are:

- Quantity and quality of information
- Time available
- Complexity of response
- Individual capabilities

The proper organisation of work must provide workers with the social recognition of labour and allow them to maintain a social and family life.

The main causes of these occupational risks are those related to the distribution of working time (hours, pace, etc.), psychosocial (organisation, leadership style and human relations in the institution). These causes interact and have an impact on the institution's psychosocial climate and on the workers' mental and physical health.

The UV has a protocol of action to psychosocial risk factors approved on March 9, 2016, by agreement of the Governing Council of the UV (ACGUV 28/2016): [Psychosocial risk protocol](#).

Finally, in the interest of the prevention of occupational psychosocial risks, we should not forget that public workers must treat our colleagues, our managers and the general public with consideration and respect.

## 6. WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

### 6.1. Instructions for action

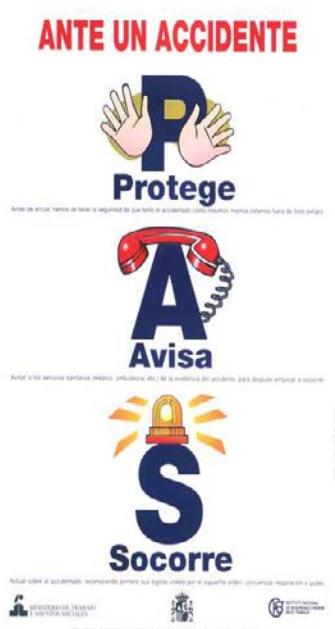
Proceed to the nearest stairwell and the nearest exit of the building.

Remember:

- Do not stop to collect personal belongings
- Do not use the elevators
- Do not block the exit doors
- Do not return to the building until an all clear is given

### 6.2. In the event of an accident

In the event of a major accident, follow these instructions in order:



**PROTECT:** We must be sure that the injured person and ourselves are out of danger. We must judge if we can assist the injured person in the place or if we remove the person from danger.

**CALL:** Call 112 or 900161161 (emergency medical services). If possible, please do not leave the injured person at any moment.

**HELP:** Try to keep calm and:

- Check vital signs of consciousness and breathing.
- Do not move the injured person unless there is imminent danger.
- Calm and reassure the injured person. Keep him/her warm enough.
- Do not give the injured person any food, drink or medicine.
- Facilitate the arrival of the emergency medical services.

### 6.3. In the event of a fire

#### CALL

Alert the administrative staff immediately about the fire so they can call the emergency personnel and the fire brigade.

#### ACT

Only in case of a small fire, use a fire extinguisher, if trained to do so, without jeopardising your own safety.

#### EVACUATE

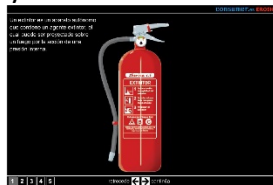
- Evacuate the building quickly by the safest and closest door or stairway. Do not run or panic.
- Use the routes of escape and exits. Never use the elevators.

- Follow the evacuation signs and keep calm.
- If you are the last person to leave the room, close all unlocked doors as you go to contain fire and smoke.
- If you encounter a lot of smoke during your escape, crawl on your hands and knees and breath through a wet tissue or piece of cloth. Heat and smoke rise, so cleaner air will be near the floor.
- Do not stop and never re-enter the building to pick up personal belongings.
- Do not obstruct emergency exits.



## PROTECT YOURSELF

Protect yourself if you cannot escape safely: close as many doors as possible between you and the fire and place wet cloths under the door to avoid smoke. Dial emergency and provide your present location, open the window and stay visible so that the fire brigade can rescue you.



Click here to see the [video](#)

## 7. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

‘Personal protective equipment’ (EPI) refers to any equipment intended to be carried or held by a worker as protection against one or several risks which may threaten their safety or health at work, and so any complement or accessory intended for such purpose.

Individual protection is the last barrier of protection between workers and hazards. However, individual protection is by no means the first and ideal solution but an additional help (not a substitute) to collective protection. It is an exceptional measure to be used exclusively when other alternative means that must be mandatorily implemented with priority have been exhausted.

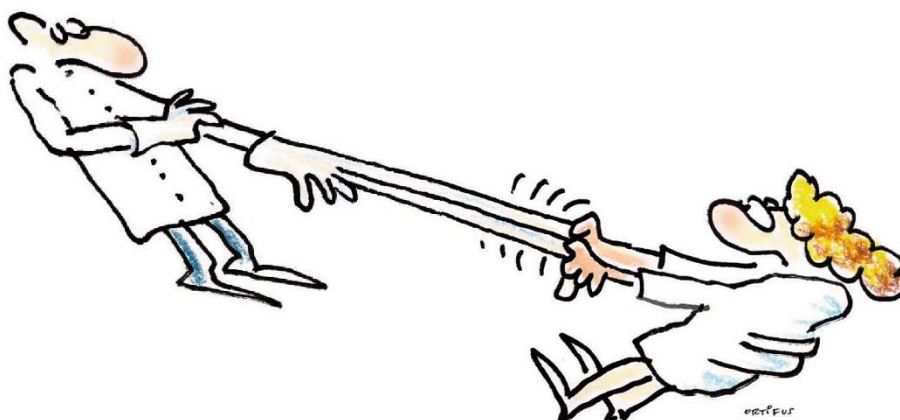


Likewise, the responsible bodies at the UV must consult workers, allow their participation and listen to and consider their proposals.

On the other hand, the UV must provide workers with adequate formation on their correct use and, besides, take a series of precautions in their handling and maintenance.

## 8. RULES IN THE LABORATORIES

- Cleanliness and tidiness are basic principles of work in the laboratory. Please return all lab materials and equipment to their proper places after use. Remember: *UNTIDINESS=RISK*.
- Do not improvise. Follow the established working procedures and understand thoroughly the chemical and biological agents you work with (Material Safety Data Sheet, safety pictograms, labels, etc.). Maximise precautions while working in the lab.



- It is compulsory to wear a lab coat (done up), protective gloves and protective glasses. It is dangerous to use contact lenses without protective glasses: in the event of spurting of dangerous liquids, lenses cannot be quickly removed, which may cause eye injuries. Remove your protective equipment when leaving the laboratory: glasses, lab coat, gloves and, then, wash your hands.
- Use the Personal Protective Equipment (EPI) suitable for each task.
- Do not bring food or drink into the laboratory. Long hair must be tied up. Avoid bracelets, watches, rings, loose-fitting garments, shorts, sandals or any kind of footwear that will not protect feet from splatters or spills.
- Medical staff on campus must be informed about allergies or sensitivity to any chemical or biological agents, or about pregnancy.
- Do not use the laboratory as a storeroom. Minimise the amount of chemical products, manage stocks adequately and keep the products in the suitable cupboards.



- Control and stay in the lab while a chemical process is taking place (reaction, distillation, etc.).
- Check that all glassware is in perfect condition; otherwise discard it. Do not use any equipment if you do not know how it works. Avoid handling wet components or flammable chemicals in the vicinity of electric wires or installations.
- Do not discharge any product into the waste water system. Use the right waste container for later collection.
- Rules for the use of fume cupboard: adjust height of sash to the level of danger of the task.
  - ✓ Lower sash completely when the fume hood is not in use or used with low frequency.
  - ✓ When the fume hood is being (very frequently) used, the sash will NOT be completely open (but at half of its maximum height, approximately).
- Learn about safety signs, and the location and functioning of safety equipment or devices to be used in an emergency: fire extinguishers, fire blankets, safety showers, eyewash fountains, etc. You must know where the nearest emergency exits are found. Any incident/accident that occurs in the laboratory shall be immediately reported to the Health and Safety and the Environment Service.

## 9. COORDINATION OF BUSINESS ACTIVITIES AS REGARDS PREVENTION

When workers of two or more companies work together, the companies shall cooperate in the application of regulations on occupational risk prevention, establishing necessary means of coordination for the prevention and protection of risks at work and the information about these.

The aim of this rule is avoid any unnecessary disturbance and to reduce accidents by means of coordinating the preventive actions, and of seeking a balance between health and safety of workers and the flexibility in the application of any measures.

Companies must inform each other about the specific risks.

At the Universitat de València, cooperation with external companies is more complex in the area of research. Thus, when external company workers operate in the UV laboratories (i.e. CSIC, foundations, private companies, etc.), we must also cooperate in the exchange of information about occupational risk prevention and in compliance measures.

## 10. KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Workers must get to know their workplace and the location of:

- Emergency routes and exits ('You are here' maps) (not to block them).
- Fire-fighting equipment.
- Semiautomatic defibrillator, where appropriate.
- Safety showers and eye-washing fountains in the case of laboratories or similar.

### 10.1. Health and safety signalling



Health and safety signalling is an additional measure in (never a substitute to) preventive measures for the elimination, minimisation and control of risk.

Health and safety signalling aims to:

- Draw the attention of workers to certain risks, prohibitions and obligations.
- Alert workers in case of an emergency.
- Provide workers with the location and identification of evacuation, protection, emergency and first-aid means and installations.
- Guide workers who carry out certain hazardous activities.



