

<p>Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE</p> <p>Procedure no. CS28- P89</p> <p>Refer OHS Policy CS15 <small>(Copy on Web Site)</small></p>	<p>Title: Hearing Conservation Procedure Corporate Services Committee approved: 8/2/2001 <i>Reviewed: 03/09/2004, 04/07/2005, 10/08/2007, 10/08/2009, 23/10/2012</i></p> <p><i>Responsible Officer: Manager Safety and Wellbeing</i> <i>Authorising Officer: Executive Manager Human Resources</i> Review: Biennial (23rd October 2014)</p>
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HEARING CONSERVATION PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

To ensure that the Institute complies with the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 and takes appropriate steps to prevent hearing loss in the workplace.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all employees of the Institute, who may be at risk of exposure to excessive noise levels. The requirement for noise level assessments in the workplace applies to all potentially noisy environments within the Institute.

3. DEFINITIONS

Excessive Noise is that which exceeds the exposure standard, which is a maximum 8 hour continuous noise of 85 dB(A) or peak noise of 140dB(C) at the ear position

Audiometric Testing is the measurement of a person's hearing threshold levels by means of monaural pure tone air conduction threshold tests.

Hearing Protector means a device that is designed to protect a persons hearing and that-

- a. is inserted into the ear canal; or
- b. covers the ear canal entrance; or
- c. covers the entire ear;

Noise Level Assessment is an assessment of workplace noise which determines the level and duration of noise exposure; and must take into account plant and other sources of noise in the workplace, systems of work at the workplace, other relevant factors, and must not take into account the effect of any hearing protectors used by persons in the workplace.

Audiological Exam is a more detailed hearing test and involves the examination of hearing threshold levels of a person to evaluate the level of sustained hearing loss by examination of monaural pure tone air conduction threshold noise frequency testing.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Responsibilities

Managers

- Are to ensure that employees receive education and training of the risks of exposure to noise and the appropriate noise control measures.
- Must supply appropriate personal hearing protectors, and instruction in the correct use and maintenance of hearing protectors to employees potentially exposed to excessive workplace noise.
- Are to ensure all staff (including Managers) wear appropriate hearing protection in areas where this is required, to set the right example.
- Are to contact the OHS Coordinator if a concern is raised by staff, students or visitors regarding workplace noise, so that a noise level assessment can be completed
- Implement measures required to control noise exposure (following the hierarchy of risk controls), and any other measures arising from noise level assessments within their work areas.
- Advise the Organisational Development Unit of employees requiring audiometric testing including:
 - New employees who may work in noisy environments
 - On a 2 year cycle, all employees who may work in noisy environments
- Ensure that appropriate signage is in place identifying work areas where hearing protection is required
- Ensure that the noise level is considered when purchasing plant or equipment, so that so far as is practicable that employees will not be exposed to noise that exceeds the exposure standard.

Teaching Staff who work in potentially noise environments

- Must provide appropriate personal hearing protectors, and instruction in the correct use and maintenance of hearing protectors to students and other persons in the area who may be potentially exposed to excessive workplace noise.
- Must ensure that students wear hearing protection where it is required
- Are to attend a hearing conservation workshop

All Staff

- Are required to cooperate with Managers in the implementation of the Hearing Conservation Procedure and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with safe work practices.
- Attend a hearing conservation workshop if they work in potentially noisy environments at the Institute
- Are to report to their Manager any work areas or instances where they consider the noise level to be excessive

Staff engaging Facilities and related Contractors

- Are to ensure that facilities and related contractors are aware of the Institute Hearing Conservation Procedure and their responsibilities including:-
 - Complying with hearing protection requirements
 - Reporting to their Institute contact any work areas where they consider noise levels to be excessive
 - Ensuring that any equipment they bring to use on Institute sites complies where practicable with noise exposure standards
- Are to respond to any instances where contractors are engaged and concerns are raised by the contractor or by Institute staff/students in relation to noise in the workplace

Health and Safety Representatives

- Participate where practicable in noise level assessments and develop of suitable risk control measures within their Designated Work Group
- Act in a consultative role regarding noise management within their Designated Work Group
- Provide appropriate advice to members of their Designated Work Group regarding the Institute Hearing Conservation Procedure and steps to take to report noise concerns
- Monitor the Institute audiometric testing system, and where considered relevant in a Designated Work Group, review the aggregated audiometric test results for their Designated Work Group

Institute OHS Coordinator

- Carry out noise level assessments as outlined within the OHS Regulations 2007
- Assist with the development of suitable risk control measures
- Work co-operatively with the Organisational Development Unit, to implement a audiometric testing process for Institute staff
- Review audiometric test results every 2 years to establish any trends or areas of concern in relation to patterns of hearing loss in various Designated WorkGroups or work areas

Students

- Are required to wear hearing protection devices where signposted or advised by an Institute staff member, and follow safe work practices
- Are to report to their Manager any work areas or instances where they consider the noise level to be excessive

4.2 Noise Level Assessments

A Noise level assessment must be carried out, maintained and reviewed as necessary within the Institute to ensure that no person is

exposed to excessive noise levels. This assessment in any event must be carried out at least every 5 years by the OHS Coordinator.

Where an employee believes the noise levels are excessive in an area they must immediately report it to their work place Manager. The Manager is to contact the OHS Coordinator to arrange for a noise level assessment to be conducted.

The noise level of plant/equipment must be considered when purchasing items of plant/equipment to ensure so far as practicable that employees will not be exposed to noise that exceeds the exposure standard.

4.3 Noise Level Control

Noise level control measures must implement the Hierarchy of Control, via consultation by the relevant Manager, Health and Safety Representative and employee, as follows:-

- (a) Eliminate the source of noise.
 - (b) Substitute with quieter plant/equipment or processes.
 - (c) Isolate or enclose the noise
 - (d) Engineer or modify to reduce the noise.
- } Most Effective
- (e) Administrative control of noise by using procedures.
 - (f) Personal Protective Equipment.
- } Less Effective

When implementing the hierarchy of control for noise the most effective, most practicable control/s must be implemented.

All areas identified as producing excessive noise levels will have signs that conform to the Australian Standard AS1319-1994, affixed at each entrance to that area, warning of the potential excessive noise and instructing all persons entering that area to wear hearing protection.

All hearing protection devices provided for wearing are to be selected, maintained and used in accordance with the Australian Standard 1270-2002.

4.4 Audiometric Testing (Hearing Tests)

The Institute must provide an audiometric test every 2 years for employees, who work in areas where potential excessive noise exists.

New employees, who will work in areas where excessive noise may exist, will be required to undertake an audiometric test within 3 months of commencement of employment.

The Organisational Development Unit working co-operatively with the OHS Coordinator will arrange audiometric tests for staff and will advise employees of the testing details.

If the results of 2 consecutive audiometric tests indicate a reduction in hearing levels equal to or greater than 15dB at 3000 Hz, 4000 Hz or 6000 Hz, the Institute must provide for the employee to undergo an audiological examination. The Institute will be advised of this by the hearing service organisation undertaking the audiometric testing.

The results of audiometric tests and/or audiological examination will be placed on the employee's personnel file in the Organisational Development Unit for comparison purposes.

The OHS Coordinator will ensure that the results of the audiometric test of an employee are provided in writing to the employee and a copy of the audiogram is provided to the employee on their request.

If the audiological examination report states the employee has sustained hearing loss that is likely to be due to exposure to noise, the OHS Coordinator must review and revise the workplace noise assessment to ensure that the exposure standard is not exceeded.

5. DOCUMENTATION

- [OHS Policy – CS15](#)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007
- Code of Practice for Noise 1992
- AS/NZS 1270:2002, Acoustics – Hearing Protectors
- AS1319-1994, Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment