

ATEC HEAT POLICY

POLICY

ATEC has an obligation to minimise the risk of injury and illness while undertaking activities that present a hazard in the workplace, especially working during hot weather conditions.

This policy aims to reduce employees' apprentices', trainees' and students' exposure to Heat Stress & Ultra Violet Radiation (UVR) from the sun by implementing appropriate health and safety control strategies.

ATEC **DOES NOT** have a specified temperature where employees, apprentices, trainees and students can stop work, **BUT** some host employers do and site specific conditions may apply

Various work-related tasks place some people at risk of heat stress, especially during hot weather. If untreated, heat stress can lead to the more serious and potentially life-threatening condition of heat stroke.

The main factors which influence the risk of heat stress are:

- high air temperature;
- high humidity, which prevents sweat evaporation;
- low air movement;
- exposure to the sun;
- Radiant temperature of surroundings;
- intense physical activity or high work load; and
- clothing impairing air movement and sweat evaporation.

All these factors have to be taken into account when assessing the risk of heat stress. A single risk factor, such as an air temperature on the day or projected air temperature etc, should not be used in isolation to predict the risk of heat stress. Safe systems of work **MUST** be set up to prevent heat stress during hot weather.

Generally* ATEC **DOES NOT** allow for clothing such as Shorts, T Shirts, Singlets etc. to be worn, that allows the employee or student to be exposed to UV radiation (UVR) during outdoor work or from any other source i.e. welding. Periods of exposure to UV radiation can be harmful, damaging the skin, which may lead to skin cancers. Both short term and long term exposure could cause effects to a person's eyes.

*To mitigate the risk of heat stress during periods of extreme temperatures, approved shorts **CAN** be worn within the ATEC Construction Training Workshop areas only by both Construction Trainers and students during the period of 1 November to 28/29th February and outside of this period, only on those days of extreme temperature heat. This is not mandatory, and employers whose own policies require their apprentices to wear long pants will prevail and will require trainers to ensure alternative control measures are in place to manage heat stress in these instances.

CONTROL MEASURES

- Where possible, during periods of seasonal heat and/or humidity, indoor work that must occur should be scheduled prior to lunch for student practicals/projects. Trainers need to be flexible in their approach to training during high risk days including frequent breaks and ensuring that they and/or their students are not placed at risk of heat related illnesses.

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- Where possible, during periods of seasonal heat and/or humidity, moderate and heavy outdoor work that must occur in the direct sun, should be scheduled before 11am or after 3pm (daylight saving time) or prior to 11am for student practicals/projects.
- Where practicable, outdoor work should be carried out in shaded areas or where temporary shade can be erected as much as possible.
- Wear a hat, sunglasses or UV safety glasses (if practicable), light sun protective clothing (or natural woven fabrics, e.g. cotton assists in the evaporation of sweat), and sunscreen.
- Acclimatise to outdoor work gradually.
- Take regular rest breaks in a cool, shaded location a short distance from where you are working to enable your body to return to normal core temperature. It will be necessary to take into account the type of work and outside heat temperature when determining the frequency and length of breaks.
- Drink at least 100-200ml of cool drinking water at frequent intervals (1 litre per hour when working in the sun) to replace fluids lost due to sweating.

AVOID alcohol, caffeine and drugs during hot weather as it is a potential risk to health by increasing loss of fluid. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited during working hours. Refer to the ATEC Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy [SUP-POL-023](#).

- Eat light meals at regular intervals during the day to ensure energy and salt levels are maintained.
- Take particular care during the hottest parts of the day to ensure you don't overexert or overstress your body due to physical activity.
- If you do not believe adequate precautions are being implemented to protect your health and safety during adverse weather conditions, you **MUST** advise your supervisor.

If you are:

- an employee contact your manager/supervisor
 - a Group Training apprentice/trainee contact your Group Training Consultant
 - a Student advise your Trainer;
- as soon as possible.

Personal Protection

- When ambient temperatures and in direct sunlight is excessive, employees, apprentices and students shall ensure they are wearing the appropriate personal protective clothing to reduce the associated risks.
- At all times (including cool and overcast days where UVR is still prevalent) employees, apprentices and students who are working/training outdoors are required to protect themselves against UVR by applying a broad spectrum sunscreen (as per product instructions), wearing appropriate hats that shade your face and neck, long pants when and where required (and when not required as per ATEC construction training workshop heat stress mitigation, and approved shorts are worn, ensure regular application of sunscreen) sunglasses or UV safety glasses (where practicable) and long sleeve shirts if practicable (where not practicable or short sleeve shirt is worn ensure regular application of sunscreen).

Wide brimmed attachments for hard helmets can be supplied by ATEC to ATEC employees to provide protection from direct sunlight.

- ATEC provides appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen to employees who undertake duties outdoors.

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- Sunscreen is available for employees and students whilst training outdoors at ATEC sites.

ATEC Group Training Responsibilities

- Where vital or emergency repair work must continue in hot conditions, the host employers' supervisors are to closely monitor the situation and ensure the provision of adequate rest breaks and that the apprentices are consuming adequate fluids.
- During site visits, ATEC Group Training Consultants will ensure apprentices wear appropriate UVR protection and are made aware of the potential hazards associated with working in adverse conditions.
- Where a Host Employer decides to cease work due to inclement weather, the apprentice:
 - a) may agree to access leave/RDO entitlements and cease work, or
 - b) must be available to ATEC for alternative duties at a different site.

In both a) and b) above, the apprentice is required to contact their ATEC Group Training Consultant to inform ATEC of the situation.

- Where an apprentice returns to ATEC for alternative duties, their ATEC Group Training Consultant is required to coordinate arrangements, such as: location, supervision by GT, the alternative duties and ensuring the apprentice receives instruction regarding recording the inclement weather arrangements on their time sheet.

Symptoms of heat stress/stroke

If you have any of the following symptoms, slow down or stop work and report to your supervisor:

- feeling unwell
- weakness
- dizziness
- confusion
- nausea
- throbbing headache

Lynne Austin
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