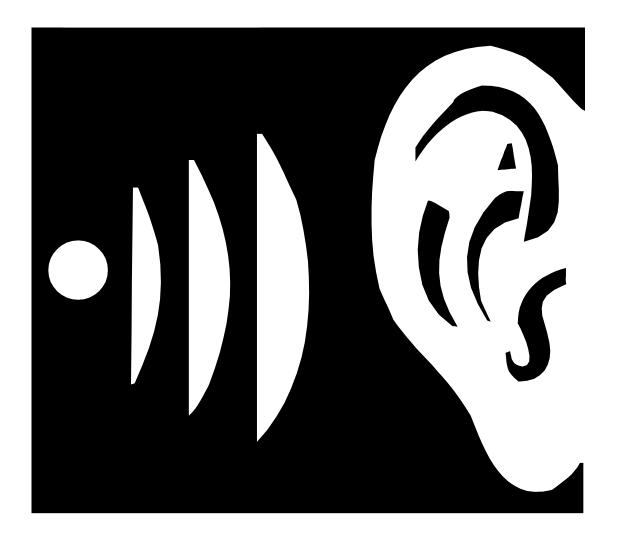
Safety Code of Practice 42

1st Edition, May 2013

CONTROLLING THE RISKS FROM NOISE AT WORK



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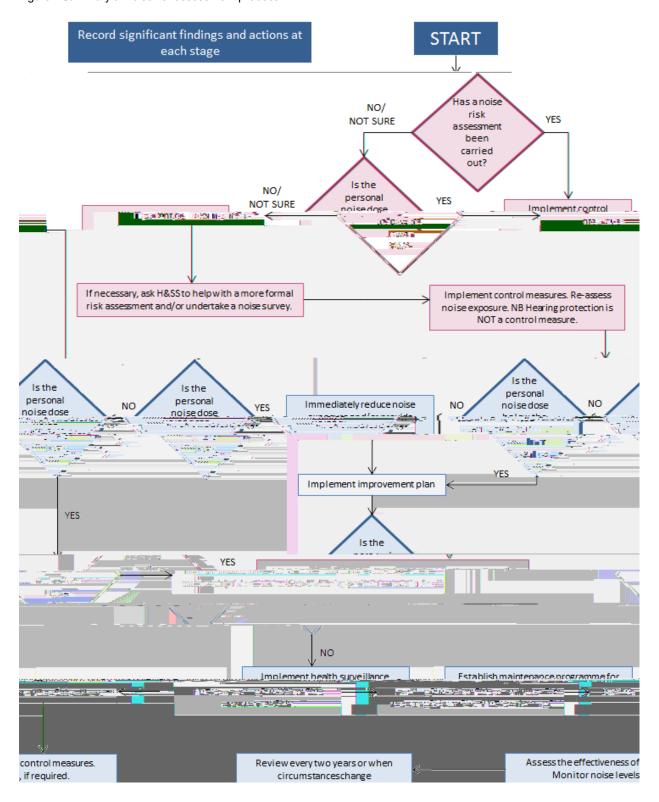
1 SUMMARY

The Safety Code of Practice sets out the arrangements for controlling noise at work for staff and in some cases, students. It covers exposure to loud noise that may potentially cause short or long term damage to hearing, and noisy work environments where noise may cause other safety issues, such as the inability to hear alarms. It does not address 'nuisance' noise. The University has a duty to reduce noise to levels as low as reasonably practicable, and to protect the health, and specifically hearing, of staff and students.

Schools and Services are required to carry out an assessment of the risk from noise, where they suspect noise levels may be at or close to the action exposure values set out in the Noise at Work Regulations 2005. The lower action exposure value is 80 dB, averaged over an 8 hour working day. There is also a peak action level of 137 dB.

The flow chart at Figure 1 overleaf summarises the steps that should be followed to minimise and control risks from exposure to noise.

Figure 1 Summary of noise risk assessment process



2 SCOPE

This Safety Code of Practice sets out what managers and staff have to do to reduce the risk of long-term damage to hearing from exposure to excessive noise at their place of work.

4.2 Line managers/Supervisors

Line Managers/Supervisors must ensure that:

They have sufficient knowledge and understanding to recognise when noise could be an issue in their area, and to seek competent assistance

Noise risks are assessed and action is taken to reduce exposure where necessary

Action is taken to ensure that legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded

The correct type of hearing protection is issued where noise exposure cannot be reduced by other methods, and is maintained and worn correctly

Staff and students (where relevant) are provided with information and training on the health risks from excessive noise, and the control measures that they must follow Noise factors (and hand-

Using all equipment in accordance with instructions and training

Wearing hearing protection in accordance with instructions

Reporting to their manager/supervisor immediately if they experience any symptoms that would be associated with noise at work

Co-operating with the health surveillance programme

Reporting any defects of problems with equipment or hearing protection.

5 NOISE LEVELS

5.1 How noise is measured

Table 1 Exposure action values

Exposure action values						
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L						
Exposure Limit Values						

It is important to recognise that noise exposure is a combination of the loudness of the noise, the duration and There will therefore be occasions when an individual is exposed to relatively loud noise, but the risk to hearing is reduced because the exposure is

of

6 ASSESSING THE RISK FROM NOISE IN THE WORKPLACE

6.1 Do you have a noise problem?

Action may need to be taken if any of the following apply:

The noise is intrusive for example, as noisy as a busy road, a vacuum cleaner, or a crowded restaurant or worse than intrusive, for most of the working day. If noise is intrusive but normal conversation is possible, likely noise level is approximately 80 dB (A).



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6.3 Hearing protection

Hearing protection should not be used as an alternative to controlling noise by technical and organisational means. Hearing protection should be issued to employees:

where extra protection is needed above what has been achieved using noise control as a temporary measure when other methods of controlling noise are being developed or installed.

Staff must be provided with hearing protection when:

they ask for them and their noise exposure is between the lower and upper exposure action values

their noise exposure exceeds the upper exposure action values.

Managers must ensure that employees use hearing protection fully and properly when their noise exposure exceeds the upper exposure action values.

Hearing protection must not be shared for hygiene reasons, and facilities must be made to store it

6.4 Hearing protection zones

Area of the workplace where access is restricted and where hearing protection is compulsory must be identified and signed. This will include any areas where:

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