

To: Heads of Department/Section, Executive Deans, HSLOs and DHSOs, Faculty Managers

Action

## University Biological Safety Policy

University Steering Group (USG) has approved a new University Biological Safety Policy, which sets out responsibilities and arrangements for managing the risk of exposure from deliberate work with biological agents. The scheme of work forms for biological projects have also been updated.

The policy applies to all intentional work which involves the handling, storage, transport and waste disposal of biological agents at the University. It does not apply to work placements in external health care facilities, or contact with biological agents through first aid/cleaning activities.

### Key requirements

If you carry out deliberate work with biological agents in your department (such as testing samples of human or animal tissue) you will need to follow this policy.

- Heads of Department must appoint a **Departmental Biological Safety Officer** who will oversee schemes of work for the department and attend the Biological Hazards and Genetic Modification Sub-Group on behalf of the department.
- **Local rules** must be in place for each department which carries out the work.
- Up to date **schemes of work** must be in place for work with biological agents. Existing schemes of work should be updated into the new format when their next annual review is due. Each scheme of work must have an up to date **Workers List**.
- The correct **approval process** must be followed for all schemes of work. Hazard Group 2 biological agents must be approved by the Biological Hazards and Genetic Modification Sub-Group **prior to work commencing**. This is in addition to other University requirements, such as ethics approval. The Biological Hazards and Genetic Modification Sub-Group meets in February and September each year.
- All personnel carrying out the work must be **adequately trained and supervised** in accordance with the relevant schemes of work, local rules and procedures.

### Find out more

The [Biological hazards and genetic modification website](#) gives an overview of biological hazards and provides links to the scheme of work forms and the policy. Please read the information on the website to make sure that you know your responsibilities and the action you need to take to meet them.

If you have any queries on the policy, please contact HSAS or the University Biological Safety Adviser.