

lechyd a Diogelwch – Health and Safety

CHEMICAL SAFETY – FIRST THINGS FIRST

This Information Sheet provides guidance with regards to the basic principles that must be followed before using any chemical in a laboratory.

This Information Sheet is only a 'First Step' guide and must be read in conjunction with additional Information Sheets as required eg 'Identifying Chemical Hazards', 'Chemical Compatibility'.

ALWAYS

1. Follow local Laboratory rules and guidelines eg wear a lab coat, tie your hair back, always wash your hands regularly and especially when leaving the Lab.
2. Ensure you have the appropriate experience and authorisation to carry out the work.
3. Assess the chemical's hazards - useful sources of information are the product label, Manufacturer's Safety Data Sheet, the Oxford MSDS system <http://msds.chem.ox.ac.uk>.
4. Prepare a COSHH Assessment specific to the activity you are undertaking. But remember:

ALWAYS TAKE INTO ACCOUNT...

- Any activity that may affect the chemicals behaviour eg heating
- Compatibility when mixing chemicals eg will an exothermic reaction occur
- The concentration and amount of chemical used
- It's form eg liquid, powder, vapour
- Routes of entry into the body eg inhalation
- The Lab environment. Is it hot, is it well-ventilated

5. Wear the correct Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). *Note: PPE suitable for one chemical may not be suitable for another.*
6. Follow your COSHH Assessment.
7. If in doubt **ASK!** Your Academic Supervisor and Lab Technician are there to help.

NEVER



- Work with chemicals if you are unsure about the safe measures required or if don't feel confident to do so.
- Use a chemical(s) if you are unsure how it will react.
- **ASSUME** – if you can't find appropriate background information, wait and ask your Academic Supervisor or Lab Technician.