

## Compressed Gases Policy

The Pressure Equipment Regulations 1999, the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2009, and associated guidance set out minimum requirements for the safe storage of gas cylinders and gas cylinder bundles to protect from the risks of fire and explosion. General fire safety requirements in the workplace also apply through the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These Regulations apply to all workplaces, where compressed gases are present or could be present.

This Policy applies to and within all buildings across the University's campuses, including Gibbet Hill, Westwood and Wellesbourne. The Policy also applies to all activities managed by the University at off-campus accommodation properties. This Policy is supported by arrangements, instructions, and guidance on the management of compressed gases, which are available on the University's Health and Safety web pages.

Under the provisions of Ordinance 18, 'Health and Safety in the University', it shall be a duty of all staff, students and others working in the University to comply, as far as it is appropriate, with 'The Statement of Health and Safety Policy', together with any other rules and guidance that may apply. This Policy, together with supporting arrangements, instructions and guidance, form part of the rules and guidance issued pursuant to 'The Statement of Health and Safety Policy'.

### Core Principles

1. The number of compressed cylinders must be kept as low as is possible and alternative means of providing gases be considered in preference to using gas cylinders. Empty or 'end of life' cylinders or regulators must be returned to the relevant supplier for safe reuse, recycling or disposal.
2. Suitable and sufficient risk assessments must be made of any compressed gas storage areas, whether they be internal or external. The assessments will evaluate the adequacy of the existing precautions and will identify any additional precautions required.
3. Control measures will include, but not be limited to: managing potential sources of ignition; minimising the potential for explosion; providing appropriate safety information; operating a Permit for 'Hot Work' where required; providing general fire safety precautions; and the provision of personal protective equipment.
4. All compressed gas storage areas within buildings must have a written justification, identifying why it is essential that compressed gases are stored indoors, and such justifications must be recorded within the QuEMIS Hazard Management system, along with the related risk assessments and control measures. This should include information on the products stored, their maximum quantities and their hazard classification. This should be updated on a regular basis and be made available to the emergency services in the event of an incident.
5. Acetylene cylinders are only to be used where there is no alternative available. Acetylene gas units (including mobile oxy-acetylene welding units) must be managed through the risk assessment process and/or, where necessary, by issuing a 'Hot Work' Permit by permission of the University Permits Office. This is due to the unique and highly explosive nature of acetylene cylinders.
6. Records will be kept of all risk assessments undertaken; information and training provided; and all checks and maintenance carried out on compressed gas and associated equipment.



7. All personnel who are required to handle and store compressed gas shall receive suitable information and instruction regarding the hazards associated with compressed gas and the gases being stored. They should be provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their job safely.
8. Gas cylinders and their regulators are subject to regular inspections and statutory checks; users need to ensure that such inspections are carried out. Any defective cylinders or regulators must be removed from service, quarantined and sent back to the supplier at the earliest opportunity.
9. Suitable local security arrangements shall take into account the classification of the gases and the quantities being stored. The security arrangements shall include appropriate physical and management security controls to prevent unauthorised access, theft, tampering, arson and vandalism.

### Responsibilities

Heads of Departments are responsible for the implementation of this Policy with regards to:- managing a register of compressed gases; implementing control measures over ignition sources; the selection and maintenance of work equipment; training; personal protective equipment; and, where necessary, safe access arrangements for maintenance staff and contractors using Laboratories/Workshops where compressed gases exist.

All staff within departments must comply with this Policy and the associated arrangements, instructions and guidance.

The University Fire Safety Adviser is responsible for coordinating all fire risk assessments; advice on compressed gas storage locations; arrangements to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies including the evacuation, escape or rescue of people; and auditing of fire safety standards and procedures.

The Director of Health and Safety is responsible for advising on the standards and regulations that must be achieved in order to meet legal requirements; for keeping the University's Health and Safety website up to date with the related policy documents; and for ensuring that spot checks and audits are carried out to provide assurance that activities are being carried out in compliance with this Policy.

### Review

This policy is dated March 2018. The policy will be reviewed at least annually.

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