

## Supervision Level Requirements (Academic staff)

See also Duties and Responsibilities of Supervisors policy:

<http://safety.chemistry.unimelb.edu.au/supervisor.php>

### Procedure

All staff are required to have a position description that includes Supervision responsibilities and EH&S responsibilities including:

- a) supervisory arrangements.
- b) reporting relationships.
- c) training.
- d) specific duties, which should be assigned according to skill and training

Staff appraisals should incorporate an assessment of the defined EHS roles and responsibilities.

Academic staff are responsible for supervising :

- a) undergraduate students (in lectures, tutorials and practical demonstrations),
- b) postgraduate students\* (throughout the conduct of their research and in demonstrating), and
- c) junior academic staff members with a direct reporting relationship.

\*Before any prolonged absence of the academic supervisor, arrangements satisfactory to the HOD must be made for the appointment of a suitable replacement supervisor, particularly for the supervision of post-graduate students.

The level of supervision should take into account the hazards associated with the tasks being performed and the level of training and expertise of those being supervised.

Undergraduate students must work in groups and under the instruction of the academic supervisor and demonstrator when participating in hazardous experiments. Postgraduate students are to receive training in the use and hazards associated with their experiments and are to be regularly monitored by their academic supervisor. No student is permitted to work alone outside normal business hours.

Academic staff are responsible for ensuring that an equivalent standard of health and safety is afforded to their students as is afforded to University staff generally. Academic staff are deemed to have principal supervisory duty for undergraduate and postgraduate student activity.

### Student Supervision Ratios

All Supervision of staff and students must be undertaken with the following minimum levels:

1. Practical Classes – High Risk 1 supervisor 10 students
2. Practical Classes – Medium Risk 1 supervisor 16 students
3. Practical Classes – Low Risk 1 supervisor 20 students
4. Post-graduate studies – 1 sole supervisor to 7 students unless special permission is obtained from the Head of School and approved by the School of Graduate Studies.
5. Computer tasks - 1 supervisor 50 students

**Examples of Risk rated activities – other activities may fit the following categories:**

High Risk: Working with dangerous goods/hazardous substances, in complex tasks

Medium Risk: Working with dangerous goods/hazardous substances in simple tasks

Low Risk: Working with small volume chemicals or hazardous materials

To achieve the required supervision levels the following must occur:

Undergraduate labs:

- First and second year students to only do low risk experiments
- An appropriate number of Demonstrators employed to supervise the number of students in the practical class. Demonstrators can be Honours or PhD students from within the School of Chemistry or people with a Science background from other departments/institutes. Third Year Demonstrators are to be selected from within the School of Chemistry because of their experience with the complex tasks involved. A Senior Demonstrator is to act as a floating demonstrator/supervisor to the Demonstrators. These can be senior PhD students or people with appropriate experience. All demonstrators must have received the Honours Safety lectures, which are performance based training sessions conducted in the School of Chemistry.
- Laboratory technical staff must also be available to supervise students.
- An academic member of staff is assigned to each prac class and acts as overall supervisor.
- The supervision ratio can reduce as students gain experience and have an understanding of laboratory hazards, particularly end of second year and into third year.
- “399 Students” and “Summer Students” must be supervised by a member of the academic staff while carrying out project work in a teaching laboratory. However, if a 399 student carries out this work in a research laboratory the academic supervisor can delegate the close supervision to a responsible and senior PhD student (after consultation with the PhD student)

Postgraduate labs:

- Honours students should not work alone in a research laboratory. On a daily basis a member of the academic staff or a responsible and senior PhD student should supervise them (after consultation). Honours students are allowed access to the building after normal working hours but should never work alone at these times. High risk experiments must be undertaken in the presence of their supervisor or senior PhD student.
- PhD students are not to carry out experimental work alone in the laboratory at any time. High risk experiments carried out by junior PhD students must be undertaken in the presence of their supervisor or senior PhD student.
- Senior PhD students are deemed capable of conducting high risk experiments, but are not to conduct them alone or after-hours.
- Academic staff are also deemed capable of conducting high risk experiments, but are not to conduct them alone or after-hours.