



ORIENTATION GUIDE

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT AT WORK



1) Context

University of Minho is a Public Higher Education Institution created by the Decree-Law no. 402/73, of the 11th of August. It welcomed its first students in the academic year of 1975/76. It's based in the city of Braga, in Largo do Paço, and has three *campi*, the campus of Gualtar, in the city of Braga and the *campi* of Azurém and Couros, in the city of Guimarães. It has a student population of more than 18 000 students, approximately 1100 teachers and almost 600 technicians and administrative staff. It's considered one of the largest Portuguese universities.



2) UMinho's Health, Safety and Environment Policy

- UMinho promotes practices of environmental sustainability that can favour the implementation of activities to improve environmental performance. UMinho is always committed to minimising the environmental impacts and improving the well-being of the academic community.
- UMinho promotes and ensures a safe and healthy work environment for the entire academic community.
- UMinho identifies the hazards and evaluates the risks associated with their nature and scale, thus implementing suitable improvement actions to minimise them.

- The responsibility for preventing accidents and complying with legal and other requirements applicable to UMinho rests with the entire academic community.
- We support this culture of safety by promoting the training, information and participation of UMinho's employees.
- We foster the continuous improvement of safety at UMinho, and are adequately prepared to respond to emergency situations and prevent accidents at work.

3) Health and Safety at Work Services

UMinho introduces its organised services of occupational safety and health, also known as medicine at work and safety at work.

Safety at work is anchored in prevention. In this respect, UMinho has developed and is actually implementing a prevention plan that includes the assessment of the risks that employees are exposed to, the application of corrective measures and the recording of incidents and accidents, which will help in selecting the adequate priority measures to be taken.

UMinho ensures the promotion and monitoring of the health of its employees by using the services of a duly certified external company that conducts health examinations adequate to the occupational risks of the work activities, and checks and evaluates the physical and mental fitness of the employees to perform these activities. These examinations should be conducted in the following manner:

- **Admission Examinations** ► Prior to the beginning of the provision of work or, if the urgency in the admission justifies so, during the following 15 days.

- **Periodical Examinations** ► Annual for employees over the age of 50, and every 2 years for the remaining employees.

- **Occasional Examinations** ► Whenever there is a substantial change in the material components of work, which may have harmful effects on the health of the employee, as well as after an absence of more than 30 days, due to illness or accident, and also, whenever requested by the Rector/Administrator of UMinho.

4) General Obligations of Employees

Employees have an obligation to:

- Respect and comply with the safety and health at work provisions as established by law, on internal regulations, on this document and also on other internal instructions in this respect.
- Collaborate with UMinho in the application of this document so as to improve the safety and health at work system.
- Refrain from performing any acts that could lead to dangerous situations, such as changing, damaging or removing safety devices or protection systems, as well as interfering with work methods aimed at reducing the risk of accidents and occupational illnesses.
- Properly use, according to the instructions given, the machinery, hazardous substances and other equipment and resources made available to them, including collective and personal protective equipment, as well as comply with the established work procedures.
- Ensure their safety and health, as well as the safety and health of others who may be affected by their actions or oversights at work.

- Adopt the measures and instructions laid down for such a situation, in the event of serious and imminent danger, and also if it is not possible to establish immediate contact with the hierarchical superior, or with the employees responsible for performing specific functions within the scope of health and safety at work.
- Participate in the training on safety and health at work provided by hierarchical superiors.
- Communicate to their hierarchical superiors the faults and weaknesses discovered that may seem likely to result in serious or imminent hazards.
- Attend and undergo the clinical examinations or trials determined by UMinho's medicine at work, taking into consideration the activities performed.
- Provide information leading to assessing, at the time of admission, their physical and mental fitness for the exercise of the functions corresponding to the respective professional category, as well as on facts or circumstances designed to ensure the safety and health of employees. The use of information of a medical nature is restricted to the occupational physician.
- The holders of senior positions, technical coordinators and supervisors, shall cooperate, especially in relation to the services under their hierarchical and technical framework, with the human resources management, in the implementation of adequate measures for prevention and monitoring of health.

5) General Safety Instructions

In Case of Alarm

- a) Stay calm.
- b) Promptly report the occurrence to the Command and Control Centre using the internal emergency number 253 60 10 10.

In Case of Fire

- a) If you have received training in the use of fire extinguishers, try to extinguish the fire using portable extinguishers, without putting yourself at risk;
- b) If the means to fight the fire are exhausted or do not work, try to remove the combustible materials from the vicinity of the fire source, without putting yourself at risk.
- c) Should the conditions worsen and you must leave the site, close all the doors possible.
If you have not received training, you must leave the site immediately, moving to a safe location, without panicking.

In Case of Explosion

- a) Protect yourself during the explosion, taking particular attention to projected materials.
- b) Safely move away from the site and wait for the arrival of an employee. Follow the instructions given.

In Case of Bomb Threat

Only notify the Command and Control Centre using the internal emergency number 253 60 10 10.

In Case of Earthquake

- a) Seek shelter near doorways and main walls, away from windows, the middle of rooms, bookcases, cabinets and other heavy objects that may fall.
- b) Hide under a desk, table, counter or against a pillar or inside wall and protect your head with your hands.
- c) Do not use the lift. Always use the stairs.
- d) Remain calm and, if possible, reassure the people around you.
- e) Do not try to exit the building during the earthquake. Stay protected until the earthquake ends.
- f) Do not rush towards the street. The exits may be blocked.

- g) Outside, stay away from utility poles, trees, lamps, buildings and walls.

In Case of Combustible Gas

- a) Close the gas shut-off valve, if possible.
- b) If it is not possible to close the gas shut-off valve, proceed to the ventilation of the space, opening doors and windows.
- c) Do not light matches, use lighters, or operate light switches.
- d) If you do not have adequate technical expertise, safely move away from the site and wait for the arrival of an employee.

In Case of Accident with Victims

Check if there are any injured people and provide assistance if possible.

If there are injured people, call 112 and report:

- a) The nature of the emergency.
- b) The location.
- c) The number of injured people and types of injuries.
- d) Notify the Command and Control Centre using the internal emergency number 253 60 10 10.
- e) Wait for the arrival of the security staff and provide all the information requested.

6) Safety Instructions in a Laboratory

- Each person working in a laboratory is responsible for their own safety and the safety of others.
- You should carry out your tasks in a calm, serious and careful manner.
- Before beginning your activity, you must bear in mind the risks involved and the security measures to adopt.

- You should know the physical, chemical and biological properties, as well as the toxicity, of the reagents prior to their use.
- Use adequate collective protective equipment (CPC) and individual protection equipment (IPE), based on the information provided in the safety data sheets (SDS) of the products that will be handled.
- Do not use the IPE outside the laboratory areas.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke in the laboratories.
- It is not appropriate to use jewellery and contact lenses during laboratory work.
- Do not store food and/or drinks inside laboratory refrigerators.
- Wash your hands frequently throughout the day and when leaving the laboratories.
- Avoid the use of mobile phones or music earphones when carrying out laboratory activities.
- Keep the work areas and equipment clean and free of unnecessary chemical products.
- Equip all spaces where chemical products are handled and stored with emergency showers/eyewash units.
- Know the location and operation of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, emergency showers/eyewash units and protective equipment, and keep these obstacle-free.
- Keep the ventilation of the laboratories on and, in more specific activities where there is the possibility of the release of contaminants to the work atmosphere, perform them inside fume hoods.
- Ensure that all the chemical products containers are properly labelled.
- Don't make transfers to containers that were used to store food products, including water bottles.
- Do not leave reagent bottles open.
- Move vials with flammable reagents away from flames.
- Never heat a closed container.

- Avoid unnecessary exposure to chemical products.
- Do not smell or taste chemical products.
- Always use the fume hood for experiments where the release of gases or vapours occurs and whenever the chemical product's SDS recommends it.
- Whenever it is necessary to dilute a concentrated acid, you should slowly add the acid to the water, and never the other way around.
- When heating a test tube containing any substance, do not turn the open end of the tube towards yourself or towards another person.
- Do not mouth pipette liquids and do not use the same pipette to measure different solutions.

7) The Emergency at UMinho

An emergency is characterised by each and any threat that may put at risk the physical integrity of the occupants in the premises of UMinho and that requires an immediate response from UMinho's internal security structure and the civil protection agents (CPA).

Behaviours to adopt in the event of an emergency at UMinho:

- Ensure that you are in a safe place. If not, try to find a safe place.
- Do not attempt to interfere with the situation, except in case of self-protection.
- Observe the situation from a safe distance.
- Notify the Command and Control Centre using the internal emergency number 253 60 10 10.

With reference to the nature of the emergency (in case of a medical emergency, call 112) report, if possible:

- Your location: building, floor and section.
- The number of people present.
- The number of injured people and types of injuries.
- Do not end the call unless your safety is at risk or you have been instructed to end it.
- Observe the arrival of the emergency teams and move to meet them if possible.
- Follow the instructions of the emergency teams.

8) Waste Management at UMinho

By adopting best practices and procedures regarding the management of waste produced in its facilities, UMinho aims to integrate and comply with the environmental commitment made, balancing environmental protection with the prevention of pollution and socio-economic balance.

The correct characterisation of the main types of waste produced on UMinho's *campi* and buildings is essential for defining its stages of separation, collection, storage, transport and routing to their final destination.



Figure1. Final destination of the waste.

Please note that the proper sorting and packaging of waste is the responsibility of the ones that produce it, wherefore all necessary measures should be taken to classify them accurately.

9) Useful contacts

Health and Safety at Work (Office of the Administrator)

Phone numbers: 916493964 / 910406580

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