

## Sharps

### 1. Overview

- 1.1 Sharps can be classified as any object or device having corners, edges, points of protuberances that have the potential to cut or puncture the skin e.g. broken glass, scalpel blades, stanley knives, razor blades, hypodermic needles, intravenous sets.
- 1.2 Sharps are a source of puncture wounds, lacerations and needlestick injury and can be a biological hazard.

### 2. Handling of Sharps

- 2.1 Special care should be taken when using sharps particularly during biological procedures, sterilisation, general handling and disposal.
- 2.2 Use retractable or appropriately guarded sharps where possible.
- 2.3 Safe work practices must be developed, understood and strictly adhered to when using sharps.
- 2.4 Students and staff must be trained on how to handle and dispose of sharps correctly.
- 2.5 Use the appropriate personal protective equipment when using sharps.
- 2.6 Use the correct sharp for the task.
- 2.7 Sharps should be correctly maintained and/or replaced as they become dull or blunt.
- 2.8 Needles should not be purposely bent or removed from syringes, or recapped after use.
- 2.9 All general rubbish bins located in areas where sharps are used should be labelled 'Not for Sharps Disposal'.
- 2.10 See section 10.9 of the [UWS Laboratory Safety Guidelines](#) for further information on the handling and disposal of sharps.

### 3. Disposal of Sharps

- 3.1 Sharps should be segregated from other waste before disposal.
- 3.2 An appropriate and approved receptacle should be provided at the point of use and not overfilled.
- 3.3 See section 10.9.2 of the [UWS Laboratory Safety Guidelines](#) for information on the disposal of contaminated and clean broken glass.

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- 3.4 Contaminated sharps must be appropriately disposed of e.g. needles should be discarded into an approved sharps container.
- 3.5 Disposable needle/syringe sets should be discarded as a single unit.
- 4. Injury with Sharps contaminated with blood or other biological material.**
- 4.1 A copy of the [Biological Hazard Emergency Plan](#) should be displayed in all areas where there is the possibility of needle stick or sharps injury.
- 4.2 Needle stick or sharps injuries should be reported immediately so that the [Biological Hazard Emergency Plan](#) can be implemented.
- 5. Further Information**
- 5.1 Please contact the [OHS&IS](#) unit if you require further information.