

Suitable Laboratory Footwear

This document has been adapted from the Department of Medicine Royal Free and

University College Medical School UK, for the Faculty of Medicine Hong Kong University.

Responsibilities

1. Managers/PI's/Supervisors must ensure that suitable laboratory footwear is worn by staff and research workers for the tasks they are given.
2. It is the responsibility of Managers/PI's/Supervisors to make risk assessments of their research work and to decide what footwear is suitable.
3. Managers/Supervisors must monitor the implementation of the risk assessment recommendations by their staff and research workers.

Guidance

In general workers in the laboratory are expected to wear rigid closed shoes rather than sandals and for some operations may be required to wear special footwear that gives extra protection, for example overshoes when working in animal handling areas or possibly steel capped shoes when handling heavy loads. This guidance may be relaxed for staff and students who work exclusively in an office environment but must be followed when they enter a laboratory.

1. DO NOT CARRY OUT LABORATORY TASKS WITH INAPPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR

- Laboratory workers must refrain from conducting research work without considering their footwear. Both non-suitable styles and also any specifically required footwear should be recorded within the Risk Assessment.
- Managers/Supervisors must provide information and instructions to

participating staff and research workers, and monitor their implementation.

2. CARRY OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE SUITABILITY OF FOOTWEAR

- A Risk Assessment for laboratory work must consider not only whether certain types of footwear are unsuitable but also whether special footwear is required.
- If footwear has not been considered within the Risk Assessment then rigid closed shoes are assumed to be necessary by default.

3. KEEP RISK ASSESSMENTS UPDATED AND AVAILABLE

- Managers/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that Risk Assessments are regularly reviewed and for updating the names of those covered by them.
- Risk Assessments should be available for examination at all times, and are best kept in a laboratory folder.

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