



## Working with Genetically Modified Organisms Policy

### SCOPE

This Policy applies to work referred to as “contained use” with genetically modified organisms (GMOs) at the University.

Under the Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2014 students (including visiting students) are considered to be employees of the educational establishment in which they are studying and undertaking contained use.

### LEGISLATION

The Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002

The Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2014

[The Genetically Modified Organisms \(Contained Use\) Regulations 2014 HSE Guidance L29](#)

[The SACGM Compendium of guidance](#)

### DEFINITIONS

**Genetic Modification** means any alteration of the genetic material of an organism (i.e. DNA or RNA), which does not occur naturally (by mating or recombination) and which has been achieved through one of the techniques set out in Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the regulations.

**Organism:** This term covers all organisms, including multicellular organisms, such as animals, plants, insects, nematodes, i.e. larger GMOs, as well as micro-organisms (including those made synthetically).

**Contained Use** means any activity involving GMOs where barriers are used to limit contact with and protect humans and the environment. Barriers used must provide a high level of safety for humans and the environment. These barriers can be physical, chemical or biological.

**SACGM:** Scientific Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification is a non-statutory committee that provides technical and scientific advice to the competent authorities including the HSE.

## POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Bath is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work place and to protect its employees, students, contractors and visitors from exposure to harm due to research carried out with genetically modified organisms.

The University will aim to achieve this by ensuring that the risks to human health and the environment arising from the contained use are reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable.

The University will also ensure that expert advice on risk assessments is obtained by establishing a Genetic Modification Safety Committee (GMSC).

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**The Vice-Chancellor (VC)** has the overall day to day responsibility for health and safety matters at the University. The VC delegates responsibility for undertaking aspects of these duties through line management and identified roles.

The following people are identified as having responsibilities (in addition to any other responsibilities under other health and safety policy) for the management of hazardous substances in those areas, and for those relevant persons, that fall under their control:

**Heads of all Departments** are responsible for ensuring that:

All employees are aware of, and adhere to, University policy, procedures and safe systems of work in order to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation relating to the use of genetically modified organisms as part of their work.

Ensuring that all class 2 and above contained uses are notified to the GMSC and competent authority (HSE) before the contained use can begin.

**Line Managers** are responsible for:

Carrying out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks and obtaining competent advice from the University GMSC on that assessment before any contained use can begin.

Identifying the most appropriate containment measures to ensure the risks are adequately controlled and ensuring they are in place before the contained use can start.

Correctly classifying the contained use into one of four risk classes based on the highest containment level selected.

Ensuring that all workers are adequately informed, instructed, trained and supervised to work with genetically modified organisms.

**University Safety, Health and Employee Wellbeing (SHEW)** are responsible for:

Providing guidance and standards to enable the University to meet its duties under the regulations and this policy to be adequately implemented.

**Employees** are required to:

Register with the Genetic Modification Safety Committee to carry out work with genetically modified organisms.

Read and sign onto relevant risk assessments and comply with the required control measures, such as wearing suitable lab coats, conducting work in a safety cabinet, transporting GMOs in secure containers and observing waste disposal protocols.

#### MONITORING

**University Health and Safety Committee** will be responsible for:

Monitoring and reviewing this policy. Reviews to be carried out every two years from the date of approval.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

[Working-with-genetically-modified-organisms-policy](#)

[GM wiki pages](#) (registered users only)