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| <b>Policy No.</b><br>SR4  |
| <b>Approving Jurisdiction:</b><br>President   |
| <b>Administrative Responsibility:</b><br>Vice President Finance &<br>Administration/Associate Vice President<br>Human Resource Services |
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## Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) Policy

Kwantlen Polytechnic University will establish and maintain systematic practices and procedures that will ensure the requirements of WHMIS are followed for the benefit of all employees and students.

### RATIONALE

The Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS) is a nation-wide system to provide information on hazardous materials used in the workplace. WHMIS recognizes the interests of the workers, employers, suppliers, and regulators, balancing the workers right to know with the industry's right to protect confidential business information.

WHMIS is essentially an occupational health and safety initiative; therefore, it requires implementation at the workplace by means of a provincial law. However, since it also involves the sale and import of hazardous materials, it enters into the federal legislative domain as well. Thus the enactment of WHMIS into law was accomplished by the passage of complimentary federal and provincial legislation which became effective 31 October, 1988.

Exposure to hazardous material can cause or contribute to a variety of health effects such as irritation, burns, sensitization, heart ailments, kidney and lung damage and cancer. Some materials may also be safety hazards that can contribute to fires, explosions and other accidents if improperly stored or handled.

WHMIS is a system of information delivery with three key elements:

- Labels on hazardous materials and their containers which alert employees and workers to the dangers of products and basic safety precautions;
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) - technical bulletins which provide detailed hazard and precautionary information on the product; and
- Worker Education programs which provide instruction on hazards and training in work procedures.

## **PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

The procedures which follow are divided into three parts. First, the requirements of the three WHMIS elements are discussed; second, specific designated responsibilities are outlined; and third, the requirement for a yearly program review and report is formalized.

### **PART A: MATERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **1. Element 1: Labels**

A WHMIS label is a source of information on a controlled product designed to alert employers, workers and students to the hazards of the product and the precautions to be taken with it. There are two types of labels detailed under WHMIS legislation: the supplier label and the workplace label. The supplier, as a condition of sale, must label the product. On the other hand, the employer must label the product if it is transferred to another container for storage. In addition, the product must be identified with a label in an appropriate manner when it is used in a production process. Kwantlen Polytechnic University will use the appropriate labels. These labels may be ordered through the Purchasing Department.

#### **2. Element 2: Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)**

MSDS is a technical document which provides detailed information on a controlled product. A controlled product is any material or substance specified by the regulations made pursuant to paragraph 15 (i) (a) of the Hazardous Products Act. It is the responsibility of the supplier to provide MSDS. It is the responsibility of the employee (designated) to ask for the sheets, keep the MSDS in an orderly manner and to provide MSDS on demand of WCB, the employee/student and the First Aid Attendant.

It is the intent of the University to eventually place the required WHMIS information in a computerized data base and have the information available (terminal) at several key University locations. Until this is implemented the University will keep the essential MSDS at two levels of availability. The first (BASIC WHMIS STATION) will be at the program/work site level. The second will be maintained by the Campus Supervisor (CAMPUS WHMIS STATION). The latter will be a collection of MSDS from all the campus basic WHMIS stations.

#### **3. Element 3: Training/Education**

Worker/student education on controlled products must be provided as an essential part of the WHMIS information delivery system. Education includes all activities which provide knowledge and skills to people so that they can work safely with controlled products in the workplace. It is the responsibility of Kwantlen Polytechnic University to educate and train employees and students. The training program outcome must ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that the employee/student can apply the information as needed to protect health and safety. As a minimum, the training program must cover:

- education in the content required on, and the purpose and significance of information disclosed on, labels and material safety data sheets;
- education in the use of means of identification such as colour, number of letter codes, or other means when used with transfer or reaction systems and wastes;

- training in procedures for the safe storage, handling, use and disposal of controlled products;
- training in procedures to be followed in case of an emergency involving a controlled product; and
- training in procedures to be followed when fugitive emissions are present.

## **PART B: SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following paragraphs briefly detail the specific responsibilities of individuals within the University community:

### **1. Administrative Supervisors**

Administrative Supervisors are responsible for:

- monitoring WHMIS program/systems within their sphere of responsibility
- determining departmental training requirements
- effecting necessary departmental follow-up after University and WCB inspections
- ensuring adequate records are kept of all required MSDS records at the Basic
- WHMIS Station and forwarding duplicate copies to the appropriate Campus Supervisor
- ensuring program/course curriculum, where applicable, contains an adequate amount of education and training to protect the health and safety of students

### **2. Personnel Officer**

Personnel Officer is responsible for:

- providing an adequate University wide WHMIS training and retraining program for employees
- co-ordinating the annual University WHMIS report

### **3. Purchasing Manager**

Purchasing Manager is responsible for:

- reviewing all purchase orders, as necessary, to ensure that MSDS are
- requested from suppliers
- forwarding MSDS, where applicable, to appropriate employees as necessary
- distributing support materials as necessary
- supplying University standardized WHMIS Workplace labels and blank MSDS forms to all University departments

#### **4. Director of Facilities**

Director of Facilities is responsible for:

- ensuring WHMIS Regulations are consistently applied and maintained on all campuses
- providing arrangements for the disposal of controlled products that are redundant
- ensuring adequate records are kept of all WHMIS material for his sphere of responsibility
- determining departmental training requirements

#### **5. Campus Supervisor**

Campus Supervisors are responsible for:

- maintaining the MSDS records for their assigned campuses (CAMPUS WHMIS STATION)
- monitoring WHMIS compliance on campus
- periodic/regular safety inspections of all shops, laboratories and storerooms and reporting of infractions to the safety committee and the responsible administrator
- ensuring that the First Aid Attendants are trained and knowledgeable of WHMIS

#### **6. Employees**

Employees are responsible for:

- observance of the University WHMIS program
- controlling and having available MSDS for their designated area of concern (BASIC WHMIS STATION)
- annotating purchase requisitions in order to ensure suppliers provide MSDS
- labeling all controlled products in their area with workplace labels
- where applicable, adding the necessary information to the curriculum to ensure the health and safety of all participants

#### **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:**

As basically detailed in the regulations, all students and employees have several roles in the WHMIS process namely, to:

- Receive and learn information contained in the University program;
- Inform the University of inadequate information or unsafe practice;
- Work with the University to develop and maintain an effective and efficient WHMIS program.

## **PART C: THE ANNUAL REPORT**

As noted in the WCB Manual, WHMIS Core Material - A resource Manual for the Application and Implementation of WHMIS, there is a need of an annual review and report on the University's WHMIS program. To this end, the University Safety and Health Committee will submit an annual report to the University President.