

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is defined as 'all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which is intended to be worn by persons at work and which protects them against one or more risks to their health and safety' and includes safety helmets, eye protection, gloves, high visibility clothing, safety footwear, safety harnesses and respirators. The regulations also apply to sports equipment when used by instructors such as life jackets for canoeing and helmets for climbing.

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations lay down a number of requirements in relation to personal protective equipment at work and require employers to consider the following:

1. **Provision and Use of PPE** - The main requirement of the regulations is for employers to supply PPE wherever there are risks to the health and safety of employees, which cannot be adequately controlled in other ways. Those members of staff who purchase PPE must understand the performance criteria, which the PPE must meet, in order to be effective. It must always be remembered that the effectiveness of PPE can easily be compromised eg by not being worn or by being worn incorrectly, therefore, PPE should only be used where no other precautions can effectively reduce the risk of injury.
2. **Compatibility of PPE** - If more than one item of PPE must be worn to give protection against different hazards, then it must be ensured that both items when used together will adequately control the risk eg where ear protection and head protection is required together both items must fit to ensure protection of the individual.
3. **Assessment of PPE** - The need for PPE should be identified in general workplace assessment records. In order to ensure that the right type of PPE is chosen the different hazards in the workplace need to be considered. This will enable an assessment to be made of which types of PPE are suitable to protect against the hazard and job to be done.

The following factors should be considered when assessing the suitability of PPE:

- (a) Is it appropriate for the risks involved and the conditions at the place where exposure will occur? eg eye protection designed to protect against mists or droplets may not protect against flying particles.
- (b) Does it prevent or control the risk without increasing the overall level of risk?
- (c) Can it be adjusted to fit the individual wearing it correctly?
- (d) Has the state of health of those required to wear it been taken into account?
- (e) Will wearing the PPE affect the needs of the job or place demands on the wearer? For example will it require increased physical effort or affect communications or visibility?

The form at the end of this section provides a format for recording assessments of PPE, as with other assessments they should be reviewed if there is a significant change in the matters to which they relate or there is some other reason to suspect they are no longer valid.

4. **Maintenance of PPE** - In order for PPE to remain effective it is necessary for it to be kept clean and in good repair, manufacturers' maintenance schedules and recommendations for replacement should be observed. With the simplest equipment the trained wearer can carry out maintenance but in some cases where more intricate repairs are necessary this should be carried out by specialist personnel or the manufacturer.
  
5. **Accommodation for PPE** - It is necessary to ensure that accommodation is provided for PPE so that it can be safely stored and does not become contaminated, lost or damaged by factors such as damp, sunlight or harmful substances. Storage arrangements will vary from pegs for waterproof clothing to lockers for overalls or respirators.
  
6. **Information, Instruction and Training** - Employers must make sure that the users of PPE are aware of the following:
  - (a) Why the PPE is needed and what risks are present.
  - (b) The operation and limitations of PPE.
  - (c) Repair, replacement and maintenance.
  - (d) How to recognise defects and the arrangements for reporting loss or defects

Training may vary in length and complexity depending on the risks to the operators health, for example a day's training would be required for a chainsaw operator, whereas an information session may only be required for Home Care staff provided with overalls and gloves.

7. **Use of PPE** - Employers must take steps to ensure that employees use the PPE they provide. Employees are obliged to make full and proper use of PPE and report any loss or defect.

In practice the Regulations do not apply to ear protection and some other types of PPE where they are covered by other specific legislation, ie Noise at Work Regulations 1989. However, the HSE consider that the advice contained in the PPE Regulations should be followed as the general principles of selecting and maintaining suitable PPE and training employees in its use are common to all Regulations.

# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) ASSESSMENT RECORD HS2.26

Task:

**HEAD AND NECK**

**Hazards:**

.....  
 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

.....  
 .....

**WHOLE BODY**

**Hazards:**

.....  
 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

.....  
 .....

**HANDS AND ARMS**

**Hazards:**

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 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

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 .....

1. Where PPE is required, state the standard (CE or BS) that the equipment meets.

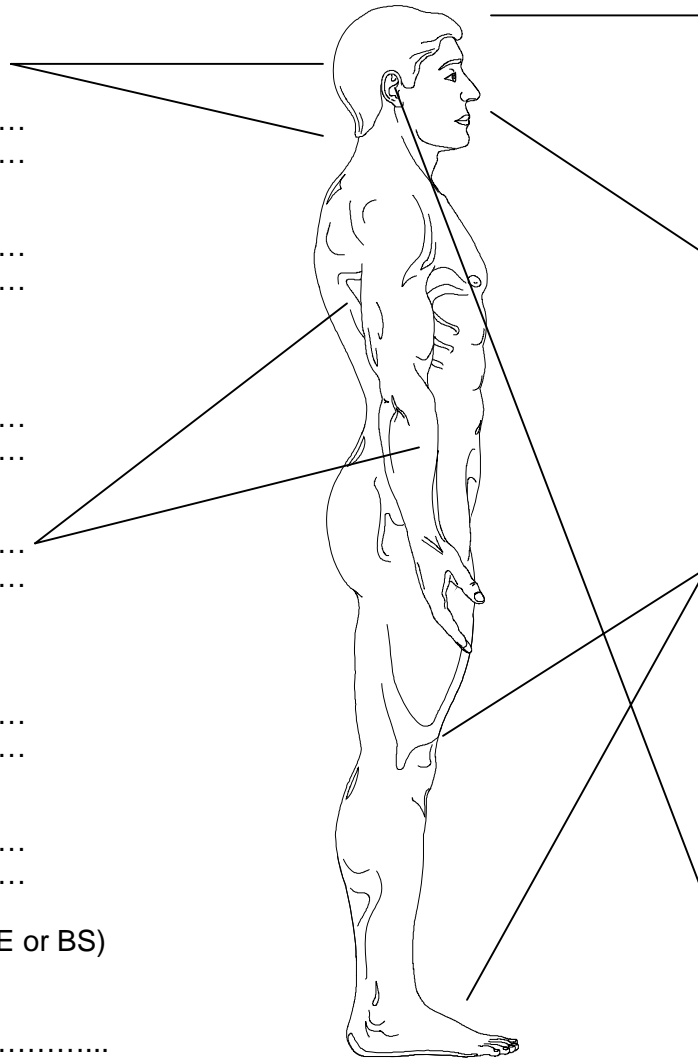
.....

2. State what training/information is required or PPE user.

.....

Signed: .....

Name: ..... Date: .....



**EYES**

**Hazards:**

.....  
 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

.....  
 .....

**BREATHING**

**Hazards:**

.....  
 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

.....  
 .....

**FEET AND LEGS**

**Hazards:**

.....  
 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

.....  
 .....

**HEARING**

**Hazards:**

.....  
 .....

**Choice of PPE:**

.....  
 .....

# PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

## HEAD AND NECK

**Hazards:** Impact from falling/flying objects, Risk of bumping head, hair entanglement, heat loss.

**Choice of PPE:** Helmets, bump caps, hats, caps, skull caps, capes/coats with hoods.

## WHOLE BODY

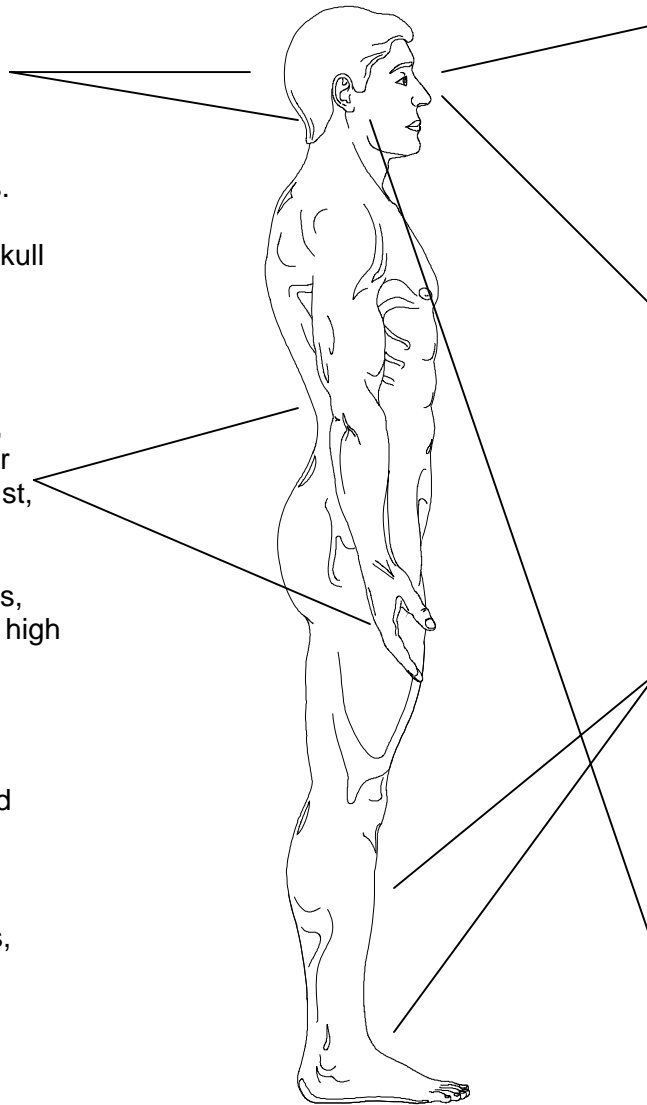
**Hazards:** Temperature extremes, adverse weather, chemical/metal splash, spray from pressure leaks or spray guns, impact or penetration, contaminated dust, excessive wear or entanglement or not being seen.

**Choice of PPE:** Conventional or disposable overalls, boiler suits, specialist PPE, eg. Chain-mail, aprons, high visibility clothing.

## HANDS AND ARMS

**Hazards:** Abrasion, temperature extremes, cuts and punctures, impact, chemicals, electric shock, skin infection, disease/contamination, vibration.

**Choice of PPE:** Gloves, gauntlets, mitts, wrist cuffs, armllets.



## EYES

**Hazards:** Chemical/metal splash, dust projectiles, gas and vapours, radiation.

**Choice of PPE:** Spectacles, goggles, face screens.

## BREATHING

**Hazards:** Dust, vapours, gases, fumes, oxygen, deficient atmospheres.

**Choice of PPE:** Disposable filtering, face piece or respirator, half/full face respirators, air fed helmets, breathing apparatus.

## FEET AND LEGS

**Hazards:** Wet, slipping, electrostatic build-up, cuts and punctures, falling objects, metal and chemical splash, abrasion.

**Choice of PPE:** Safety boots and shoes with steel toe caps and midsole protection, gaiters, leggings and spats.

## HEARING

**Hazards:** High noise levels

**Choice of PPE:** Earplugs, earmuffs.