
Department of Physics and Astronomy, University College, London.

**Courses PHASG201 and PHAS3400:
Session 2008/2009**

**Coordinator: Dr Mark Ellerby
Room F1 (Basement), Physics Building
e-mail: mark.ellerby@ucl.ac.uk**

Safety Advice to Supervisors for Third and Fourth Year Research Projects

Final Year project work may involve students in exposure to some hazard or potential hazard. The purpose of the present note is not to prescribe in detail the safety precautions to be adopted, but rather to make clear the framework within which questions of safety are to be approached.

The following points should be noted:

- i. Primary responsibility for the safety of a student engaged in project work devolves upon the project supervisor, who must take all reasonably practical steps to ensure that the execution of the project does not expose the student to undue hazard.
- ii. Projects should not be undertaken which expose students to the possibility of serious injury. Examples which illustrate the latter include the requirement to work with exposed high voltages, known carcinogenic chemicals, or the exposed beams of Class IIIB and above lasers.
- iii. It is the duty of a supervisor to make the student aware at the inception of the project the requirements of good practice in matters of safety. Good practice is aimed at eliminating avoidable hazards.
- iv. Supervisors must vet projects at the design stage, and thereafter follow them with sufficient attention to ensure that hazardous elements are not built in to apparatus.
- v. The degree of supervision required to fulfil (iv) does not imply that students may only undertake project work in the presence of their supervisors, rather that supervision should be frequent enough to ensure that good practice is always adhered to.
- vi. Students should not be allowed, or required, to undertake research work in an area where they will be working without the presence of a responsible person. Besides the supervisor, the latter can be a member of the academic staff or an experienced technician.
- vii. Project work may be undertaken in a research laboratory. Where this is the case, the supervisor must make the Group Safety Officer responsible for that laboratory aware of the nature of the project, and obtain his/her consent for the research to take place.