

General safety instructions

Important: This document is meant for employees that will not work within a lab and provides a limited overview of the most important safety instructions and information that the employee at least needs to know in order to be able to work safely within the Faculty of Science. This document is not meant as a replacement for safety instructions given by the safety and health department (AMD). Additional information and/or (safety-)training might be needed for an employee to be able to perform their job safely. The Faculty of Science also has its own safety regulations that the employee needs to follow. Read this [document](#)!

1. Safety and health department and general safety rules

1.1 Safety and health department (AMD)

The employees of the AMD are safety officers with expertise and experience in both research and safety. The AMD focusses on 3 main topics:

- a) Prevention: providing instructions, performing inspections and risk assessments and give advice about safety issues.
- b) To check for compliance with legislation and permits.
- c) Calamity control: setting up, training and maintaining the emergency response team, perform incident investigations and evacuation drills.

The AMD can help you with questions regarding safety and health issues, and give advice on how you can deal with these issues or what you might need to deal with these issues. The AMD is not responsible for your safety. The AMD can not make you work safe, or make your work safe.

Safety is a shared responsibility of you (employee) and your supervisor (employer)

Together you ensure that the working environment is safe and that the work is carried out safely. The AMD can support this by advising on how you can achieve this together.

A lot of information concerning safety, can be found on the AMD [website](#). Under the tab 'Science', several standard operating procedures (SOPs) can be found for different topics, which can be opened and read. Next to that, information concerning a safe work environment, emergency response officers, incidents and dangerous situations, working with hazardous substances and the risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E) can also be found here.

At the AMD [website](#) contact information from all safety officers can also be found. The AMD is located in the faculty office, room no: 1.06, 1.07, 1.08. Don't hesitate to visit us for question related to health and safety issues or send an email to AMD@science.leidenuniv.nl. We are happy to help you!

For more information about how safety and health is organized within the Faculty of Science click [here](#).

1.2 Reporting incidents and dangerous situations

Incidents is a collective name for accidents and near-misses, which are often preceded by dangerous situations. The example below, explains the difference between the 3 terms:

Dangerous situation: A (loose) wire is present on the floor in a room where many people are present (there is a chance that someone might trip over the wire, but this has not happened yet).

Near-miss: A person trips over the wire, but is not injured and thus did not suffer any damage to his/her health.

Accident: A person trips over the wire and is injured, suffering damage to her/his health for which medical treatment (by a doctor / hospital) is possibly needed.

All these incidents (accidents and near-misses) and dangerous situations need to be reported to:

- a) Prevent dangerous situations from becoming an accident.
- b) Learn from the situation and prevent repetition.

The goal is not to blame people. On the contrary, by reporting incidents you help the Faculty of Science in creating a safer work environment!

Reporting incident and dangerous situations can be done using the [incident report form](#) or by sending an email to the [AMD](#). More information can be found on the [website](#).

1.3 Other notifications

For technical malfunctions/problems a notification can be made using the [report malfunction](#) button on the employee website of the university (you will need to log in first).

It might also be wise to report personal conditions, like pregnancy, heart diseases, diabetes, use of medicine, visual impairments etc. to your supervisor, a [counsellor](#), the [company doctor](#) and/or the AMD. These conditions might form a risk during your work (in example: not being able to see the difference between a green (= safe) and red (= unsafe) light due to color blindness). Additionally, this information can be important for the emergency response team to know, as they will be able to more adequately respond in case of an accident or emergency.

1.4 Emergency situations and evacuation

The alarm number within every building of the Faculty of Science is **4444**. Don't call 112! The reception will then not be notified and they are the ones that will have the first contact with the emergency services and need to forward them correctly.

The alarm number (**4444**) can be called, using a fixed phone that is present in every workplace, in case of emergency or with accidents. On every fixed phone the emergency number is given (see picture below). The [emergency response team](#) will be activated and, if needed, external emergency services will also be notified.

In case of a fire, the fire alarm (see picture below) can be pressed. Do not confuse this with the emergency release of emergency doors (see picture below), the emergency release can be used to open doors in emergency situations, but is not an alarm.



Fixed phone with alarm number (yellow sticker)



Fire alarm (red)



Emergency release (green)

In every building several repressive means are present, like fire extinguishers, emergency showers, eye wash, first aid kits and the AED (see pictures below), which are indicated with several safety signs. Make sure that you know the location of these repressive means and how to use them! Also know where an AED is present, the emergency response team can ask you to get one in case of an accident.



Fire hose and map with emergency routes and exits

Fire extinguisher and fire alarm

Eye wash

Emergency shower

Emergency shower

AED

In case of evacuation the slow whoop alarm will go off. When hearing this, you need to leave your workplace as soon as possible. Take the shortest route out of the building (don't use the elevators!) and go to the nearest assembly point (see picture below). The escape route is signposted, however it is important that you have explored this route before and know where the nearest emergency exit and assembly point is. The green/white signs with the fleeing person (see picture below) and arrow in the flight direction indicate the escape route. Most escape routes end at an emergency exit to the outside. In case of automatic fire detection, doors are automatically released. In case the door is not opened automatically (i.e. due to a manually triggered evacuation signal), the green emergency release box can be pressed to open the door. Stay at the assembly point until it is indicated that you can leave. Don't leave earlier!



Emergency exit sign



Assembly point

Additionally, it is important that you follow the instructions of the emergency response officer, even when they indicate that evacuation is needed while no slow whoop signal is heard or in case you have to go to a different assembly point.

For more information about calamities and evacuation click [here](#).

1.5 Working hours and other information

Working after office hours (between 19:00 – 08:00 and during the weekend) is only allowed if it is really necessary for the continuation of the work process. Only low risk tasks may be performed. Working alone is prohibited, make clear arrangements with your supervisor. Best is to not work after office hours. Primary reason is that there is no emergency response team present after office hours, that can assist in case of incidents or emergencies.

Next to that, the following rules apply:

- For students it is forbidden to work after office hours.
- If working after office hours, you need to register your presence.
- You need to have permission from the institute manager.
- You need to make a risk analysis.

Despite the fact that no work is performed on the lab, it may very well be that you may come into contact with the lab environment or that your workplace is close to a lab. For that reason, it is important that you know what dangers you can encounter and when you may or may not enter a room/lab. Ask your supervisor for information.

2. Complaints of arm, neck and shoulders (CANS)

2.1 Background, causes and consequences

Complaints of arm, neck and shoulders (previously named repetitive strain injury (RSI)) is a very underestimated risk and is in the top 3 of occupational health diseases. CANS is the result of muscle overload due to repetitive movements or a static posture. Especially screen work is a risk factor. Next to that, working times (duration), work pressure (stress), workplace (wrong furniture/means), work methods (i.e. small letters on the screen resulting in leaning forward to be able to see) and the organization of work (i.e. to little variation) can indirectly contribute to CANS.

Symptoms can be local cramps and tiredness, pain, a tingling sensation, loss of power and control, stiffness and dysfunction and restriction of muscles.

Causes and symptoms can eventually lead to damage to nerves, overload of muscles and tendons (loss of power and strength, dysfunction), headaches, dizziness and reduced concentration.

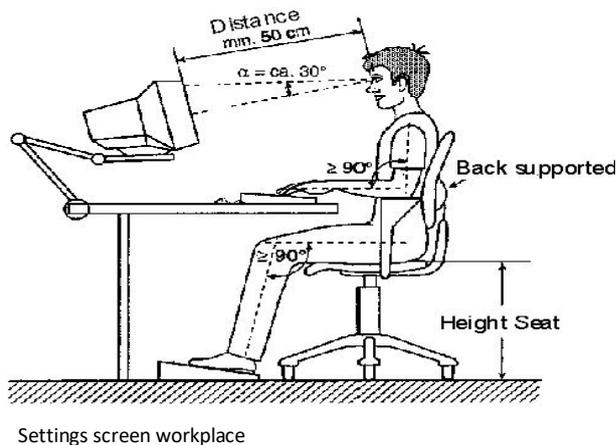
2.2 Prevention of complaints of arm, neck and shoulders

To prevent CANS it is very important to keep moving. Take regular (mini) breaks, preferably a 5 minutes break every half an hour. During breaks make sure you move around enough. This can be achieved by getting coffee/tea at a coffee machine on a different floor or at the end of the hallway, visit colleagues instead of calling them or take a walk during lunch. It is a scientific fact that people who take regular walks are more healthier and productive! Additionally, it is important to loosen up your muscles, so stretch your arm, neck and shoulders regularly.

Furthermore, ensure variety in work and possibly make use of a sit-stand table (pay attention: standing is also a form of static load, movement is always better).

Also, don't forget your eyes! Regularly look away from your screen for a minute (preferably out of the window / a point in the distance). In general, it is wise to keep yourself fit (the university has its own [healthy university](#)). A healthy and fit body can handle more and restores faster!

For screen work it is important to set your chair, desk and screen in the right way (see picture below). In the procedure '[prevention of CANS](#)', additional information is given about CANS and describes how you can set up your screen workplace (or check the [PDF 'set up workplace EN/NL'](#)). Laptops should not be used more than 2 hours a day (without use of a separate screen, keyboard and mouse). Preferably, do use a separate screen, keyboard and mouse.



If you encounter problems with settings your screen workplace correctly, contact the [AMD](#). In case you already have complaints, visit the [company doctor](#).

For more information:

[Video how to set up your workplace](#)

[CANS test](#) – tool to test if your workplace is set correctly and to see if you are at risk for CANS.

[Arbocatalog VSNU](#) – CANS – see GP5 and GP8 for more information concerning CANS.

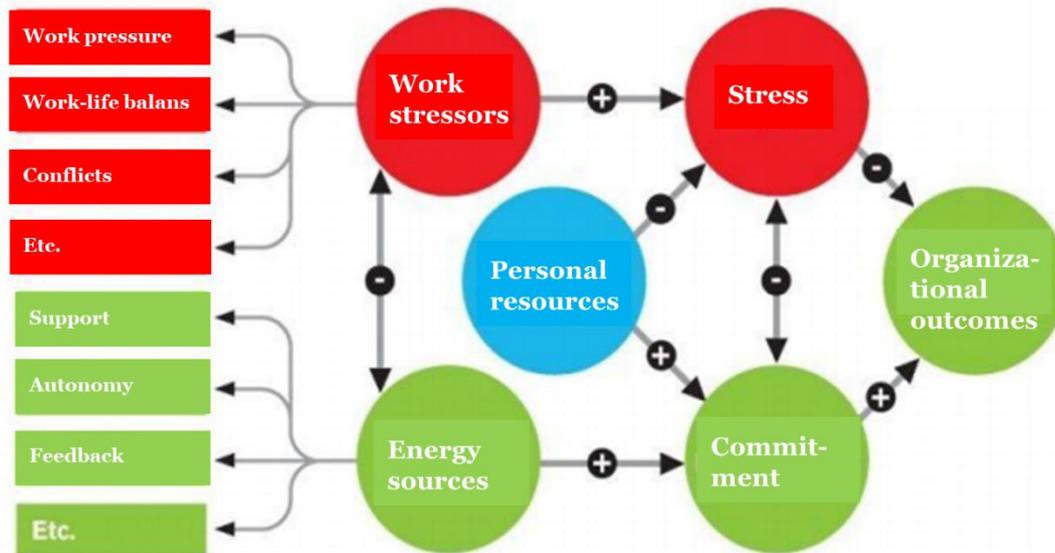
3. Psychosocial workload

3.1 Background, causes and consequences

Psychosocial workload contains all factors in your work situation that causes stress. Stress can consist of physical, psychosocial and social complaints (e.g. burn-out or depression). Psychosocial workload has a negative impact on work conditions, work performance, job satisfaction and work ambience and increases sick leave. There are two forms of psychosocial workload, namely a too high workload and unwanted behavior.

When workload is too high, there is a imbalance between workload and personal capacities resulting in work related stress. In other words, the amount of work and time available transcends the capacities of the person. Factors that can contribute to that are: not getting enough support, having to little autonomy, not being able to get enough rest, high job demands, conflicts, time pressure, high work rate and personal factors (e.g. a sick family member). In the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R) (see figure on the next page), an overview is given.

This model is based on 4 components: Work stressors, Energy sources, Personal resources (mental resilience) and Consequences of work (organizational outcomes). Energy sources can prevent the unwanted effects (e.g. sick leave, exhaustion and burn-out) of too much work stressors. High job demands combined with a lack of energy sources can lead to stress-related complaints. To keep the balance it is important to have enough energy sources available to prevent work stress. To restore the balance it is more effective to increase energy sources, instead of reducing work stressors.



Job demands-resources model: Having enough energy sources to reduce work stressors is important to keep the balance, increase commitment and create a positive effect on the organization.

Energy sources are factors that help to reduce work stress, achieve work related goals, stimulate personal growth and development and lead to commitment. Examples are: sufficient autonomy, getting enough (social) support, a good team spirit, receiving feedback from colleagues and supervisor, participating in the decision making process, possibilities to improve and develop and being able to use a variety of skills.

Personal resources are aspects of a person that can be developed and that can help in dealing with stressful situations, for example: self-confidence, personal effectiveness and optimism.

Unwanted behaviors can be:

- Aggression/violence: Orally or physically being harassed, threatened or attacked.
- Discrimination: Unequal treatment or deprivation or exclusion of people based on personal characteristics (race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, nationality, marital status, political preferences, disability/chronic illness, contract or working hours).
- (sexual)intimidation: Sexual intimidation at work is any form of sexual approach, requests for sexual favors or other sexual oriented verbal, non-verbal or physical behavior in the work environment that are experienced as unwanted.
- Bullying: Repetitive unwanted negative behavior against which a person cannot defend him/herself.

Social safety is important within the Faculty of Science, unwanted behavior is not tolerated!

3.2 What to do in case of psychosocial workload?

If you have to deal with psychosocial workload (either too high workload or unwanted behavior), it is important that you seek help and talk about it. Talk to your supervisor, or if that is not an option, talk to a [counsellor](#) or the [company doctor](#). Conversations with a counsellor or the company doctor are always confidential and you need no permission, you can visit these people at all times!

4. Dutch occupational safety and health law

4.1 Employer's obligations - Risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E)

The employer is legally obliged to ensure the safety and health of the employees with regard to all aspects related to work and to this end pursue a policy that is aimed at the best possible work conditions ([Dutch occupational safety and health law, article 3](#)).

To be able to do that, the employer needs to record, in writing, all risk that the work entails for the employees in a risk assessment and evaluation (RI&E). This RI&E should include a description of all hazards and risk mitigating-measures and risks for special categories of workers (e.g. pregnant woman). Also, the employer needs to make sure that every employee can take notice of this RI&E ([Dutch occupational safety and health law, article 5](#)).

Every work environment contains risks, as an employee you need to be aware of these risks. For this it is wise to ask your supervisor about the risks in your work environment and view the RI&E of your institute. It is important that you know what you are doing and in what kind of environment you are working, in other words:

Know the risks of your work, know how to deal with them and also know what to do if things go wrong!

4.2 Employee obligations

As an employee you also have certain obligations ([Dutch occupational safety and health law, article 11](#)), these, among others, include:

- Follow and apply instructions and education.
- Report incidents and dangerous situations.
- Use materials, work equipment and hazardous chemicals in a safe responsible way.
- Use personal protective means and use them in the right way

4.3 Work interruption

As an employee you have the legal right to interrupt your work when there is a threat of serious danger ([Dutch occupational safety and health law, article 29](#)). In this situation, you may not be disadvantaged by your employer. Report these situations immediately to your supervisor and the AMD.

Dutch occupational safety and health law, article 29:

“An employee is authorized to interrupt the work and to continue the interruption if, in his/her reasonable judgement, there is a serious danger to persons and in reasonable judgment the threat of danger is so imminent that a supervisor cannot act in time. For the duration of the interruption, the employee retains his entitlement to his/her wage. The employee may not be disadvantaged as a result of the work interruption in his/her position in the company or in the institution.”