



Purchase and Use of Laser Pointers

 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN	Purchase and Use of Laser Pointers	Document No.	HS-GN-029
		Date	10.08.23
		Pages	2 of 4
		Revision	Rev 1

Revision Record

Issue	Date	Reason for Review
Rev 1	August 2023	Due for review & transferred onto new document template

 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN	Purchase and Use of Laser Pointers	Document No.	HS-GN-029
		Date	10.08.23
		Pages	3 of 4
		Revision	Rev 1

Contents

1.0	Purpose of the Guidance	4
2.0	Scope of Guidance	4
3.0	Guidance	4

Document No.	HS-GN-029
Date	10.08.23
Pages	4 of 4
Revision	Rev 1

1.0 Purpose of the Guidance

This guidance is to provide information on the Class of laser pointers that should be used for teaching purposes.

2.0 Scope of Guidance

This guidance covers staff, students and visitors who undertake presentations to others and use laser pointers.

3.0 Guidance

Laser pointers used in the University should be of Class 1 or Class 2 as defined in the British Standard for laser safety. Pointers of a Class higher than Class 2 should not be used unless advice on their use has been sought from the University's Radiation Protection Advisers.

The misuse of laser pointers (sometimes referred to as laser pens) reported in the press has generated public concern over the safety of these devices. The British Standard for laser safety sets out seven Classes of laser, these are Class 1, Class 1C, Class 1M, Class 2, Class 2M, Class 3R, Class 3B and Class 4. The higher the Class number, the greater the power of the laser and the hazard posed by the laser.

The British Standard provides advice on the use of lasers for demonstrations, displays and exhibition and states that only Class 1 or Class 2 devices should be used in unsupervised areas. Laser pointers used by, for example, professional lecturers in the workplace are considered to fall under this category.

The Radiation Protection Division of Public Health England (PHE) has endorsed this advice and considers that Class 1 or Class 2 laser pointers should be adequate for most teaching applications.

Schools/Support Services should purchase laser pointers only from reputable suppliers in the UK who will sell laser pointers only of Class 1 or Class 2. The pointers should be marked clearly with the Class assigned under the British Standard. Laser pointers should not be purchased overseas where higher powered lasers are often freely available. Schools/Support Services should also review existing laser pointers which are in use to confirm that they are Class 1 or Class 2 and are marked accordingly.

Anyone who wishes to use a laser pointer of a Class higher than Class 2 should first seek advice from the University's Radiation Service or the University Safety Adviser.