Memo

To	Safety Co-ordinators (for onward transmission to all schools & administrative directorates, and AV staff)
From	Dr Melanie Taylor, University Safety Advisor
Date	17th March 2005
Reference	Safety Circular 6/2005

Interactive white boards

Interactive white boards and computer projectors are being used increasingly as visual aids for teaching and presentations. They allow the group facilitator to deliver lectures interactively using a variety of methods, including video clips, use of the internet, interactive presentations, colour visuals and traditional blackboard skills.   Additionally, they allow for manipulation of text, objects, and calculations by students as well as the facilitator.

It is important that users are aware of the health and safety implications of using projection equipment.   All projectors, including slide projectors and overhead projectors, if misused, have the potential to cause eye injury. Interactive white boards may present a higher risk, as presenters tend to stand in front of the beam.   Recent advice from the Health & Safety Executive can be viewed at http://www.hse.gov.uk/radiation/nonionising/whiteboards.htm

Some simple guidelines should be followed:

- ✓ Staring directly into the projector beam should be avoided at all times.

- ✓ The presenter should minimize the time spent facing into or towards the beam. Users should try to keep their backs to the beam as much as possible. In this regard, the use of a stick or laser pointer (not exceeding Class 2) to avoid the need for the user to enter the beam is recommended.

- ✓ Students should be adequately supervised when they are asked to point out something on the screen.

It is generally accepted that a maximum of 1500 ANSI lumens is adequate for projection equipment in most environments. In very bright ambient lighting conditions, it is advised that window blinds are used rather than increasing the brightness of the projector.

When setting up this equipment, try to ensure that projectors are located out of the sight line from the screen to the audience; this ensures that, when presenters look at the audience, they do not also have to stare at the projector lamp. The best way to achieve this is by ceiling-mounting rather than floor— or table-mounting the projector.

When purchasing or using projectors for purposes where there is likely to be a person standing in front of the beam, consideration should be given to the use of a method of brightness reduction,

such as a neutral density filter or brightness adjustment facility. These modifications can be removed or adjusted for other purposes such as cinema projections, where there is not an intention that someone will stand in front of the beam, so allowing the projector to be used to its full image quality potential.

It is recommended that health and safety notices are posted adjacent to interactive whiteboards, reminding people of the guidelines above.

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