

1. Purpose and Objectives

This procedure provides information on the generation, collection, storage and disposal of clinical waste to ensure:

- That infectious waste is segregated from other waste streams;
- That the collection, storage and disposal of clinical waste is conducted in an environmentally sound manner;
- Compliance with environmental and workplace health and safety legislative requirements in relation to the disposal of clinical wastes; and
- That risks to health, safety and the environment are minimised.
- Minimise the cost of disposal of Clinical and Related Wastes.

This procedure supplements the University's [Environmental Management Policy](#) and should be read in conjunction with the University's [Waste Management Program](#).

2. Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Clinical Waste - Refers to any samples (eg. Tissue, venom, blood, serum, and swabs) that have been in contact with, or used in experiments with a pathological substance and includes pathological waste.

Clinically Contaminated Wastes - Refers to any material in direct contact with clinical wastes, or in such a manner as to have come into contact with and/or been contaminated with clinical wastes, and is to be disposed of.

Incompatible Clinical Wastes – Refers to any clinical waste, that is not suitable for this stream, such as very large items, metals (except sharps), or other such items that are not suitable for shredding.

Pathological Waste - Refers to waste of a viral, infectious or contaminated nature. Pathological substances are substances that act as a source, host or carrier of disease. This includes tissue samples, blood samples, faeces, and contaminated equipment such as containers, bags or surgical equipment.

Perceived Clinical Waste - Is any waste that is typical of a clinical environment and may be confused by waste handlers as being of a clinical nature (e.g. syringes, rubber gloves, face masks, laboratory coats, etc.)

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Pharmaceuticals -Refers to drugs used for the prevention, diagnosis, care or alleviation of a disease, ailment, injury or defect in human or animal.

Sharps - Refers to objects or devices having a sharp point or protuberance capable of cutting or piercing the skin. They include, but are not limited to, hypodermic needles, scalpels, broken ampoules and any broken glassware.

Waste - Under Section 13 of the *Environmental Protection Act, 1994 (Qld)*, waste includes any gas, liquid, solid or energy (or a combination of wastes) that is surplus to, or unwanted from, any industrial, commercial, domestic or other activity, whether or not of value.

Waste Generator – Any person whose act or process produces waste and is therefore responsible for that waste.

3. Procedure Scope/Coverage

This policy applies to all clinical and related waste (refer to definitions in Section 2) from The University of Queensland campuses and sites (where site-specific EMSs are not in place) and may include the following:

- Clinical wastes;
- Clinically contaminated waste;
- Sharps;
- Pharmaceuticals;
- Infectious/contaminated animal carcasses and cage linings;
- Faeces samples for diagnostic testing;
- Infectious/contaminated or genetically modified soil; and
- Perceived clinical waste.

This policy **excludes** the following:

- Animal carcasses – non infected or uncontaminated (refer to [Animal Waste Procedure](#));
- Cage lining – non infected or uncontaminated (sawdust, animal faeces, fur and lining) (refer to [Animal Waste Procedure](#));

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- Cytotoxic Waste (refer to [Cytotoxic Drugs and Related Waste Procedure](#));
- Incompatible clinical wastes (refer to definition in Section 2); and
- Cadavers (human).

4. Procedure Statement

The measures detailed in this procedure must be followed when disposing of clinical wastes at all UQ campuses and sites.

Some operational aspects of clinical waste management differ between campuses and sites. ***Always refer to any site specific work instructions in addition to this procedure for collection times, contacts and other details specific to your campus or site.***

5. Clinical and Related Waste Infrastructure and Consumables

5.1 General Requirements of Waste Bins, Receptacles, Bags and Bin Liners

- All Clinical and Related Waste must be collected in yellow bins and receptacles lined with yellow liners. All bins, bags and liners must be marked with the Australian Dangerous Goods symbol specifying “Infectious Substances” (ADG Classification – 6.2).
- A range of approved yellow bins, receptacles and liners for collecting Clinical and Related Wastes at source are available for purchase by schools and centres through the UQ Central Store. Please refer to: <http://www.pf.uq.edu.au/StoresCatalog.html>
- Clinical and Related Waste disposal bins (240 litre wheelie bins) will be provided by the waste contractor and are available by contacting the Cleaning Manager, Property and Facilities Division by emailing clean@pf.uq.edu.au.
- Other bins and receptacles may be acceptable for use for contaminated items that will not fit into the approved liners, receptacles and bins or disposal bins (e.g. pallets for large quantities of soil). Any alternative bins, receptacles and liners used for the collection of Clinical and Related

Waste, not otherwise available through the UQ Central Store, must be approved by the Cleaning Manager, Property and Facilities Division by emailing clean@pf.uq.edu.au.

5.2 General Storage of Wastes

All bins used to store Clinical and Related Waste shall be:

- Placed in a manner and location that minimises the risk of spill and/or contamination through inappropriate use.
- Stored in appropriate areas where they cannot be accessed by the general public, as determined by the School's or Centre's OH&S representative; and
- Stored in a manner that minimises the general risk to health, safety and/or the environment.

6. Management of Clinical and Related Wastes

6.1 Collection of Clinical and Related Wastes at Source (e.g. Laboratories)

Clinical and Related Waste must be managed as follows:

- Sharps must be placed directly in yellow sharps containers, marked with the Australian Goods symbol specifying "Infectious Substances" (ADG Classification – 6.2) before being placed in yellow Clinical and Related Waste bins/receptacles.
- As a result of a school or centre's risk assessment, some Clinical and Related Waste may need to be autoclaved before being placed in Clinical and Related Waste bins/receptacles.
- The contents of bins and receptacles used at the source must be removed and transferred to the Clinical and Related Waste disposal bins (240 litre wheelie bins) before the liners exceed two-thirds full or 6 kg, whichever is the lesser.
- The liners from the bins and receptacles must be sealed before transferring them to the yellow 240 litre wheelie disposal bins.

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- Should schools or centres may wish to collect bags/liners with small volumes in a larger bin liner before placing in the 240 litre wheelie bins (disposal bins), the larger liner must satisfy all the requirements in this section.
- Where waste will not fit into the approved or supplied liners, bins/receptacles, please contact the Cleaning Manager, Property and Facilities Division by emailing clean@pf.uq.edu.au

6.2 Collection of Perceived Clinical and Related Wastes at Source (e.g. Laboratories)

It is recommended that Perceived Clinical and Related Waste is collected with the same procedure for Clinical and Related Wastes above. However, the following procedure may be used as an alternative:

- Perceived Clinical and Related Wastes can be collected at source:
 - In any receptacle, provided it is sturdy and stable.
 - In the case of Perceived Clinical and Related Wastes of a hazardous nature (i.e. pipette tips or broken glass), but not sharps as per the definition, hard walled receptacles shall be used (e.g. corrugated cardboard boxes).
 - If waste is to be transferred out of this receptacle for disposal, a liner must be used in the receptacle.
 - Any receptacle and liner is acceptable **except those coloured black and marked for 'general waste' use.**
- Perceived clinical wastes **must be disposed of as Clinical and Related Waste:**
 - Bins and receptacles used to collect perceived clinical wastes should be cleared before they become too full to minimise potential spills.
 - Non-Clinical and Related Waste liners/bins/receptacles used to collect Perceived Clinical and Related Wastes at source must be sealed before transferring to yellow, Clinical and Related Waste liners and then to yellow 240 litre wheelie bins (disposal bins).

University cleaners will not collect or handle any clinical and related wastes or perceived clinical wastes.

6.3 Disposal of Wastes

Clinical and Related Waste for disposal must be:

- Collected in yellow, Clinical and Related Waste liners and transferred to yellow, Clinical and Related Waste 240 litre wheelie bins (disposal bins). (Note: where waste will not fit into the approved liners/bins, please contact the Cleaning Manager, Property and Facilities Division by emailing clean@pf.uq.edu.au).
- Disposal bins (yellow 240 litre wheelie bins) should not exceed 20kg in weight.
- Put out for collection within 7 days of being generated. Wastes shall be held for as long as possible (without exceeding the 7 day limit) to fill the disposal bin as much as possible.
- Perceived Clinical and Related Wastes can be held for indefinite periods and can be used to make up full bins of Clinical and Related Waste if required.
- A disposal bin (wheelie bin) need not be full if the oldest contents of the bin require immediate disposal (i.e. 7 days old). Consideration may be given to refrigerate perishable Clinical and Related Waste. Avoid immediate disposal in a near empty collection bin.
- When any clinical and related waste bins are placed in public areas they must be locked. Locks are provided with the bins. Lost locks will be replaced and charged to the University. Where possible, Property and Facilities will recover these charges from the school or centre.

7. Incompatible Clinical and Related Wastes

The Clinical and Related Waste system will handle the majority of UQ's wastes. However there are limitations and some material must be excluded for work health safety and equipment limitations. The following items cannot be disposed of through the system prescribed in this procedure:

- Steel and metal items other than needles or sharps.

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If you have these types of wastes to dispose, contact the Manager Cleaning, Property and Facilities by emailing clean@pf.uq.edu.au.

8. Management of Spills

In the event that a clinical and related waste bin has spilled its contents, contact Security on 53333 or other nominated person on your campus/site.

- Every school and centre is responsible for their Clinical and Related Wastes until the time the contractor collects the disposal bins from the kerbside holding area.
- Schools and centres that generate Clinical and Related Waste must hold equipment, and have staff who are trained and available, to clean up spills.
- Spills of any waste must be cleaned up immediately by the school or centre who generated the waste (where they can be identified). Any school or centre that has a spill will be instructed by Security to effect clean up. Failure to do so will result in Property and Facilities arranging clean up and costs being recovered.

9. Transporting Clinical and Related Wastes

Clinical and Related Waste shall be collected and transported by:

- A person or company with an appropriate licence for handling regulated wastes. A copy of the licence cover sheet must be supplied by the contractor to the University before any waste is removed from site;
- No University or private vehicle is to be used to transport clinical waste generated by the University; and
- Transportation shall be in accordance with the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act (Qld) (1995)*.

10. Responsibilities

Table 4 outlines responsibilities for clinical and related waste disposal:

Table 4. Responsibilities

Responsible Person	Duties
Students, Laboratory technicians, Researchers and Academic staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segregate the clinical and related wastes, and perceived clinical wastes from other classes of wastes; • Use compliant, clearly labelled liners, bins and receptacles for clinical and related waste; • Autoclave, treat, or tightly seal laboratory wastes as per risk assessment, prior to disposal in the clinical and related waste bins; • Place the waste in the yellow clinical and related waste disposal (wheelie) bins, lock the bins and take them to the kerbside position for collection; • Have all necessary spill equipment available.
Heads of Schools and Centres, and Executive Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that students and staff are trained in the operating procedure for clinical and related wastes. • Ensure spills can be managed by the school or centre.
Property and Facilities Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide contractual clinical and related waste collection service; • Liaise with Heads of Schools and Centres, and Executive Officers to ensure that the clinical and related waste management is effectively carried out at the University; • Review the clinical and related waste procedure at least every 3 years.

11. References

- *Environmental Protection (Qld) Act (1994)* and associated regulations;
- *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act (Qld) (2011)* and associated regulations;
- *Health (Qld) Act (1937)*;
- *Work Health and Safety (Qld) Act 2011* and associated regulations;
- *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) (Qld) Act 1995*; and
- *AS/NZS 3816: 1998 Management of Clinical and Related Wastes*.