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Australian Standards for window coverings in science labs

Posted by Anonymous on Fri, 2015-10-16 11:16

Australian Standards for window coverings in science labs: Good morning, We need to replace the window coverings in our labs. Is there an Australian standard that states the requirements for window coverings?

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Year Level:

6

7

8

9

10

Senior Secondary

Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

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Australian Standards for window coverings in Science Labs

Submitted by sat on 28 October 2015

Answer reviewed 23 February 2023

There are no regulations or standards that apply to the window coverings in a laboratory. However, there are certainly many factors that should be considered with any decision on what to use to make the working and learning environment comfortable and functional.

Science ASSIST recommends that a site-specific risk assessment be conducted to consider the type of window covering that is suitable, the material that it is made from, and whether the covering should be on the inside of the window, or whether it should be external to the building.

Factors to be considered

- The type and location of the window.
- The types of activities that are carried out in the laboratory. Each laboratory may have different requirements for window coverings.
 - If it is a physics laboratory, where experiments with light are conducted, a good blackout covering is required.
 - Most laboratories require a reasonable blackout capability for the use of data projectors.
 - School science laboratories are generally classified as Physical Containment level 1 (PC1), if they conform to the requirements specified in Section 5 of *AS/NZS 2243:3 2022, Safety in Laboratories, Part 3: Microbiological safety and containment*. If conducting any microbiological work in the laboratory, then a requirement is that all surfaces can be readily cleaned and able to be decontaminated. The use of curtains in this situation would not fill this requirement.
- Ventilation: Are windows required to be open. Can windows be opened easily with the window covering closed.
- Can the window covering be operated with ease.
- Location of naked flames or heat sources. The location of practical benches where naked flames or other heat sources may be operating could be a concern if the coverings move and flap around.
- Aspect of the window which influences the temperature of the laboratory. Heat may be an issue if the windows are large or face the afternoon sun during the summer months.
- Colour choice—dark colours such as black will heat up a room fairly quickly.
- The cord used in corded window coverings should be secured to the wall allowing easy access to all staff and to prevent it being a choking hazard.
- Use of curtains or blinds made from fire retardant materials.
- Security: The room may house equipment that is expensive, posing a risk of theft, and therefore the contents of the room should not be visible from the street .

Science ASSIST guidelines

Science ASSIST has developed [GUIDELINES for the design and planning of secondary school science facilities in Australian schools](#).¹ See section 7.4 Control of sunlight, glare and reflections. (pg.62) for more information regarding considerations for window treatments.

References

¹Science ASSIST. 2017. GUIDELINES for the design and planning of secondary school science facilities in Australian schools. Retrieved from the Science ASSIST website: <https://assist.asta.edu.au/resource/4175/guidelines-design-and-planning-...>

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