Assessing the situation: Technology (Mandatory)

In *Technology* you will learn about assessing situations to ensure safety in a range of different technology classrooms.

This material addresses aspects of the following syllabus outcome:
4.3.2 A student demonstrates responsible and safe use of a range of tools, materials and techniques in each design project.
Extract from: Stage 4 Technology Syllabus © Board of Studies NSW 2003.

Why assess a situation?

Before beginning any task in a technology classroom, particularly if it involves the use of tools or machinery, it is very important to *stop* and *think*. Consider these points:

- What are you going to do?
- How are you going to do it?
- What tools or equipment do you need to do it?

and most importantly…

- What safety procedures have to be put in place to prevent accidents or injury?

By asking yourself these questions, you are assessing a situation in order to minimise risk.

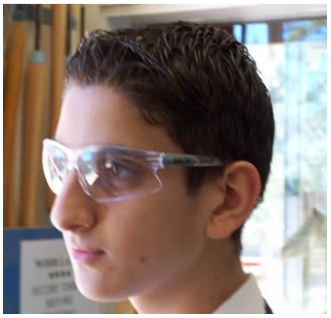
It is essential to adopt a sound, safe working attitude to protect yourself and others from possible injury. Commonsense and careful personal workshop behaviour should ensure that nobody is exposed to risk.

Workshop safety is an *attitude of mind*.

Assessing the technology classroom

Assessing your technology classroom environment is a good place to start. There are eight broad areas that should be considered in any workshop and personal safety assessment:

1. **Know your materials**: to use any material effectively calls for thought and planning as well as studying any information associated with working with the material.
2. **Aim for good workshop layout**: a neat and orderly layout will always minimise risks in a technology environment.



3. **Dress for safety**: do you have all the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)?
4. **Allow time to plan your work**: have you thought through what needs to be done, when, how and what with? What about safety procedures?
5. **Treat tools and equipment with respect**: damaged or blunt tools cause accidents.
6. **Take special care with machinery**: thoughtlessness or loss of concentration for less than a second can lead to serious accidents.

7. **Beware of solvents**: these are highly toxic and flammable so safety instructions on the container should be followed precisely.
8. **It all adds up to safety**: only care on the part of everyone using a workshop in a technology environment can ensure safety. Most safety rules are simply common sense. Don't ever make the mistake of thinking they are for someone else. They are for you.

(Leadbeatter and Keable (1974) *Australian Woodworking*, pp. 1–3)

Activity: Situation assessment

Examine the following workshop tasks listed below. Identify the *minimum* safe working practices and procedures you would need to put in place in order to safely carry out the task listed.

Practical task	**Minimum safe working practices and procedures you would need to do**
Use a fixed scroll saw to cut out a wooden jigsaw puzzle you have just designed and drawn. 	PPE:
Use a cordless portable drill to drill a hole in a piece of acrylic. 	PPE:
Use an electric poker to burn a design into a project. 	PPE:

Think about this final word on safety for a moment

Reading a set of rules is not enough, you must understand and observe a code of safe working practice and help others to do the same. Safety is not only following a set of rules; it is an understanding and a desire to work safely. Remember: *safety begins with you*.