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**Provision of inclusive personal
protective equipment (PPE) – Guide**



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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 30 September 2025. It was prepared by Technical Committee PH/23, *Horizontal topics for PPE*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to the committee manager.

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As a guide, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and advisory recommendations. It is not to be quoted as if it were a specification or a code of practice.

Presentational conventions

The guidance in this document is presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Any recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Additional commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

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Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

In particular, attention is drawn to the following specific Acts and regulations:

- PPE Regulation 2016/425 [1];
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 [2];
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1993 [3];
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 [4];
- Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 [5];
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 [6];
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 [7].

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Introduction

Diverse workforces are important to the future of all organizations and are a huge asset to those which foster inclusive cultures.

Increasingly, manufacturers and employers are working to develop more inclusive offerings but, in the vast majority of cases, sex, gender, ethnic or cultural/religious considerations are not fully taken into account. This is even more challenging for people with disabilities or medical conditions, whose needs are not accommodated for by most PPE.

The current position is rendering many unable to join certain industries or job roles as a result, and is denying access to activities which are good for both physical and mental wellbeing. This British Standard is intended to encourage a move away from unisex and “one-size-fits-all” PPE.

The intention of this British Standard is to provide guidance to organizations and individuals involved in the purchasing, supply and use of PPE to ensure the needs and requirements of diverse workforces are accommodated through the development, availability and provision of inclusive PPE.

The intended application of this British Standard includes all working environments and professional activities completed in the context of both public and private sectors. This specifically applies where end-users are provided with items designed to protect them from, and within, their immediate surroundings, wider environment and interaction with others.

Particular attention is drawn to the guidance and recommendations for engagement and consultation with the whole workforce, ensuring representation from under-represented person(s) or marginalized communities, diverse social groups and the end-users requiring inclusive PPE.

This British Standard is intended to be an important step towards PPE that is inclusive and will play a role in supporting equity in the workplace.

It has been developed by a diverse team that includes end-users, health and safety professionals, manufacturers, distributors and those experienced in the application and development of PPE standards.

1 Scope

This British Standard provides guidance for the provision of inclusive personal protective equipment (PPE) across various industries and sectors. It encompasses the selection, purchasing process, training and maintenance related to inclusive PPE. This British Standard aims to promote accessibility and inclusivity in PPE provision, focusing on the safety, health and wellbeing of all individuals.

This British Standard provides guidance for selecting inclusive PPE, taking into account factors such as end-user diversity, safety, risk, discomfort, ergonomic designs and compatibility. It provides guidelines for inspecting, maintaining and replacing inclusive PPE to achieve ongoing effectiveness and end-user safety.

This British Standard covers the importance of providing training for PPE end-users to achieve proper usage, fit and maintenance of inclusive PPE, with a focus on accommodating diversity. It outlines procedures for selecting PPE suppliers, developing specifications and evaluating suppliers based on inclusivity criteria. It focuses solely on guidance for the purchasing and provision of inclusive PPE to promote accessibility and safety in, but not limited to, the workplace.

This British Standard is applicable to organizations and individuals involved in the purchasing, provision and use of inclusive PPE across all working environments. It addresses the needs of all end-users, promoting equitable access to safety equipment in, but not limited to, the workplace.

This British Standard does not cover the performance requirements or manufacturing specifications of inclusive PPE.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes provisions, or limits the application, of this document¹⁾. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

[BS 30416](#), *Menstruation, menstrual health and menopause in the workplace – Guide*

[BS EN ISO 11610](#), *Protective clothing – Vocabulary*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in [BS 30416](#), [BS EN ISO 11610](#) and the following apply.

3.1 accessibility

degree to which PPE, facilities, and services are usable by and available to a diverse range of end-users, including those with disabilities, establishing equal access and opportunity for participation wherever PPE is required

3.2 compatibility

<in relation to the PPE> extent to which two or more combined items of PPE that are expected to form an ensemble or partial ensemble are suitable for use by all end-users in a manner that does not impact the requirements of the PPE or its safe and effective use

<in relation to the end-user> extent to which one or more items of PPE used in isolation or as an ensemble are suitable for use by all end-users in a manner that does not impact the requirements of the individual end-user (e.g. religious headwear, menstrual or disability requirements)

¹⁾ Documents that are referred to solely in an informative manner are listed in the Bibliography.