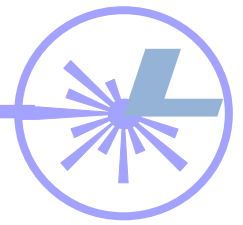


# Laser Safety Management



## Non-Surgical Aesthetic Treatments Using Lasers and other Intense Light Sources

### Introduction

Lasers and other intense light sources (e.g. IPL) present a significant risk to the retina of the eye (permanent blindness). In addition, there is also a risk of skin burns to anyone undergoing treatment.

This information sheet summarises the main legal requirements for SMEs offering cosmetic treatments involving intense light sources.

### Legal Requirements (England and Scotland)

Firstly, undertake a suitable and sufficient **risk assessment**. Various controls will result and will almost always include;

- Training (safe use of the equipment etc.),
- Control of access to treatment area/room,
- Provision of safety eyewear,

**Safety Training** and information must be provided to *all* staff that may be exposed to the risks from intense light.

**Written policy/procedures** must be in place (*if there are 5 or more employees*). In addition to a **Health and Safety Policy**, this typically includes;

- General laser safety procedures,
- Specific instructions on safe use of equipment,

In addition to the above *absolute* requirements, businesses must also implement any other **reasonably practicable** controls to minimise the risks to clients, staff and members of the public.

In some regions, a **licence from the local authority** (council) must also be obtained. This currently applies in Nottinghamshire and some areas of London.

### Wales and Northern Ireland

Businesses using lasers in Wales and Northern Ireland must also register with the local healthcare regulator (HIW and RQIA respectively).

### Other Hazards

In addition to the main risk of eye and skin damage, the follow hazards should also be considered;

- Fire / electrical
- Hazardous substances
- Trip hazards and working environment
- Personal safety / lone working
- Cross infection
- Laser 'plume' / adequate ventilation

### Common Safety Controls

Examples of typical controls include;

- Client records/consultation / consent
- Pre / post treatment care / advice
- Confinement of laser to within the treatment room (closed doors, blinds on windows etc.)
- Control of access
- Equipment design (e.g. footswitch guards)
- Training and information
- Minimise highly reflective surfaces (mirrors)
- Ventilation/extraction
- Consultation with laser safety specialist (LPA)
- Provision of PPE

### Specialist help and advice

Legally, a '**competent person**' must lead the risk assessment process. For technical advice and specialist help, an external specialist known as a Laser Protection Adviser (LPA) may be required to fulfil this role and demonstrate legal compliance.

### Reference

The legal requirements listed in this information sheet are made with reference to the following,

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974  
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999  
Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2010  
Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998  
London Local Authorities Act 1991  
Nottinghamshire County Council Act 1985