



Information for employees and students working at the Faculty of Science (W&N)

This AMD information sheet describes how to prevent issues in the future by sensibly purchasing or importing required items for research. Those may be: equipment and furniture, but also special (re)agents. Before purchasing, you should, in addition to costs, take several other matters into account. Many issues have already been described in the information sheets on those subjects, and, therefore, this text contains many referrals.

1 Internal and external regulations and existing agreements

1.1 Tenders

The contract for some articles has been awarded to certain suppliers. Who those suppliers are, may be found on the [purchasing department's website](#), or you could ask the faculty's purchaser. Has a contract been awarded for the desired service or this article? Then you may rely upon it that during the call for tender the CE certification and a number of aspects of use were already taken into account.

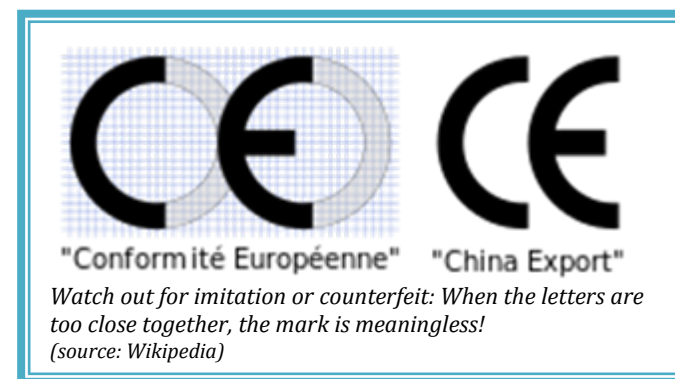
1.2 Permit requirements

Some kinds of equipment may not be installed without a permit. For example, equipment containing a radioactive source must be registered with AMD's radiation expert in regard to the permit requirements of the Dutch Nuclear Energy Act ("Kernenergiewet"). Special permit or customs requirements apply to the import of animal by-products (embryos, plasma, serum, and such) or special preparations. When ordering basic substances for drugs and explosives, you will be asked to sign and send in a detailed (!) end-user statement prior to shipment.

1.3 CE marking

CE certification is mandatory in Europe for, among other things, electr(on)ic equipment, machinery, pressure equipment, measuring equipment, and personal protection equipment. The [CE marking](#) is applied by the manufacturer or importer, by which the fulfilment of all European standards is indicated, among which the minimal safety standards. For this, the supplier compiles a technical file. The article should be accompanied by a so-called Declaration of Conformity plus a manual for installation and use in one of the European languages French/German/English. In case of machinery even a Dutch version is mandatory.

An electrical device that carries no CE marking, may not be marketed in Europe! If you do buy such a device, for example, directly from China or the USA, all obligations of the supplier transfer to you as buyer and you become an importer. If, subsequently, an occupational accident were to occur with its



cause in said device, the Dutch Labour Inspectorate will prosecute on the basis of an economic offence, and no longer on the basis of an offence of the Dutch Working Conditions Act. This amounts to criminal proceedings against the University Board, instead of an administrative fine!

Solution: always buy from a reputable supplier or make a deal with a European importer who assumes the CE responsibilities of the article. In the extreme case you yourself, as buyer-importer, should have all requirements checked out and have any omissions remedied by a competent company. This may fail, because you probably do not have the technical file, and costs a lot of money. After this, you apply the CE marking yourself, write the Declaration of Conformity, and the manual too.

If no CE certification obligations apply, please check, prior to purchase, if any NEN standards apply to a product and if it meets those.

2 Items for consideration regarding the circumstances of use

Suppliers often do not take the actual circumstances of use in research into account. Please first think of the requirements yourself, and choose the article that matches those.

Items for consideration are, among others:

- The location in which the device will be put/ where it is going to be used
Think of: size, local ventilation, presence or installation of electrical connections, and such, see [AMD information sheet RhL070 Relocation and Room Modifications](#).
- Local noise production
Will the ability to concentrate or the hearing of employees be compromised? The sound levels in laboratories are often already high, especially when there is a lot of other equipment. Two devices producing 78 dB each, together produce 81 dB, because every extra 3 dB indicates a sound level twice as high. Please also see [AMD Information sheet VOM070 Noise](#).
- Ergonomics and comfort
Is the product designed ergonomically? Are all buttons and such within easy reach, regarding the control panels, as well as the maintenance provisions (for Technical or Household Services). Are the control panels intuitive, and the pictograms clear and unambiguous? Is everything clear for colour-blind people too?
For personal protection equipment (PPE): is the PPE suitable for the purpose and is it comfortable to wear? PPE may never reduce safety or provide false safety; therefore, please choose these carefully! See [AMD Information sheet RhL020 Safety Equipment](#).
- Future availability of the article (and spare parts).

3 Maintenance issues

Please keep future maintenance in mind when purchasing: are you able/allowed to perform check-ups, maintenance, and repairs self or in-house, or do you need to enter into a maintenance contract when purchasing? See [AMD information sheet RhL060 Certification, maintenance and repairs](#) and the example in 4.4.

4 Actual purchase stories

4.1 Purchase of office furniture

The purchase of office furniture by the university is under contract. In the tender requirements all legal requirements and standards that apply to office furniture were taken into account. However, the standards for desk chairs are based on the average employee. Therefore, for about 80 percent of the healthy employees, such chairs may be adjusted properly. The other require tailor made products, for example, an extra long gas spring and deeper seating for tall people. Within the standards some variety is possible too, and some manufacturers go beyond the standard requirements. Furthermore, not everyone is comfortable on the same chair. Our experience has taught us that the differences are found in the width of the seating, the adjustment of the arm supports, and the adjustability of the lumbar support.

The solution is, therefore, to first try a chair before ordering it. You would not be the first with a brand new chair that is not comfortable! The AMD has test chairs on loan from several suppliers, so a body fitting chair may be picked and ordered. Otherwise you may apply for a test period at the supplier first.

4.2 The direct ordering of chemicals in Canada

Ordering without an importer has as a consequence that you, as researcher, will be considered to be the importer. The moment the article arrives, you will receive the customs/import papers to fill in. For this there is no knowledge support. Consequence: destruction of the shipment by the customs services in case the proper data are missing, and at the very least clearance charges.

Solution: Ask a known supplier if he or she could import it for you.

4.3 Import of animal by-products from Australia

Zebrafish embryos fall under the Dutch Decree on Animal By-products (“Besluit Dierlijke Bijproducten”). Import has to be done quickly, because due to the development of the embryos, these fall under the Dutch rules and regulations regarding laboratory animals after a couple of days. Failure of the import in this case, therefore, also implies stagnation of the research project.

Solution: ask for the permit number from the Biological Safety Officer and make sure that this shipment is known at Schiphol beforehand (which is where the permit is based, and, therefore, import through another airport is not possible!) Please also see [AMD Information sheet RhL 050 Transportation and shipment of research material](#).

4.4 Gas alarm due to lack of maintenance

Some laboratories contain oxygen control or gas detection systems. These have led to dangerous situations and deployment of the emergency response teams several times now, because a maintenance contract was lacking. Oxygen control is critical to safety, which is why these systems will automatically enter a fault state, when the yearly maintenance is not performed. The calibration of gas detection systems expires after a certain period of time. These too require recalibration to maintain the proper protection! Please contact the [faculty's purchaser](#) before entering into a maintenance contract. Perhaps it will be possible to join in with an existing contract.