



G00002

-12-

APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR LASER BEAM SPLITTING**ABSTRACT**

Apparatus and method for laser beam splitting. The apparatus includes a waveplate (1) for polarizing an incident laser beam (10) and at least one birefringent wedge (2) for
5 splitting the polarised beam into two orthogonally polarised split beams (12, 13). The apparatus is characterised in that the birefringent wedge (2) is rotatable about its optical axis (17) to vary an angle of incidence (5) of the polarized beam on the wedge (2) so as to allow for controlled adjustment of a separation angle (16) between the split beams. A second wedge (3) may be provided to reduce and compensate the separation angle.

10 (Fig. 1)



162162