

MANUAL HANDLING PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure safe systems are devised and implemented to protect employees who are required to manually handle work equipment and objects, so far as is reasonably practicable, from the associated risks.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 defines manual handling as “the transporting or supporting of a load, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving loads.” The Regulations require employers to avoid the need for hazardous manual handling as far as reasonably practicable. Manual handling, as well as other factors, is known to be a risk factor associated with work-related musculoskeletal disorders and therefore must be undertaken safely.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Deans of Schools / Directors / Heads of Department

Responsible for all health and safety within their School or Department and therefore must:

- Ensure risk assessments are completed, including for manual handling
- Allocate sufficient resources for all control measures required by the risk assessment

Supervisors, Line Managers, Directors of Studies and Academic Leads

Responsible for ensuring the day to day supervision of health and safety matters in their areas of responsibility and therefore must:

- Identify safer alternatives to manual handling where reasonably practicable
- Carry out / ensure risk assessments are completed, and include the risk from manual handling where significant
- Communicate the risk assessment to all affected parties
- Bring this procedure to the attention of direct reports undertaking manual handling

Health and Safety Champion

Act as the focal point for Health and Safety within their school or department and as such must:

- Bring any concerns reported to them, and related to manual handling, to the attention of the school or department Health and Safety Committee as appropriate. Any urgent concerns should be raised with the Dean of School / Head of Department immediately

Individual Users (Staff and Students) have a responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others, and therefore must:

- Take care of themselves and others who could be affected by their actions and omissions
- Use any mechanical handling aids and PPE provided for the task appropriately
- Adhere to the control measures identified in the Risk Assessment
- Report any significant safety issues to their Line Manager promptly

PROCEDURE

Employers are required to assess risks from manual handling and avoid risks where reasonably practicable. Where the risk cannot be eliminated it must be assessed and reduced.

Elimination of Manual Handling - Where reasonably practicable, manual handling should be eliminated. For example, materials could be delivered to the point of use rather than to a remote storage area thus removing the risk from handling.

Mechanisation/Automation - If the elimination of manual handling is not possible then consideration should be given to mechanisation. Examples include the use of mechanical assistance, barrows and trolleys etc.

It should be remembered that some forms of mechanisation can introduce other risks which may need to be addressed. Mechanical handling aids fall under the definition of Work Equipment and, therefore, the [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations](#) should also be consulted.

Assessment of Risk – The risk from manual handling can be recorded in a 'general' assessment that covers broadly similar tasks, e.g. mail delivery and office set-up. In some cases a specific assessment may be required, for example, unusual / one-off tasks. The Health and Safety Executive Guidance document (L23) provides a useful set of filters and assessment charts, to help determine when a more detailed assessment may be necessary.

The task, load, working environment and individual capability should all be assessed.

- **Load:** Consideration should be given to the weight, shape and size of the object etc. Note that the employer has a duty to provide an indication, or where reasonably practicable, exact information regarding the weight of an object and the heaviest side of a load.
- **Individual:** Consider the health, capability and level of training of those involved etc
- **Task:** Consider the duration, frequency, distance the object is moved, whether it involves turning/twisting, as well vertical lift region etc
- **Environment:** Assess the floor surface, gradient, lighting, temperature and whether there are any obstacles present etc.

The risk assessment should be reviewed if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid or following any significant change to manual handling tasks. Further guidance on

completing risk assessments, as well as the risk assessment template, can be found in the Procedure for Carrying out a Risk Assessment.

Training

All staff who undertake manual handling which presents a significant risk should enrol on manual handling training. The training covers the basic principles of safe manual handling and demonstrates the correct techniques to use. Details of courses are available via the [Training Portal](#) or Health and Safety dept. (HealthandSafety@uws.ac.uk).

Any member of staff using personal protective equipment and/or mechanical handling aids also need to be competent in their use.

Reporting Incidents

All incidents, including those involving manual handling, must be reported via the University Awaken system.

References:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pUbns/priced/l23.pdf>

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