



University of Sussex

Manual Handling Policy

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Manual Handling Policy

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1. Introduction and Scope

The University of Sussex will comply with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended), which place a requirement on the employer and employee to 'reduce the hazards to health associated with the manual handling of loads'.

Accordingly, the University will so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Avoid manual handling operations where a significant risk of injury could occur;
- Design and provide safe and ergonomically suitable workplace environments;
- Assess the risks associated with manual handling activities and eliminate or reduce these to a tolerable level;
- Introduce appropriate measures to reduce the risk of injury;
- Provide equipment to enable manual handling activities to be undertaken safely;
- Provide suitable and sufficient supervision, training (*including periodic refresher training*) and information to all staff involved in manual handling operations.

2. Purpose

Manual Handling is one of the most common causes of absence through injury at the workplace. Monitoring of accident statistics has shown that a significant proportion of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) reportable injuries are caused by manual handling activities. This policy and its accompanying guidance is therefore intended to help reduce the risk of manual handling injuries and promote good practice in all lifting, handling and carrying operations.

3. Definitions

Manual Handling – the transporting or supporting of inanimate load, (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, holding, carrying, and moving) by hand or bodily force.

Injury – Injury to any part of the body caused by manual handling, injuries include; strained muscles, over-stretched or torn ligaments, trapped, compressed or impinged nerves and disc damage (e.g. prolapsed disc).

Load – A load is a discrete moveable object. This includes, for example, not only packages and boxes but also an inanimate person requiring placing in the recovery

position, a lawn mower, pushing a car, and material supported on a shovel or fork. An implement, tool or machine, such as a chainsaw, fire hose or breathing apparatus, is not considered to be a load when in use for its intended purpose.

4. Responsibilities

Manager's responsibilities

Heads of Schools and Directors of Units (Managers) have a responsibility to ensure that all manual handling operations that are under their control that could result in injury are assessed and adequately controlled.

Therefore the Manager must:

- Appoint a suitably competent person to assist in undertaking the above;
- Identify all manual handling operations that may require a risk assessment;
- Undertake risk assessments and implement any risk reduction measures identified as necessary;
- Identify all staff who are required to undertake manual handling operations and provide them with appropriate training and information necessary to carry out the manual handling task allotted to them (*Training and information should be updated as necessary*);
- Ensure staff are made aware of this policy and associated guidance and that they understand and are able to comply with it:
- Act promptly to reduce any manual handling hazards identified by employees:
- Record the results of the risk assessment and retain for five years;
- Review assessments on an annual basis or when the work significantly changes.

Liaise with the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Office (HSWO) by

- Consulting with the HSWO where the residual risk is assessed as high (See guidance note for further information);
- Ensuring all manual handling accidents and injuries are reported to the HSWO.

Liaise with the Occupational Health Service (OHS) by

- Informing the OHS on the pre-employment health questionnaire of any manual handling hazards pertinent to the job being offered;

- Informing the OHS if they become aware of any health problems resulting from or could affect an employee's ability to carry out manual handling activities;
- Implementing any health advice given by the OHS

Employee responsibilities

Employees must:

- Adhere to the identified safe working practices;
- Make full and proper use of any safety equipment or manual handling aids provided;
- Report any defects in systems, practices or equipment;
- Co-operate with the University in undertaking the assessments;
- Attend training provided and put it into practice in the workplace;
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their activities;
- Inform the manager when they believe that there is a risk of injury to health from a manual handling activity;
- Inform the manager when they suspect the risk assessment is no longer valid.
- Inform the manager of any health problem or condition that might affect their ability to handle loads safely.
- Comply with any health advice given by the OHS

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Office (HSWO) responsibilities

The HSWO is responsible for:

- The monitoring, investigation and reporting of manual handling incidents.
- Developing and co-ordinating training in manual handling.
- Providing advice to Schools and Units on Manual Handling issues.
- Promoting awareness of safe manual handling practices.

Occupational Health Service (OHS) responsibilities

The OHS is responsible for:

- Assessing the physical capacity of employees to determine fitness to undertake manual handling activities (as defined in Job Descriptions).
- Advising managers and staff on associated problems and health issues.
- Providing advice to Schools and Units on Manual Handling issues.
- Promoting awareness of safe manual handling practices.

5. Details of procedure/operational details

Avoid, eliminate, automate or mechanise manual handling

The first control measure to consider is whether the manual handling activity can be avoided. This may be achieved by elimination, automation or mechanisation of the task.

Manual Handling Risk Assessment

The Regulations require that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be carried out when hazardous manual handling is unavoidable.

The aim of the manual handling risk assessment is to make a well-informed decision about the measures necessary to prevent, or adequately control high risk manual handling operations and reduce the risk of injury. It can form part of a more general risk assessment for a specific work task and its complexity should reflect the magnitude of the manual handling risk being assessed. The assessment should follow an ergonomic approach and consider the **T**ask, **I**ndividual Capabilities; the characteristics of the **L**oad and the work **E**nvironment (**TILE**) associated with the activity (see [Appendix 1 for TILE hazard information](#)).

Manual handling assessments should be carried out by a competent person, recorded and reviewed regularly. The competent person must attend and successfully complete *Manual Handling Assessor Training*. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office provide this training and can assist in the risk assessment process.

Manual handling risk assessment outcomes should be communicated to the employees undertaking the work. Managers in control of the work must ensure the control measures are implemented and used by their employees. Managers, in conjunction with other competent persons, will monitor the effectiveness of the control measures.

To help risk assessors identify how best to reduce risk, a list of suggested risk reduction measures and controls are given as an aide memoir (see [Appendix 2](#)). The list is not meant to be exhaustive and can be expanded upon.

Manual handling aids

Mechanical assistance from the use of handling aids (e.g. sack barrows and trolleys) can help reduce the risk of injury. If the manual handling assessment identifies that a lifting aid is needed, it should be suitable and sufficient for the task and fulfil Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) requirements. Users of aids must be trained and regular checks of the equipment carried out and recorded.

Reporting of high risk activities and injuries

Employees must report high risk manual handling activities to their line manager. If the manual handling activity is perceived to be extremely high risk the employee(s) designated to undertake that activity must NOT proceed and should immediately inform their line manager, or someone with similar authority, to facilitate remedial action.

Employees shall report manual handling accidents and incidents to their manager and arrange for their Health and Safety Coordinator to complete a University Incident form as soon as possible.

6. Training

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office provide training courses on managing the risks of manual handling operations, the courses are:

For managers and supervisors – Manual handling assessor training

This in depth course will equip participants with the skills to assess manual handling operations using the HSE Manual Handling Assessment Chart tool, raising awareness of manual handling hazards, risks and controls, whilst installing basic knowledge of anatomy, mechanics of movement and causes of manual handling injuries, and guiding participants on how to carry out a suitable and sufficient manual handling risk assessment.

For all Staff involved in manual handling activities – Practical manual handling training

The course focuses on manual handling hazards, the risks from manual handling, safe lifting techniques and control measures. It includes an element of practical lifting exercises.

For all Staff who have previously attended the Practical manual handling training – A refresher course

This refresher course gives staff the opportunity to discuss any lifting experiences or concerns in a small group environment, the course reminds delegates of the key points on assessing hazards and risk control taught in the practical manual handling training, and advises on safe lifting/carrying techniques with an opportunity for participants to try them out, a short group exercise will be set to ensure that staff are competent in carrying out dynamic risk assessments.

7. Monitoring & review

The assessment should be kept up to date. It should be reviewed if new information comes to light or if there has been a change in the manual handling operations. The assessment should also be reviewed if a reportable injury occurs or when individual employees suffer an illness, injury or the onset of disability which may make them more vulnerable to risk.

The HSWO will monitor the effectiveness of this policy by means of inspection, audit the study of reported incidents and consultation with the OHS regarding the number of work-related occupational health referrals

8. References/Related Documents

Health, Safety and Wellbeing office manual handling guidance and information
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/manualhandling>

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)
<http://books.hse.gov.uk/hse/public/saleproduct.jsf?catalogueCode=9780717628230>

HSE guidance in manual handling
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/faq-manhand.htm>

HSE Manual handling assessment charts
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf>

HSE simple guide to Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg291.pdf>

Appendix 1 TILE (hazard information)

<p>TASK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strenuous pulling/pushing Bending Overreaching Twisting movements Repetition handling Carrying long distance Static muscle work Team handling Bonus schemes Handling above head height Handling away from the body Insufficient rest time 	<p>INDIVIDUAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexperience Competence Training Age Gender Health Strength Ability to communicate Attitude Disability Pregnancy Mental ability
<p>LOAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre of gravity Weight Bulky Size Slippery to hold Difficult to grasp Fragile contents Shifting contents Badly stacked Hot temperature Sharp edges Right way up Too big to see over 	<p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confined space Obstacles Hot/cold Humidity Lighting Ventilation Weather (e.g. wind, ice) Slip trip hazards Holes/slopes Uneven floors Stairs Ill fitting PPE Proximity of other workers Other hazards (e.g. vehicles)

Appendix 2; Aide memoir of risk reduction measures and controls

Problem areas (TILE plus other factors)	Ways of reducing the risk of injury
Task(s)	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a lifting aid? • improve workplace layout to improve efficiency? • reduce the amount of twisting and stooping? • avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads? • reduce carrying distances? • avoid repetitive handling? • vary the work, allowing one set of muscles to rest while another is used? • push rather than pull?
Individual capability	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pay particular attention to those who have a physical weakness? • take extra care of pregnant workers? • give your employees more information, e.g. about the range of tasks they are likely to face? • provide more training?
Load(s)	<p>Can you make the load:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lighter or less bulky? • easier to grasp? • more stable? • less damaging to hold? <p>The above may be achieved by asking the supplier of externally sourced goods to help, e.g. provide handles or smaller packages.</p>
Environment	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove obstructions to free movement? • provide floors and traffic routes which are in good condition? • avoid steps and steep ramps? • prevent extremes of hot or cold? • improve lighting? • provide adequate ventilation? • provide adequate space for the movement of people? • prevent falling objects or falls from height?
Other factors (e.g. handling aids and equipment, work organisation)	<p>Can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide equipment that is more suitable for the task? • carry out planned preventative maintenance to prevent problems? • ensure equipment designed to be “wheeled” can move easily? • provide better handles and grips? • make brakes easier to use, reliable and effective? • provide work clothing and/or PPE which is less restrictive? • ensure work clothing and/or PPE is suitable for the work? • vary tasks to reduce the monotony? • make better use of workers skills? • make workloads and deadlines more achievable? • encourage good communication and teamwork? • involve workers in decisions? • provide better training and information?