

MANUAL HANDLING CODE OF PRACTICE

1. INTRODUCTION

This Code of Practice forms part of the arrangements to implement the University Health and Safety Policy and must therefore be adhered to accordingly. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 should be considered alongside the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which contain a general requirement on employers to undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of health and safety issues in the workplace that may affect employees while they are at work. Where an assessment indicates that there is a possibility of risk from the manual handling of loads, the specific requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 are applicable.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002) apply to a wide range of manual handling activities at work. The regulations define manual handling as...

"..the transporting or supporting of a load (include lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying of moving of a load) by hand or bodily force. "

A load may be either an inanimate object, such as a box or trolley, or an animate object, such as a person or animal.

Incorrect manual handling can cause musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). The term 'musculoskeletal disorders' covers...

"..any injury, damage or disorder of the joints or other tissues in the upper/lower limbs or the back."

These disorders account for more than a third of all work-related illnesses and can occur to any individual in any occupation, including offices, laboratories, libraries and maintenance.

Although manual handling injuries can be caused by intense or strenuous activities or unexpected events, such as a fall, often this isn't the case - Unfortunately, most occur as a result of cumulative strain, i.e. gradual wear and tear caused by day-to-day tasks, with the person not feeling the pain until several hours after the injury. In rare cases, this can result in long-term debilitating sickness. Factors leading to cumulative strain are:

- Excessive tension continued from day to day
- Lack of variety of movement in the task
- Excessive and/or prolonged muscle tension or force
- Awkward body postures
- Insufficient rest between periods of work

- Repetition of the task

Individuals must not carry out or be given any manual handling work which is beyond their capabilities or experience. Always use any equipment provided and if in doubt obtain assistance. If an individual experiences adverse symptom, such as pains in a joint or the back, these pains should be reported to their Line Manager to enable arrangements for treatment if necessary and possible modification to the work.

Procedures for the assessment of manual handling operations are available at the University; these assessments are a key factor in managing the prevention and control of manual handling injuries. Training in correct manual handling is also available to all University staff. This can be arranged through the Health & Safety Unit.

2. SCOPE

Keele University (employer) is required to:

- As far as reasonably practicable, have arrangements in place to avoid the need for manual handling
- Assess the risk of injury from manual handling that can't be avoided and review this assessment if there is reason to suggest it is no longer valid, or there have been significant changes to the manual handling activity.
- As far as reasonably practicable, where manual handling can't be avoided, reduce the risk of injury from manual handling
- Monitor any procedures in place or introduced to reduce the risk from manual handling and act upon any findings to implement further improvements where reasonably practicable
- Provide training and information to employees, including specific information about any loads they may handle.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Deans & Directors of Professional Services

- Ensure Risk assessments covering manual handling activities are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Provide appropriate resources required to implement this Code of Practice.

Heads of Schools & Heads of Departments

- Ensure processes are in place so that lone working activities are appropriately risk assessed and managed.
- Ensure appropriate resources are available to implement this Code of Practice.

Line Managers

- Ensure that manual handling tasks are considered during risk assessment activities
- Reduce the need for manual handling as far as reasonably practicable in areas under their control
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient resources are available to enable manual handling tasks to be carried out with minimal risk
- Provide appropriate and suitable equipment such as trolleys or sack trucks to minimise the risk of injury through manual handling
- Provide suitable personal protective equipment if required
- Refer individuals to occupational health if informed of health problems related to manual handling
- Arrange relevant training for individuals or groups where required.

Staff Must:

- Use any equipment / system of work provided, to reduce the risk of manual handling injury
- Attend manual handling training if required
- Bring any problems relating to manual handling to the attention of their Line Manager
- Not attempt to lift or move any containers or objects which may be beyond their capabilities

Students must:

- Follow and comply with any local rules regarding manual handling
- Use any equipment provided for the transportation and moving of materials and equipment

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

General risk assessments must be carried out under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations. Where a general risk assessment indicates a possibility of injury from manual handling operations, and it is concluded that avoidance of the operations is not reasonably practicable, a more specific manual handling assessment is to be undertaken as required by the Manual Handling Regulations.

It is important to take an ergonomic approach when looking at Manual handling activities. Therefore, assessments should include consideration of the task; the load; the working environment and the individual capability of those carrying out the task. An assessment should be carried out by the person, or team of people, familiar with and / or directly involved with the task being assessed.

Keele University follows the Health & Safety Executives approach to manual handling risk assessment and in applicable cases will use the [Manual handling assessment charts \(the MAC\)](#)

[tool](#)), [Risk assessment of pushing and pulling \(RAPP\) tool](#) and the [Assessment of Repetitive Tasks \(ART\) tool](#).

Advice on how to undertake these assessments can be sourced from the Central Health & Safety Department.

Equipment is to be provided where possible to minimise or simplify handling of heavier objects and we ensure that two persons are available where the risk assessment identifies the need. Where the risk assessment requires it, personal protective equipment and uniform needs to allow unrestricted movement for manual handling activities.

Recommendations arising from the assessments are implemented by Line Managers. Employees must be instructed of the outcome and copies of the assessments are provided to all relevant employees.

New and expectant mothers, those with health conditions which place them at additional injury risk, and workers below the age of 18, are generally prohibited from carrying out manual handling activities. Where an individual in these categories has duties which would ordinarily involve manual handling, their Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that they are not permitted to continue with these duties until the risks have been assessed.

Records of manual handling assessments are retained for at least 5 years by the school/department. Note that whilst there is no requirement to retain copies of risk assessments which have been superseded, it is useful to retain them for future reference, for example, in case they are needed to defend a legal action.

5. TRAINING

A Manual Handling training module is available to all staff in Learning Pool and must be completed by anybody undertaking manual handling activities.

Employees involved in significant lifting may require additional manual handling training. This is to be determined by the local area and The Central Health & Safety Department can assist in sourcing the additional training upon request.

For staff who are not expected to carry out significant lifting and therefore do not receive detailed manual handling training, it should be made clear during local induction that they are not permitted to undertake these types of activities.

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION, STANDARDS & GUIDANCE

Health and safety at work etc Act 1974

Management of health and safety at work Regulations 1999

Manual handling operations Regulations 1992

Personal protective equipment at work Regulations 1992

Provision and use of work equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998

HSE: IND(G)232 Consulting employees on health and safety

HSE: IND(G)90 Ergonomics and human factors at work

HSE: IND(G)398 Making the best use of lifting and handling aids

HSE: IND(G)171 Managing upper limb disorders in the workplace

HSE: (ACOP) (L23) guidance on regulations; Manual handling operations regulations 1992

HSE: IND(G)383 Manual handling assessment charts (the MAC tool)

HSE: IND(G)143 Manual handling at work

HSE: Operational guidance; Moving and handling construction materials

HSE: IND(G)478 Risk assessment of pushing and pulling (RAPP) tool

British Safety Council: Manual handling : guide to controlling the risks

British Standard: BS ISO 11228-1:2021 Ergonomics. Manual handling. Lifting, lowering and carrying

8. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

[The table below should be completed by the document owner and included within every University Policy Document. The version control table will also be uploaded to the University Policy Documents webpage that hosts the procedure.]

Document Name	Manual Handling Code of Practice
Owner	David Taylor – Head of Health and Safety, Legal, Governance & Compliance
Version Number	1
Approval Date	05/03/2024
Approved By	University Executive Committee (UEC)
Date of Commencement	07/05/2024
Date of Last Review	
Date for Next Review	07/05/2027
Related University Policy Documents	Health and Safety Policy
<i>For Office Use – Keywords</i>	