



Manual Handling Policy

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Revision history

Version	Type (e.g. replacement, revision etc)	Date	History (reason for changes)

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years by the Health & Safety team.

This policy contains the following:

1. Introduction
2. Risk Assessment
3. Reducing the Risk
4. Procurement/Maintenance of Equipment
5. Training
6. Principles of Safe Moving and Handling

1. Introduction

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD's) are one of the most common causes of occupational ill health. MSD's affect the muscles, joints, tendons and other parts of the musculoskeletal system. It is important to understand the risks associated with manual handling and take appropriate measures to assess and ultimately reduce these risks, so the likelihood of suffering from MSDs such as back pain is reduced.

The objective of this policy is to reduce the risk of injury to those who may be involved in manual handling activities.

2. Risk Assessment

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify hazards, the persons affected, and the degree of risk and to consider suitable means of controlling or eliminating the risk. A Head of Department (HOD) and/or staff must carry out risk assessments for work activities within their area of responsibility.

Risk assessments will help identify if the work can be undertaken without the need to undertake manual handling activities.

If it cannot be considered reasonably practicable to carry out the work without avoiding hazardous manual handling activities, then a Manual Handling Assessment should be completed to identify measures that need to be taken to secure safe working arrangements.

The assessment considers:

- Task
- Individual capability
- Load
- Environment

Specialist assessments involving the movement of students with physical disabilities will be conducted by Learner Services who will provide a moving and handling protocol for these students.

3. Reducing the Risk

The Manual Handling Assessment should decide how best to reduce the risk of injury. A typical list of measures to consider is given below. This list is not exhaustive.

- Eliminate task
- Automate Task
- Use mechanical handling aids
- Share the load
- Reduce the weight of individual items
- Make the load easier to manage or grasp etc
- Improve task layout
- Remove any space constraints
- Improve condition of floors etc

4. Procurement/Maintenance of Equipment

Any additional equipment or furniture will be procured and maintained in accordance with the "Provision and Use of College Work Equipment Policy".

5. Training

Training and refresher training will be given to staff and students involved in manual handling as identified by risk assessment.

Training should not be viewed as a substitute for risk assessment. The need for training as a method of risk reduction needs to be identified as part of the risk assessment process.

6. Principles of Safe Moving and Handling

Moving and handling is a common cause of injury at work. Good manual handling techniques can significantly reduce the risk of injury.

Most staff and students will, at some time, become involved in manual handling tasks in college. This could include carrying books, moving a computer or carrying equipment from one area to another. The following techniques for moving and handling will ensure that moving and handling tasks are undertaken safely and without undue risk of injury.

Before you start

- Think about the job.
Does it need carrying, or can a trolley or other equipment be used instead?
- Think about what you are going to do before you do it.
Where is the load going?
Does it need more than one person to lift it safely?
Is there enough room?
How can you avoid having to twist when lifting or putting the load down?
Think about you.
Are you dressed for the job? Tight clothing can restrict movement. High heels are never suitable.
Do you have a health problem that might make you vulnerable to injury?
- If you are not sure of how heavy a load is, test it out before you try to lift it. Gently rock the load to test the weight and its distribution.
- If you have not been trained, you should not lift more than 15Kg without advice from your Manager.
- Remove any obstructions/tripping hazards from the route.
- Work out where and how to take a rest if moving a heavy load over a long distance.
- Are there any sharp edges? If so, then you may need to wear gloves to protect yourself.
- If load is too bulky, look at ways in which to break it down



Lifting technique

- Place your feet apart to make a stable base for lifting.
- Placing one leg forward in front of the other will help improve balance and control.
- If you have to reach out to the load, try sliding it towards you before attempting to lift it.

If lifting from a low height, bend your knees, NOT your back.

- Stand correctly, keeping your back straight and your chin tucked in.
- Keep your shoulders level and facing the same direction as your hips.
- Lift smoothly, avoiding jerking movements.
- Lift your head first – your back then straightens automatically.
- Grip the load with your palms, rather than just your fingers – If you need to change your grip, rest the load first.
- Keep your arms close to your body to help support the load.

Do not allow the load to obstruct your view. Seek assistance if it is too large.

Moving the load

- When carrying, keep the load as close to the body as possible.
- Keep the heaviest side of the load closest to your body.
- When pulling or pushing, use your body weight to move the load. If possible, let the momentum of the load do some of the work eg when pushing trolleys.
- When pulling, keep your back straight and your arms as close to your body centre line as possible.
- Avoid twisting your body when turning.

