



# Management of Manual handling

## Guidance

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## Introduction

Most activities within the University of Leeds will involve some manual handling activities. However, some staff will have jobs that involve a lot of manual handling and will need particular support, all staff in schools/ services should be aware of the University requirements and how to fulfil these. This guidance clarifies information on how the standard should be interpreted and implemented by all those involved in the manual handling activities.

## Definitions

**Manual handling** - transporting or supporting a load by an individual or a group of people - including lifting, lowering, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving. This includes using a mechanical aid (such as a trolley, pallet truck, sack wheels or powered hoist) which may reduce the manual handling but not eliminate it as effort is still required to move, steady or position the load.

**Workplace manual handling** – manual handling activities (indoor or outdoor), where a person carries out work, research or study.

**Load** - the object to be moved, e.g. box, package, tool or machine, person, animal etc.

## Roles and actions

The health and safety responsibilities of staff, students or visiting personnel are set out in the University Health and Safety Policy (at [www.leeds.ac.uk/safety](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety)). For this protocol the actions below should also be carried out.

### Line managers

- Check and approve that the hazards associated with workplace manual handling are included and controlled in relevant risk assessments, e.g. both activity-based and, where appropriate, specific manual handling risk assessments.

### All staff

- Where necessary include hazards and control measures relating to workplace manual handling in any risk assessments you complete.
- Report any accident or incident related to workplace manual handling through your local systems.
- Take part in any training recommended to you for workplace manual handling.

## Guidance

- **Assessing the hazards associated with workplace manual handling**

Checks need to be carried out to ensure that staff know to include manual handling in risk assessments, where necessary. See additional guidance for when a specific detailed manual handling risk assessment is required. Further advice is also available from the Health and Safety Manager (HSM) and/or Health and Safety Coordinator. There are also various risk assessment courses available, including one on specific manual handling risk assessments, for line managers or staff to undertake (see the health and safety website for details or contact HSM).

- **Risk assessments which could cover manual handling include:**

- a) A general or activity risk assessment - many risk assessments would already include manual handling as a hazard – e.g. office or fieldwork risk assessment.
- b) A specific manual handling activity risk assessment – needs to be completed for lifts carried out by a group of people (2 or more). In addition, it may be needed if people are doing a lot of repetitive manual handling or moving heavy loads – e.g. moving loads up and down stairs, pushing trolleys

over long distances, carrying bulky or heavy equipment, moving loads outside or across fields on fieldwork. (See additional specific guidance for when a specific manual handling risk assessment is required and how to complete this.)

- c) An individual risk assessment –for staff/ students who have a personal health condition and/ or injury which may affect their lifting capabilities, or make them more susceptible to injury from manual handling tasks. As stated in the Health and Safety Policy the individual needs to inform their line manager/ academic tutor (or go confidentially to their Health and Safety Manager) of their health condition and/ or injury.
- d) A new or expectant mother risk assessment – this is for staff/ students who inform their line manager / academic tutor that they are pregnant or are attending the University, after giving birth in the last 6 months or are breast feeding.
- e) A young persons (those under the age of 18) risk assessment – where any manual handling activities need to be included.

Check that these risk assessments include any necessary control measures such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or work equipment (e.g. trolleys, sack wheels etc). These items should be supported by ongoing maintenance, inspection and training and should fulfil the requirements of the Work Equipment protocol. If lifting equipment is used ensure that any additional legal requirements are covered – extra guidance is available from Health and Safety Managers.

Often local health and safety arrangements will include specific control measures such as safe ways to move or lift heavy items – e.g. turning mattresses, delivering computers, moving gas cylinders, etc. Information on these safe ways to work/ study or research should be included in the risk assessments. If in doubt contact the relevant Health and Safety Manager or Health and Safety Coordinator and/or ask for training.

- **Training**

The level of training required by staff will depend on the amount of manual handling carried out. Every member of staff (however much or little manual handling they do) must complete the University's online manual handling training module every 3 years. For those staff who do not have access to computers alternative equivalent training/induction is provided and records kept. (There may be occasional exceptions, e.g. due to health conditions, where the relevant Health and Safety Manager should be contacted.) This will help staff to keep up to date with the essential techniques needed to help prevent injuries – as set out in the Health and Safety Training protocol. Health and Safety Managers can provide online training figures and staff names and training dates, where needed, for schools or services. It is also recommended that any students who carry out manual handling in their study/ research, should undertake the online student training module. People writing manual handling risk assessments should, as a minimum, either be competent in completing manual handling risk assessments and/or have attended the relevant University training course.

Staff who routinely carry out manual handling should also attend a practical University training course (Level 3 Manual Handling or relevant bespoke course – see [www.leeds.ac.uk/safety](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety) for information). Even light objects carried repetitively over time may cause strains and sprains, if the correct manual handling principles are not applied.

Training to use specialist lifting equipment will usually be provided by the equipment manufacturer. Very specific training (e.g. for those handling white goods) are provided by specialists – the relevant Health and Safety Manager can offer advice on this.

- **Accident reporting**

Staff must report any workplace manual handling accident, incident or near miss using the online accident reporting system and your school/service's local processes. If staff are not sure who has access or how to go about this, they should contact Health and Safety Services.

- **Work Equipment**

The risk assessment will occasionally identify the need to use specific equipment to help move, handle, lift items – e.g. trolleys, sliders, scissor tables etc. Check that a system is in place to provide, maintain and inspect these; further information is set out in the health and safety protocol on Work Equipment; or ask the Health and Safety Manager for your school or service.

- **Variation to the Standard**

In very occasional circumstances a variation to the Standard may be required. If this is the case, it is to be agreed in writing by the Head of Health and Safety.

**Any further questions or for further advice, guidance or support please contact the Health and Safety Manager for your school/service.**