

ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS REGULATIONS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

(Version 2)

This document sets out the commitment of the Council of Royal Holloway, University of London to meeting the requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended. It requires that the potential for harm to staff and students as a result of undertaking manual handling operations is either prevented, or where that is not reasonably practicable, is adequately controlled.

To achieve compliance with the requirements of this Policy and Procedure, the Council recognises the importance of its role in placing day-to-day responsibility with each head of department/school/director (hereafter referred to as 'managers'), assisted by their Health and Safety Co-ordinator or other designated member of departmental staff.

The requirements of this Policy are based on the principle that staff and/or students shall not undertake manual handling tasks having the potential to cause harm, unless they have, in the first instance, been risk assessed. Where the risk assessment identifies it to be necessary, prior to an activity being undertaken, appropriate training shall be provided, together with any essential manual handling and personal protective equipment being available.

It is not the purpose of this document to provide a comprehensive guide to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations. It does, however, provide an outline of their requirements and the action to be taken. Supplemented with the training that will be available to those designated to undertake the manual handling risk assessment process, it will enable comprehensive management action to be taken to control potential hazards and risks at the departmental level.

Section 1 – What does manual handling mean?

Manual Handling is the transportation or supporting of a load (including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving) by hand or by bodily force. The term 'load' includes objects, people and animals.

Note: Mechanical assistance, such as the use of a sack truck, may reduce but not eliminate manual handling since effort will still be required to move, steady or position a load.

Section 2 – What is required under the regulations and what do managers need to do?

Where staff and/or students are required to undertake manual handling activities, managers must ensure that the following hierarchy of risk control measures is in place as required under the Regulations:

- (i) Eliminate or avoid the need for hazardous manual handling**
Undertake a review of manual handling tasks to establish, in the first instance, whether these need to be undertaken or whether less hazardous options are available. For the tasks

remaining, identify who might be harmed in undertaking them, how, and the harm that may be caused.

(ii) For those manual handling activities that remain, assess the risk of injury

Departmental assessments shall be conducted by those trained to do so (such training being provided by a member of the College Health and Safety Office). Copies of the College's manual handling assessment checklists are available on the Health and Safety Office website.

Most assessments will require just a few minutes observation to identify ways to make an activity easier and less risky (i.e. less physically demanding). In doing so they will also identify any existing controls and whether these are adequate.

Departmental assessors should ensure that staff undertaking manual handling activities are involved in this risk assessment process.

(iii) From the information gathered from the assessment, reduce the risk of injury

Take such action as is identified to be necessary from the risk assessment. This will include:

- The provision of information, instruction and training to those required to undertake manual handling tasks;
- The provision of such equipment (e.g. sack truck) as may be identified to be necessary to reduce the risk of injury, so far as that is reasonably practicable;
- Ensuring that 'safe systems of work' are in place.

(iv) Review the assessment and revise it if necessary

Having implemented the controls, ensure that they are reviewed and revised at least annually, or more frequently where the assessment identified this to be necessary.

Where the risk assessment establishes that funding is required to implement improvements they shall be met from the departmental budget. In the event that financial resources do not permit such action, the matter must be referred without delay, to the next level of management.

Section 3 - Staff/Student Responsibilities

Staff and students have a responsibility not to undertake any manual handling activities that may cause themselves or others harm and adhere to the information, instruction and training provided. They must immediately bring instances having the potential to cause harm to the attention of their immediate line manager.

Section 4 – Manual Handling Risk Assessments and Training

Managers shall ensure that no member of their staff undertakes risk assessments until trained to do so by a member of the College Health and Safety Office, and that personnel undertaking manual handling duties are provided with sufficient information, instruction and training and, where appropriate, equipment to undertake tasks safely.

Members of staff of the Health & Safety Office are available to assist with the identification of the need for and the undertaking of risk assessments and wherever possible, provide the training

identified to be necessary. They shall also provide advice and assistance to managers and those undertaking risk assessments, on the action they need to take to ensure the safe execution of manual handling activities undertaken by them, or on their behalf.

Note: Any manual handling practical skills training that cannot be provided by College Health and Safety Office staff shall be provided by an external training provider, and approved by the Health & Safety Adviser.

Section 5 – Monitoring Compliance with the Requirements of this Policy

The duties prescribed under this Policy are designed to ensure the safety of personnel. Each department's compliance with the requirements of this Policy will be reviewed by members of the College Health and Safety Office during the health and safety audit process.

This Policy and Procedure forms part of the College's Health and Safety Policy.

Definitions

“Reasonably Practicable”

Place on one hand the quantum level of risk and on the other the money, time, or trouble involved in averting the risk. If there is a gross disproportion between them with the risk being insignificant in relation to the sacrifice then you will have proven that compliance was not reasonably practicable.

‘Safe System of Work’

This will include the requirement for information, instruction and training and may also include elements such as are identified below which may only be possible to determine in the light of the actual situation, on the spot, at the relevant time:

- A physical environment that is ‘safe’ in which to undertake specific tasks.
- The sequence in which tasks may need to be undertaken.
- The provision of an adequate level of supervision.
- The provision of written instructions.
- The provision of the correct equipment.
- Such other measures as may be appropriate based on the level of risk involved.

Dr Richard Fisk
Health and Safety Adviser
Version 2
26/10/2009

'In accordance with the College's commitment to equality and diversity, this Policy has been written and screened to avoid discrimination and promote a positive approach to race, disability and gender issues. Comments on the content of this document should be directed to Mrs Leanie DuToit in the College Health and Safety Office.'