



St Peter's College

MANUAL HANDLING

Reference: University Safety Office, Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (S7/99).

General

1. A considerable number of University and College employees are involved in manual handling and lifting operations. Loads likely to cause injuries do not always cause musculo-skeletal injuries. During manual handling and lifting operations accidents can easily happen which cause injuries to the head, hands or feet.

2. There are two clear duties identified in the assessments made under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992:

a. Identify those manual handling and lifting operations which are likely to involve a risk of injury.

b. Avoid the need for manual handling operations involving a risk of injury, so far as is reasonably practicable. This will usually take the form of redesigning the tasks or providing mechanical assistance.

Risk Assessment

3. If a formal risk assessment is required, please refer to the College's policy on how to complete one. It's likely that most risk assessments will be made at the time when a load requires manual handling. The following factors, not necessarily exhaustive, should be taken into consideration:

a. The Task.

(1) How is the load to be manipulated?

(2) What is the impact upon posture if load is to be handled manually (a very significant factor is to avoid twisting whilst lifting).

(3) Is stooping involved?

(4) How far is the load to be moved?

(5) What is the number of similar tasks to be carried out?

(6) How many people are involved?

b. The Load.

(1) How heavy?

(2) Is it bulky or unwieldy?

(3) Is it likely to be or become unstable?

(4) Is it sharp or difficult to grasp?

c. The Environment.

- (1) How much of space is there around the operation against how much is needed?
- (2) What type of floor or work surface is there in the area of the operation, en route and in the destination area?
- (3) Is lighting throughout the operation adequate?

d. Individual Capabilities.

- (1) What is the strength of the person or persons expected to undertake the operation?
- (2) Individual characteristics ie man or woman and age.
- (3) Are there any existing health problems of the employee(s)?

4. Reducing the Risk. The assessment should decide how best to reduce the risk of injury. A typical list of measures, again not exhaustive, to consider is:

- a. Eliminate task.
- b. Automate task.
- c. Use mechanical handling aids.
- d. Share the load.
- e. Reduce the weight of individual items.
- f. Make the load easier to manage or grasp etc.
- g. Improve task layout.
- h. Use the body more efficiently.
- i. Remove any space constraints.
- j. Improve conditions of floors etc.

5. College Manual Handling Assessor. Where any doubt exists with respect to manual handling, the College's manual handling assessor (and see the Statement of Safety Organisation) should be consulted.

6. Manual Handling Aids. Where any lifting operation requires the use of a mechanical aid, requisite checks as required by Lifting Operations and Lifting Machinery Regulations 1998 (LOLER 98) may be needed. A copy of the regulations can be downloaded without charge from the HSE web site.

CJ Scotcher

Acting Bursar

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