



## MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS

*This Policy Standard states the requirements placed on Colleges and Departments to ensure manual handling operations, associated with their activities, are carried out safely. This in order to ensure the health, safety and well-being of staff, students and others performing such tasks on behalf of a College / School / Department.*

*The Policy Standard also states the duties and responsibilities placed on staff, students and others when undertaking such tasks.*

### **The document applies to:**

- *All Colleges and Departments.*
- *All staff, students and others undertaking manual handling tasks on behalf of a College, School or Department.*

### **The document does not apply to:**

- *Manual handling operations associated with a Contractor's undertakings.*

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Bangor University, so far as is reasonably practicable, but in accordance with the relevant legislation, statutory requirements and good practice, to ensure the health and safety of staff, students and visitors to the University.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

In addition to those general duties in law, the University and its constituent Colleges and Departments, have a specific obligation under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended), to assess the risks associated with manual handling operations and introduce measures to, so far as is reasonably practicable, eliminate or control risks.

The following definitions will apply:

- *Manual Handling Operation*: The moving of items; either by lifting, lowering, carrying, pushing or pulling.

## 3. BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION

Manual handling injuries are part of a wider group of 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. Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WRMSDs) could affect muscles, joints and tendons in all parts of the body. Most work-related MSDs develop over time.

Statistics from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) indicate that MSD cases, including those caused by manual handling, account for more than a third of all work-related illnesses reported each year. 2014 / 2015 estimates show that in Great Britain:

- The total number of WRMSDs cases (prevalence) accounted for 44% of all work related illnesses/cases.
- An estimated 9.5 million working days were lost due to WRMSDs, an average of 17 days lost for each case. This represents 40% of all days lost due to work related ill health in 2014/15.

In order to prevent injuries and the potential long term health impacts associated with manual handling activities, employers must seek to avoid manual handling operations, so far as is reasonably practicable, by redesigning the task to avoid moving the load or by automating or mechanising the process. If this is not possible, a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks from hazardous manual handling operations must be prepared with appropriate controls put in place to reduce risks.

## 4. DUTIES OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University has a general duty to take all reasonable steps to secure the health and safety of staff, students and / or other persons performing manual handling operations on behalf of a College / School / Department.

## 5. COLLEGE / SCHOOL / DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

This Policy Standard establishes the fundamental principles for managing the risks associated with manual handling operations undertaken by staff, students and others as part of a College / School / Department activity.

Each Dean of College and Head of Department must ensure the following management arrangements are implemented to eliminate manual handling operations, or, where this is not possible, reduce the risks arising from a handling task. Management arrangements must:

- a. Identify all manual handling operations within their area of responsibility.

- b. Dependent on the nature of handling operations (e.g. frequency, complexity), nominate a competent member of staff to act as a local 'Manual Handling Assessor'<sup>1</sup>.
- c. Undertake a preliminary appraisal of manual handling operations utilising the Health and Safety Executive's MAC Tool (see Further Guidance below).
- d. Arrange for a more detailed Risk Assessment (if the preliminary appraisal indicates one is required), that considers the task to be performed and the varying needs posed by individuals performing the task, e.g. physical capabilities.
- e. Establish controls, as directed by the Risk Assessment.
- f. Purchase suitable mechanical aids, if required by the Risk Assessment.
- g. Inspect and maintain aids as necessary to ensure they remain in good working order<sup>2</sup>.
- h. Provide appropriate instruction, training and supervision to staff, students and others performing manual handling operations to make them aware of the potential risks associated with the task and the correct techniques and equipment to use.
- i. Review the Risk Assessments regularly, with updates communicated as needed.
- j. Ensure handling related accidents and incidents are reported to Health and Safety Services promptly and investigated accordingly, with action taken where possible, to prevent a reoccurrence of the event.
- k. Maintain records as required, e.g. Risk Assessments, training, inspections / maintenance and statutory records<sup>2</sup>.

## 6. DUTIES OF STAFF, STUDENTS AND OTHERS

All staff, students and others eg volunteers performing manual handling tasks as part of a College / School / Department activity must:

- a. Follow all instruction and training provided to ensure their health, safety and well-being when performing the manual handling task.
- b. Use equipment provided to minimise manual handling activities and risks.
- c. Never struggle to undertake a task outside of their physical capabilities and / or training and instruction.
- d. Inform their Supervisor, Line Manager, and H&S Coordinator or directly to Health and Safety Services, immediately of anything, including illnesses or medical conditions, which could affect their fitness to perform manual handling tasks.
- e. Report any concerns, accidents or incidents to their Supervisor, Line Manager, and H&S Coordinator or directly to Health and Safety Services immediately.

## 7. FURTHER GUIDANCE

Please visit the University's Health and Safety Website for further information and signposting to relevant authoritative guidance, including the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) 'tool' for identifying and assessing manual handling risks ([HSE INDG383 \(rev2\): Manual Handling Assessment Charts - the MAC Tool](#)).

<sup>1</sup> Contact Health and Safety Services for further information regarding Manual Handling Assessor Training.

<sup>2</sup> The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) applies to some lifting aids eg pallet trucks. Such items must be notified to the University Insurance Officer to ensure a competent engineer undertakes statutory examinations.

## **8. REVIEW AND AUDIT PROCEDURES**

Health and Safety Services will carry out general and periodic audits to ensure compliance against this Policy Standard and legislation in general.

Colleges / Departments must periodically review their own procedures to ensure the requirements of this Policy Standard are implemented, suitable and effective.

In addition, the University's Health and Safety Committee may from time to time review the effectiveness of this Policy Standard.

**End.**