

Health Safety and Wellbeing - Manual Handling Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

- (1) Ensure that Victoria University has a system established to eliminate or risk of injury, as far as reasonably possible, to all employees, students, contractors and volunteers from hazardous manual handling
- (2) Describe what manual handling is and how it may be hazardous to people
- (3) Prescribe a system of identification of hazards involved in manual handling tasks
- (4) Provide instruction on controlling hazardous manual handling for all tasks in relation to work at the University or in relation to any activity under the control of the University.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

- (5) This procedure applies across the University and to all University employees.

Section 3 - Definitions

- (6) Nil

Section 4 - Policy Statement

- (7) See [Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Resonsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Everyone working at VU	Take care to avoid injury by knowing their own ability and limitations. Follow instructions on minimising hazardous manual handling tasks. Attend training on manual handling and risk minimisation if required to carry out their roles safely. Identify manual handling tasks in relation to their own work and environment. Assist others in minimising hazardous manual handling in all aspects of work.
Executives and Leaders	Encourage discussion and introduction of innovative identification and control of hazardous manual handling tasks. Monitor information on manual handling injuries, ensure controls are reviewed and allocate reasonable resources for implementation.

Roles	Responsibility
Managers and Supervisors	Identify hazardous manual handling tasks within job descriptions and particular tasks. Use hazard identification tools prior to any purchase and/or before introducing any new task or equipment to the workplace or activities. Ensure induction, instruction, training and supervision is provided to all employees, students and others to eliminate or minimise hazardous manual handling. Provide mechanical and other aids to control hazardous manual handling in the workplace and in relation to work related activities. Continually review the risk control measures.
Teachers, Academic Staff and Researchers	Provide induction, instruction, training and supervision to minimise hazardous manual handling tasks for themselves and their students. Use hazard identification tools prior to any purchase and/or before introducing any new task or equipment to University activities.
OHS Team	Provide advice on minimising hazardous manual handling as requested. Ensure distribution of any information on innovative manual handling controls, issue alerts and improve procedures where necessary. Source and coordinate appropriate training for the minimisation of hazards in manual handling tasks. Monitor results when new controls have been introduced as required.

Part B - General

(8) Manual handling is physical exertion by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any object. Most manual handling activities are not hazardous if undertaken for limited periods of time and within the ability of the individual. Identifying those tasks which have the potential to cause injury is necessary to establish safe work practices as required in the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#), and the [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007](#).

(9) The risk of injury associated with manual handling increases with tasks that involve:

- a. repetitive or sustained application of high force;
- b. repetitive or sustained awkward posture;
- c. repetitive or sustained movement;
- d. application of high force being an activity involving a single or repetitive use of force that it would be unreasonable to expect that a person in the workforce could undertake;
- e. exposure to sustained vibration;
- f. handling live people or animals; and
- g. handling of unstable or unbalanced loads that are difficult to grasp or hold.

(10) The identification and control of manual handling tasks must be a regular part of business for all employees. The identification, planning and implementation of controls should be done in consultation with employees directly performing the tasks for all activities. The process of hazard identification and risk control for manual handling will be recorded using guidance documents provided on the OHS intranet site which include:

- a. ohs risk assessment for activities in laboratories, practicals, excursions and field trips to be used before introducing new activities;
- b. ohs risk assessment for events to be used when planning events;
- c. ohs procurement checklists to be used prior to purchasing new equipment, goods or services;
- d. workplace inspection checklists to be used for regular workplace inspections;
- e. ohs risk assessment for activities in laboratories, practicals, excursions and field trips to be used when reviewing work practices and class plans whether the activity changes or not; and
- f. computer workstation adjustment worksheet to be used for office based work.

(11) Control measures for minimising the risk of injury due to hazardous manual handling include:

- a. altering the layout;

- b. monitoring and making changes to the environment including heating, cooling and vibration in locations where manual handling may be undertaken;
- c. monitoring and changing the system of work (processes and techniques);
- d. changing the objects used in the task involving manual handling e.g. handles on items, decreasing size, weight or resistance; and
- e. use of mechanical aids such as hoists, trolleys, pulleys and lifts.

(12) All students, staff, contractors and volunteers should be briefed on manual handling hazards identified inherent in their role during inductions, as well as being instructed in correct procedures, use of equipment or other controls to protect them from injury directly prior to performing tasks which have manual handling hazards and informed of their obligations to follow the established procedures.

Section 6 - Guidelines

(13) Nil

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