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**Manual handling of inanimate loads – guidance and risk assessment form**

**Considerations for carrying out an inanimate loads manual handling risk assessment:**

* **the task** – does it involve holding the load away from the trunk, twisting, stooping, reaching upwards, carrying for long distances, pushing, pulling, insufficient rest or recovery breaks?
* **the load** – is it heavy, bulky, difficult to grasp, unstable or intrinsically harmful (sharp edges/hot)?
* **the working environment** – are there constraints on posture, poor floors, various levels and steps, extremes in temperatures and humidity, poor lighting levels, working outside?
* **the individual capability** – does the job require unusual capabilities, is it hazardous to those with existing health problems, hazardous to those who are pregnant, and/or is specific training required?

**Inanimate object guidelines**

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| **The task*** Bending and stooping to lift a load significantly increases the risk of back injury.
* Items should ideally be lifted from no lower than knee height to no higher than shoulder height. Outside this range, lifting capacity is reduced and the risk of injury is increased (please see Figure 1 below). Where items need to be lifted from above shoulder height, a stand or suitable means of access should be used.
* Items which are pushed or pulled should be as near to waist level as possible.
* Pushing is preferable, particularly where the handler can rest his or her back against a fixed object to give leverage.
* Carrying distances should be minimised, especially if the task is regularly repeated.
* Repetitive tasks should be avoided wherever possible.
* Tasks that involve lifting and carrying should be designed in such a way as to allow for sufficient rest breaks to avoid fatigue.
* Wherever possible avoid tasks that require twisting the body.
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| **The load*** The load should be kept as near as possible to the body trunk to reduce strain and should not be so big that it obscures vision.
* An indication of the weight of the load and its centre of gravity should be provided where appropriate.
* Unstable loads should be handled with particular caution. Any change in the centre of gravity is likely to result in overbalancing.
* Ensure that there is a secure handhold, using gloves where necessary to protect against sharp edges, splinters and high or low load temperatures.
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| **NB - There is no such thing as a completely ‘safe’ manual handling operation. But working within the guidelines of Figure 1 Lifting and Lowering, Manual Handling at Work: a brief guide, will cut the risk and reduce the need for a more detailed assessment.** |  |

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| **The individual*** consider age, body weight and physical fitness.
* Have regard to personal limitations; employees must not attempt to handle loads that are beyond their individual capability and assistance must be sought where this is necessary.
* Persons with genuine physical or clinical reasons for avoiding lifting should have allowances made for this, as should expectant mothers, who should not be required to undertake hazardous lifting or carrying tasks.
* Sufficient knowledge and understanding of the work is an important factor in reducing the risk of injury.
* Individuals undertaking lifting or carrying must be given suitable instruction, training and information to enable them to undertake the task with minimum risk.
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| **The working environment*** There must be adequate space to enable the activity to be conducted in safety and the transportation route must be free from obstruction.
* Lighting, heating and weather conditions must be taken into account.
* Floors and other working surfaces must be in a safe condition.
* Adequate ventilation is required, particularly where there is no natural ventilation.
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| **Other factors*** Personal protective equipment (PPE) may be necessary for staff who are carrying out manual handling activities.
* If the use of PPE restricts safe and easy movement, this should be reported.
* Constant interruptions from other workers must be avoided, as this can reduce an individual’s concentration.
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**Manual handling of loads**

**Risk assessment checklist**

**This checklist will remind you of the main points to think about while you:**

* consider the risk of injury form moving and handling tasks
* identify the steps that can remove or reduce the risk
* decide your priorities for action.

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| **Section 1a The Task** |
| **Task reference number:……………………………………………….****Brief description of task:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..****Location: …………………………………………………………………………………………… Date: ……………………………………………………..****Assessor’s name: …………………………………………………………… Title: ………………………………………………………………………….****Assessor’s signature:……………………………………………………………………. Review date: ………………………………………….****Overall priority for remedial action: Nil/High/Medium/Low** **Date by which action has to be taken: ……………………… ………………** |

**Section 1b:**

1. Does the task involve a significant risk of injury? If ‘**Yes**’, go to Q2. If **‘No’,** there is no need to continue with the assessment**. YES/NO (circle as appropriate)**

2. Can the task be avoided/mechanised/automated at a reasonable cost? If **‘No’** go to Risk Assessment. If **‘Yes’** proceed and then check the result is satisfactory. **YES/NO**

# General manual handling risk assessment

Inanimate load training

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| Name of premises |  |
| Area of premises covered by this assessment |  |
| Staff covered by this assessment |  |
| Assessor(s) and job titles  |
| Name ……………………………………Job title ………………….……………. | Name ……………………………………Job title ………………….……………. |
| Date of assessment  |  | Date of review |  |

The generic risk assessment for manual handling is designed to identify manual handling hazards in the workplace and quantify the associated risks. Information is gathered in the first sections in order to select reasonably practicable and appropriate control measures – which are then listed in the action plan. The questions posed are not an exhaustive list – each assessor should include factors which may be particular to their own workplace. In cases where the required action may take some time to fund and implement it may be necessary to also specify short-term control measures in order to reduce risks to acceptable levels. The assessment follows the TILE(E) formula:

**T(asks):** All moving and handling tasks within the area of this assessment.

**I(ndividual** The levels of staff expertise and training (techniques

**capabilities):** and equipment) and the requirement for individual assessments. *Cross-refer with the register of staff at risk from manual handling at work.*

**L(oads):** The level of object handling required within the scope of this assessment.

**E(nvironment):** Constraints due to environmental features or available space.

**E(quipment):** The quantity and suitability of current moving and handling equipment. *Cross refer with the register of Manual Handling Equipment*

Some information may be duplicated between the other sections of the generic risk assessment or individual student or staff member assessments. In such cases cross-reference should be made between the documents to avoid duplication.

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| **Section one - Tasks** | **Give details of occasions and frequency** |
| Do current handling tasks require lifting or supporting loads over the recommended lifting and lowering limits (1 or more staff)? |  |
| Do tasks require holding or moving loads away from the body i.e. on the floor / low shelves? Or in sustained stooping postures? |  |
| Do tasks require excessive pushing/pulling forces e.g. up/down ramps or across high friction floors? |  |
| Do any tasks require a high frequency of repetition within a short time period (e.g. unloading large amounts of delivered stores?  |  |
| Do tasks carried out away from the premises cause particular handling difficulties (e.g. operating warning lights)? |  |
| Are any handling tasks carried out in areas of higher risk – e.g. on ladders / roofs? |  |
| Review the accident logbook for moving and handling incidents – have all contributing hazards been identified and moderated? |  |
| Additional notes  |
| Indicate the level of risk due to the current **task** factors |
| Risk classification (severity x likelihood)Circle one category | High  | Medium  | Low |

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| **Section two – Individual capability** | **Site management staff** | **Domestic staff** |
|  **(Specify employed staff or sub-contracted)** |
| Number of staff registered as being at risk of manual handling injury at work |  |  |
| Number of staff who currently require initial or update training in moving and handling |  |  |
|  ***Yes/no – give details*** |
| Have all staff received on-site supervision and instruction in the use of specific equipment and techniques (as detailed in written guidelines)? |  |
| Do any staff members require individual assessments for health reasons? |  |
| Do any tasks require unusual strength or capability – or pose a risk to those that might be pregnant or suffer from previous injury? |  |
| **Additional notes:** |
| Indicate the level of risk due to the current **individual** factors |
| Risk classification (severity x likelihood)Circle one category | High  | Medium  | Low |

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| **Section three – Loads** | **Give details and frequency of handling as appropriate** |
| Are heavy loads accurately labelled as to contents and weight? |  |
| Are handled loads large, unwieldy or difficult to grasp? |  |
| Are handled loads unstable or poorly balanced? |  |
| Are loads inherently more difficult to handle – e.g. hot, sharp, fragile? |  |
| **Additional notes:** |
| Indicate the level of risk due to the current **load** factors |
| Risk classification (severity x likelihood)Circle one category | High | Medium | Low |

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| **Section four – Environment and Equipment** | **Give details of location (storage areas, external buildings etc.)** |
| Does lack of space constrain posture or suitable equipment for any tasks?  |  |
| Are any of the floors slippery, sloping, stepped or uneven? |  |
| Are any loads stored in low or inaccessible storage areas? |  |
| Are areas likely to be cluttered with obstacles that prevent easy access? |  |
| Is the current equipment provision suitable, sufficient and available in all areas (e.g. trolleys)?  |  |
| Is there a system in place to record faults in equipment and to maintain cleanliness and function of equipment? |  |
| Are there currently any plans for alteration of the building to improve accessibility? | **Yes already underway** | **Yes, as part of accessibility plan/service delivery plan** | **no** |
| **Additional notes:** |
| Indicate the level of risk due to the current **environment** and **equipment** factors |
| Risk classification (severity x likelihood)Circle one category | High | Medium | Low |

Generic Risk Assessment – Inanimate Loads

ACTION PLAN

The action plan should contain details of control measures to bring the risks identified on the previous page down to acceptable levels. There may be a range of potential measures – both short term and long term. For example an identified risk may be the unloading and storing of a regular supply of ordered goods. Short term control measures might be to purchase a trolley or to write guidelines on good handling and the number of staff required. A longer term measure might be the reorganising or enlarging of storage space if necessary. To demonstrate that a control measure is the most reasonably practicable it may be useful to give details of other strategies and the reasons why they have been rejected.

Consider these control measures, in no particular order: written guidelines (generic / specific), labelling of objects (weight / contents), alteration to the environment, provision of equipment, staff training, potential control measures for consideration.

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| Identified risk factors | Short term control measures (person responsible) | Target date and date of completion | Long term control measures (person responsible) | Target date and date of completion |
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