

Estates Development and Projects

Manual Handling Policy

The following describes how the Estates Division will discharge its duties under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 Regulation i.e. to – “reduce the risk associated with manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable” regarding the transportation of materials to and from Imperial College London construction sites.

Statistics show that manual handling is one of the most common causes of absence through injury in the workplace. More than one-third of lost time accidents are caused in this way at an estimated cost of £130 million per annum. These injuries may often have long-term effects, severely affecting earning potential and subsequently lifestyle and leisure activities for the individuals and their families.

This policy is intended to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries and provide guidance on the measures that could and should be taken, to ensure the safety of individuals transporting materials during construction activities. The intention is to:

- produce a suitable and sufficient risk assessment based on industry best practice.
- identify and provide mechanical handling aids where possible and appropriate to the task.
- planning and developing the work schedules to minimise the requirement for manual handling.
- provide appropriate manual handling training for those employees identified as requiring it.
- Daily Activity Briefing's (DABs) used to identify, assess, discuss and review relevant Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) with the team undertaking the works to ensure it is adequate for the task.

The term 'manual handling' is used to denote any job or task where human effort is needed to move an object, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, etc.

It is our policy to ensure individuals are not exposed to poor manual handling techniques by eliminating risks where possible, reducing risk levels where elimination is not possible by the use of mechanical aids where appropriate, for example pallet trucks, trolleys, etc. An assessment of manual handling activities will be carried out by competent persons. Risks which are identified should be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable. The following TILE factors should be considered during the assessment:

- **The Task**
- **The Individual**
- **The Load**
- **The working Environment**

Task

Projects around the campus can bring all sorts of hazards and risks during the unloading and loading of materials around site work areas and from unloading delivery vehicles. Mechanical aids can be used during the unloading process and can include hi-ab vehicles, tail-lifts and moffett truck mounted forklifts.

Once unloaded, the task needs to suitably assessed to ensure the materials to be moved can be moved either mechanically or the need for tools. If operatives are required, then suitable team lifts should be considered and appropriate measures taken with suitable training and supervision.

The following are examples of construction industry best practice. Imperial College London Estates will want to see evidence of these controls being used on our construction sites where elimination is not possible and manual handling has to be resorted to:

Good Practice Aids (Materials)	Example Image
<p>Trolleys (Pipework, general materials)</p>	
<p>Wheels (Tubular systems)</p>	
<p>Pallet Trucks (Deliveries on pallets, materials moved to pallets for storage). Trucks can be motorised or hand pumped.</p>	

	
<p>Glass Handling Units</p>	
<p>Mini Hoists (Lifting of duct work to height)</p>	 
<p>Pallets & Ramps (Safe movement of materials avoid any changes in ground levels)</p>	

	
<p>Loading Out and Storage</p>	
<p>Miscellaneous (removal of heavy waste)</p>	
<p>Moveable Storage Units</p>	

Individual

Consideration must be given to the operative's age, body weight and physical fitness. They should be fit for work and suitably assessed to ensure they have significant knowledge and understanding of their work as this is an important factor in reducing the risk of injury.

Regard must be given to personal limitation, operatives must not attempt to handle those which are beyond their individual capability. Assistance must be sought where this is necessary. Individuals undertaking lifting or carrying must be given suitable instruction, training and information to undertake the task with minimum risk.

Managers or supervisors must ensure that manual handling assessments are carried out with relevant records kept. They should ensure that employees are properly supervised and adequate information and training is provided to persons carrying out manual handling activities with special arrangements made, when necessary, for individuals with health conditions who could be adversely affected by manual handling operations.

Before works start, suitable information and training, must be provided to persons who are required to carry out manual handling activities. Training needs will be identified and reviewed by the Supervisor in charge of the works and if required, refresher training will also be given at reasonable intervals. DABs must be used to discuss and agree the methodology with the teams selected to undertake the task to ensure all are in agreement of how the works are to be completed.

Load

Operatives must be informed of the approximate weight of loads which are handled and objects which have eccentric weight distribution. Poor lifting and carrying techniques can result in discomfort and increase the risk of injury. In extreme circumstances, these injuries can have permanent effects. These risks can be reduced by adopting the following simple precautions:

- Ensuring that formalised systems of work have been designed for the work activity are complied with.
- Make full and proper use of aids to lifting and carrying, such as trolleys, and lifting equipment (examples provided previously within this document).
- Ensure that regular rest breaks are taken where manual handling activities are repetitive to prevent the onset of fatigue.
- Ensure that walkways are free from obstructions.
- Make full and proper use of personal protective equipment.
- Report any problems or concerns associated with manual handling operations to a responsible person without delay.

Environment

In most locations around the College, the working area will be shared alongside users occupying adjacent rooms. It is important that during procurement the size of materials needed for work are recorded and that smaller deliveries are made in more manageable bundles to be stored in the working area as storage space is at a premium.

The tidiness of the site should be monitored regularly and storage areas kept clear with moveable racks and bins used as needed and as highlighted previously within this document.

All policy objectives are agreed by our contractors through monthly meetings of the Safety, Health, Environmental Leadership Team (SHELT). The monitoring of manual handling controls will take place during the Client's regular RAG Health & Safety inspections. Breaches of legislation and this policy that is witnessed on site will be discussed with the Site Manager in the first instance, to ensure agreed improvements are being implemented in a timely manner. The final score for the RAG Health & Safety inspection report, in respect of breaches of this policy will be discussed and agreed with the Head of Health and Safety – Estates Projects, before the report is issued.