



# POLICY

**Policy Title:** Hazardous Manual Tasks

**Policy Owner:** Director Human Resources Service Centre

**Keywords:** 1) Manual 2) Handling 3) OHS

**Policy Code:** PL150 [hr100]

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## 1. INTENT

This policy aims to achieve the University's goal of providing and maintaining, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy work environment for its workers, students and visitors.

The University will, so far as is practicable, ensure its workers are not exposed to workplace hazards that have the potential to cause manual handling injuries.

This policy outlines the University's policy related to identification, assessment and control of hazardous manual tasks.

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

All Edith Cowan University (ECU) workers and contractors

### 3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
ECU	Edith Cowan University
Hazard	Anything that may result in injury or harm to health
Hazardous manual task	A manual task that involves any of the following: a) repetitive or sustained force; b) high or sudden force; c) repetitive movement; d) sustained or awkward posture; e) exposure to vibration.
Manual task	Any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain a person, animal or thing.
Worker	A person who carries out work in any capacity for ECU, including work as: a) an employee; or b) a contractor or subcontractor; or c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor; or d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking; or e) an apprentice or trainee; or f) a student gaining work experience; or g) a volunteer.

### 4. POLICY CONTENT

#### 4.1 Identifying and Assessing Hazardous Manual Tasks

Hazardous manual tasks must be assessed in accordance with the WorkSafe WA Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice. The assessment is the responsibility of the manager/supervisor who has control of that work area.

##### 4.1.1 Consultation

1. Assessment and control of hazardous manual tasks must be carried out in consultation with the relevant workers, health and safety representatives and /or the health and safety committee as appropriate.
2. This consultation must occur:
  - a) In the planning/design stage of new projects or modifications to the existing workplace;
  - b) Where options or decisions are being considered on control measures;
  - c) When assessment and the effectiveness of the control measure are being reviewed; and
  - d) When assessing work tasks that have contributed to a manual handling injury.

3. Consultation, co-operation and co-ordination of activities with all other persons who have a work health or safety duty in relation to the same matter must be undertaken, so far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984.

## **4.2 Control Measures**

### **4.2.1 Minimising Risk**

In accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996, the risk of injury or illness associated with manual tasks in the workplace must be eliminated, or, if this is not reasonably practicable, the risk must be minimised.

Minimising a risk may involve:

- a) Changing the design of the work area and the layout of the workplace where the hazardous manual task is carried out;
- b) Changing the systems of work used to perform the hazardous manual task;
- c) Changing the nature, size, weight or number of things involved in the performance of the hazardous manual task, including anything to which the task relates and any plant or other thing used in performing the task;
- d) Providing mechanical aids to perform or assist in performing the hazardous manual task;
- e) Changing the environment in which the hazardous manual task is performed; or
- f) Using any combination of the above measures.

### **4.2.2 Design Requirements**

- Managers and supervisors must ensure that, so far as is practicable:
  - a) Plant, equipment and containers used by University workers are designed, constructed and maintained to minimise hazardous manual tasks; and
  - b) Work practices involving manual handling are assessed in accordance with the Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice.
- University purchasing specifications should specify the use and functions of plant and equipment, and where possible the general performance characteristics required to reduce the risk of manual handling injury.

### **4.2.3 Designers, Manufacturers, Importers and Suppliers**

- Designers, manufacturers, importers or suppliers of any plant or equipment intended for use at the University must meet their statutory obligations to ensure that the design and construction is such that workers who properly use the plant and equipment are not exposed to risk of injury or harm to health as a result of performing manual handling tasks connected with its use.
- This responsibility also includes a requirement to test the plant and equipment, and to provide on supply adequate information regarding any associated hazards and safe use.

#### **4.2.4 Information, Instruction and Training**

- If a manual task remains hazardous after appropriate methods outlined in 4.2.1 of this Policy have been adopted, the risk must be minimised by providing information, training and instruction.
- Faculties and Service Centres who engage the services of a contractor have a responsibility to ensure that the contractor is advised of manual handling risks involving University plant and equipment.

#### **4.3 Reviewing Control Measures**

Once control measures have been implemented they must be reviewed in order to ensure they are working effectively.

#### **4.4 Costs**

- 4.4.1** The cost of implementing hazardous manual task controls associated with the introduction of new plant and equipment are the responsibility of the Faculty or Service Centre.
- 4.4.2** Faculties and Service Centres implementing corrective work practices and procedures, or changes to existing practices will be in the first instance expected to meet the costs from their own budget.
- 4.4.3** If appropriate, funding may be requested through the University Health and Safety Committee. Funding approval will be at the discretion of the Executive Director (Administration).

### **5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In relation to this policy, the following positions are responsible for the following

#### *Policy Owner*

The Policy Owner the Director Human Resources Service Centre has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation in ECU.

#### *Health and Safety*

The Health and Safety Office is responsible for maintaining Information relating to the University's manual handling injury prevention programme and copies of risk assessment reports provided by consultants

#### *Faculties and Service Centres*

Faculties and Service Centres are responsible for keeping original copies of consultant's reports and internal risk assessment reports as well as maintaining details of risk control measures and design modifications to plant and equipment.

#### *Staff/students/contractors*

Staff/students/contractors are required to comply with the content of this policy and to seek guidance in the event of uncertainty as to its application.

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

6.1 Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are as follows:

- University Health and Safety Policy [HR081], available from the Health and Safety pages of the HR Service Centre website.
- Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice available online through the WorkSafe Western Australia website.

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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## 8. APPROVAL HISTORY

Policy Approved by:	Vice-Chancellor
Date Policy First Approved:	1995 October 2009 (Vice-Chancellor)
Date last modified:	November 2013
Revision History:	March 2010: Policy amended to comply with University Guidelines re Drafting of Policy Documents November 2013: Policy amended to align with new policy template
Next Revision Due:	November 2016
TRIM File Reference	SUB/12558 (Previous Trim File: 95/3220)