

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline how potentially hazardous manual handling tasks in the Department of Education and Training (DET) workplaces are identified, assessed, controlled, monitored and reviewed.

2. Scope

The procedure applies to all DET schools, central and regional offices.

3. Procedure

Hazardous manual handling has been identified by DET as a mandated hazard requiring management in all Victorian Government Schools. It must be included in the OHS Risk Register of each workplace.

3.1 Identify hazardous manual handling tasks

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominees** in consultation with employees and Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) are to identify hazardous manual handling tasks undertaken in the workplace. Hazardous manual handling can be defined as “work requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain a thing if the work involves one or more of the following:

- sustained awkward posture
- repetitive movement
- application of single or repetitive use of unreasonable amount of force
- exposure to vibration
- lifting persons or animals
- unbalanced or unstable loads
- loads that are difficult to grasp or hold.

See the Manual Handling Guide for examples of hazardous manual handling tasks in DET workplaces.

A summary of these tasks should be included in the ‘Hazard Description’ column of your workplaces OHS Risk Register.

Guidelines

- This policy applies to all school staff, relief staff, students, visitors, contractors and volunteers. It applies to all activities both on and off school property, including school camps, excursions and any other programmed activity in the community.
- Visitors, volunteers and people on placement will not be involved in lifting or using equipment, such as a hoist.

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- Yarra Ranges SDS operates under a no lift policy, please refer to Queensland Manual Handling of students.
- Yarra Ranges has a Drop policy please refer to this for more information.

3.2 Risk Assessment Process

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with employees and HSR are to assess the level of risk for tasks that have been identified as potentially hazardous, taking into account the current risk controls implemented and the following risk factors:

- Task (e.g. undertaken for long periods of time)
- Individual (e.g. skills and training level)
- Load (e.g. too heavy, too large)
- Environment (e.g. stairs to navigate, lack of space).

The assigned level of risk should be recorded in the OHS Risk Register and/or Risk Assessment Template or equivalent.

A risk assessment can be completed by any DET employee, in consultation with Management and other relevant employees using the Risk Assessment Template or equivalent when:

- there is a high or extreme level of risk in the OHS Risk Register
- there is uncertainty about the level of risk associated with activities to be undertaken
- there is limited understanding and/or knowledge about individual manual handling tasks to be performed

Sample risk assessments have been designed as generic guides to assist workplaces in assessing common manual handling risks.

A Safe Work Procedure (SWP) should be developed and displayed adjacent to where the hazardous manually handling task is to be carried out. Employees should be trained in the process as documented in the SWP.

See Manual Handling Guide for further information.

3.3 Record current risk controls

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with employees and HSR are to eliminate or reduce the level of risk associated with hazardous manual handling tasks so far as is reasonably practicable, by considering the risk factors in Section 3.2 of this Procedure.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to record the current risk controls in the OHS Risk Register. Current risk controls should also be recorded in the Risk Assessment Template or equivalent, where required.

See the Manual Handling Guide for sample risk controls.

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3.4 Additional controls

The **Workplace Manager** in consultation with employees and HSR are to implement additional controls if there are:

- specific hazardous manual handling tasks are not understood
- individual factors need to be considered e.g. skills and level of training
- issues surrounding the load to be moved (e.g. too heavy, too large, etc.)
- environmental considerations e.g. layout/design or work area
- has been a near miss, incident or injury reported as result of manual handling task.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to record additional controls in the OHS Risk Register and Risk Assessment Template or equivalent.

3.5 Information instruction and training

The **Workplace Manager** is responsible for ensuring all employees, volunteer workers, visitors and casual relief teachers are informed about the potential hazardous manual handling tasks and risk controls implemented, by:

- having all employees complete the Manual Handling eLearning Module.
- presenting the Manual Handling Awareness Training to employees
- providing employees with risk assessments and the opportunity to raise questions and participate in consultative processes
- completing an induction prior to commencing work
- communicating the process to report manual handling hazards, near misses and incidents.

Records of training should be documented in the OHS Training Planner/Register.

3.6 Reviewing Risk Control Measures

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of risk controls in the OHS Risk Register and Risk Assessments in consultation with the HSR and employees. The outcomes of the review should be communicated to all employees and HSR.

4. Define Terms

Terms defined by DET can be located on [Defined Health, Safety Terms](#) website.

5. References

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*
- Victorian Code of Practice for Manual Handling 2000

6. Related Documentation:

Risk Assessment Template
Safe Work Procedure
OHS Training Planner/Register
OHS Risk Register
Manual Handling Guide
Manual Handling Awareness Training

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7. Version Control

Version	Section Amended	Amendment	Date Created	Author
2	All	Reviewed as per OHSMS 2 yearly review process. Inclusion of reference to Hazardous Manual Handling Risk Management Form. Wording changes in responsibilities section, inclusion of examination of risk factors, inclusion of review section.	April 2011	EHU
3	6.1,7	Inclusion of Hazardous Manual Handling Identification Form	October 2011	EHU
4	All	Minor wording changes Change to heading to reflect AS/NZS 4801: 2001 requirements	July 2013	ESWB
5	All	Reviewed as per OHSMS 2 years' review requirement. Reviewed in line with the OHS Regulations 2017. Removal of responsibilities section as text is embedded within the procedure. Removal of definition sections as key terms as hyperlinked to relevant webpage. Manual handling identified as a hazard requiring management in all DET workplaces. Clarified the identification, control and monitoring of manual handling risks process.	June 2017	ESWU

References: School DROP poster

This policy was reviewed in November 2017 and will be reviewed in August 2019

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