

# Manual Handling - Setting Up Events

## 1 BACKGROUND

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There has been an increase in the number of staff manual handling incidents including staff lifting items while setting up for events on campus.

## 2 ACTION REQUIRED

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1. If you are organising an event a risk assessment should be completed as a minimum requirement: [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0018/82035/risk-assessment-template-17-Aug-2015\\_Final-V7.doc](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0018/82035/risk-assessment-template-17-Aug-2015_Final-V7.doc) and for larger events you should also complete and submit a Safety Review Form: <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-staff/working-here/work-health-and-safety/managing-health-and-safety-risks>
2. Include the type of manual handling tasks that you will need to do in your risk assessment
3. Can you eliminate the risk by outsourcing the manual handling task e.g. order items to be delivered directly to the venue?
4. Ensure that you have adequate and appropriate trolleys or other lifting devices suitable for the task
5. Ensure that you have adequate staff resources to assist and leave enough time to set up for the event
6. Follow basic manual handling guidelines as listed on page 2
7. Complete manual handling training if manual handling is a part of your ongoing role. Training courses are available on [hronline](#)

## 3 ASSISTANCE

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Please contact the Health and Safety team if you require assistance with your manual handling risk assessment.

If a staff member is injured they should contact the **Injury Hotline on telephone 4033 9999** and press 4 to speak to a member of the Health & Safety team. They should also notify their supervisor and log an online incident report.



## MANUAL HANDLING GUIDE

### 1. Assess the situation

- What is the weight of the object?
- Is it an awkward shape that will be hard to grip?
- Does it have sharp edges?
- Is the load stable and the weight evenly distributed?
- How far do you have to carry the load?
- Does it have to be lifted to and/or from a height?
- Is your path clear and is the surface of the pathway even?
- Complete a risk assessment taking all these things into account.

### 2. Size up the load

Test the weight by lifting up one corner before trying to move it.

### 3. Select suitable risk controls

- Are there alternatives to manual handling e.g. can an object be delivered by other means to the point of use?
- Can trolleys or other lifting devices be used?
- Is there a lift available to use instead of stairs?
- Can the objects to be moved be stored at a more convenient height e.g. heavier objects stored between knee and waist level?
- Can the object be broken down into smaller loads?
- Can the pathway be cleared to avoid trip hazards? Do you have enough space to manoeuvre the load?
- Can other staff members be used to assist?
- Do the people involved require manual handling training?
- Finally, if you have to lift an object think about the way you are going to do it.

### 4. Use good lifting techniques

**Stand close to the load** facing the direction in which you intend to travel, with your feet spread to create a firm base.

**Bend your knees** and keep your back in a natural line. Don't bend your knees fully as this may leave little power to lift.

**Grasp the load firmly.** The best grip is one in which the fingers are curled into a hook.

**Raise your head**

**Lift with your legs.** Use your leverage, momentum, balance and timing for a smooth action. Move your feet as necessary.

**Avoid twisting** the body during lifting. Do not bend sideways

**Hold the load** close to the centre of your body.

### 5. Carrying a load

**Keep the load close to your body**, with your arms and chin tucked in.

**Avoid twisting your body**, stooping, bending or leaning back. If you need to change direction move your feet.

**Don't change your grip** unless the load is sufficiently supported

**Don't block your vision** with the object you are carrying

**Rest if you feel fatigue.**

### 6. Unloading

**Bend the knees keep the back straight** to lower the object.

**Keep the weight close to the body.**

If the load is to be placed on a bench, **rest it on the edge and push it forward** with your arms and body

**Be careful of fingers and toes**