

## Manual Handling and Work Station Ergonomics Policy

*Printed copies are for reference only. Please refer to the electronic copy in the Policy and Procedure Manager (PPM), the electronic policy management system (EPMS), to ensure you are referring to the latest version.*

### Purpose:

This policy describes the process for identifying, assessing and controlling hazardous manual handling to reduce the number and severity of musculoskeletal disorders associated with manual handling and ergonomics.

### Audience:

Staff, Authorised Contractors, other personnel at workplaces under the management or control of Murdoch University, public

### Objectives:

- To assist Murdoch University in creating and maintaining a safe work place to ensure that manual handling and ergonomic principals are adopted for all tasks and workstations.

### Definitions:

*Any defined terms below are specific to this document. The definition of common terms appears in the Murdoch University Dictionary of Terms.*

- “Manual Handling” means any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any object.
- “Hazardous Manual Handling” includes:
  - Manual handling having any of the following characteristics:
    - Repetitive or sustained application of force;
    - Repetitive or sustained awkward posture;
    - Repetitive or sustained movement;
    - Application of high force being an activity involving a single or repetitive use of force that it would be reasonable to expect that a person in the workforce may have difficulty undertaking; or
    - Exposure to sustained vibration.
  - Manual handling of live persons or animals.
  - Manual handling of unstable or unbalanced loads or loads that are difficult to grasp or hold.

## **Policy Statement:**

1. All hazardous manual handling tasks must be identified and assessed before the task is undertaken. The person(s) undertaking the task must be consulted, and if practicable, the designated Health and Safety Representative should also be involved.
2. The level of risk to the person(s) involved with the task should be assessed where the level of risk is moderate or higher, then risk reduction measures are required. The risk of a musculoskeletal disorder affecting the person(s) must be eliminated, or if not reasonably practicable, reduced as far as reasonably practicable.
3. The task must be reassessed before alteration is made to the objects being handled, or a change to the workplace location. If additional information about a manual handling task becomes available, it should also be incorporated into the assessment.
4. Controls
  - 4.1. Provision of information, training or instruction in manual handling techniques must not be used as the sole or primary means of controlling risk unless the following ways of controlling risk are not practicable:
    - 4.1.1. Altering the workplace.
    - 4.1.2. Altering the environmental conditions, including heat, cold and vibration, where the task involving manual handling is carried out.
    - 4.1.3. Altering the systems of work used to carry out the task involving manual handling.
    - 4.1.4. Changing the objects used in the task involving manual handling.
    - 4.1.5. Using mechanical aids.
  - 4.2. These controls must also be assessed for their short, medium or long-term viability.
5. Ergonomics
  - 5.1. Ergonomics is a specialised field, therefore these guidelines can only outline the basic principles. Schools/Offices should follow these guidelines when purchasing new furniture. These guidelines will also be of use in an initial ergonomic assessment of workstations when staff report problems.
6. Chairs
  - 6.1. Refer to the University's ergonomics assessment for detailed specifications for the following purposes:
    - 6.1.1. Student task chairs.
    - 6.1.2. Staff task chairs.
    - 6.1.3. Standard meeting room chairs.

- 6.1.4. Executive meeting room chairs.
  - 6.1.5. Interview/Consulting room seating.
  - 6.1.6. Experimental laboratory seating.
- 7. Ergo Balls
  - 7.1. Not recommended for use, a medical practitioner must be consulted prior to use.
  - 7.2. Ensure written permission has been obtained by the manager of the School/Office.
- 8. Workstations
  - 8.1. Refer to the University's ergonomics assessment for detailed specifications for the following purposes:
    - 8.1.1. Office administration areas.
    - 8.1.2. Reception areas/enquiry counters/Student Centre counters.
    - 8.1.3. Laboratories – computer.
    - 8.1.4. Laboratories – experimental.
    - 8.1.5. Meeting rooms – standard and executive.
    - 8.1.6. Teaching and learning spaces.
- 9. Training
  - 9.1. The Safety Health and Wellbeing team can provide training in manual handling and ergonomic workstation design. Further information or advice can be obtained from the respective School/Office Health and Safety Representative.

### **Performance Indicators:**

There are no performance indicators.

### **Related Documents:**

[Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996 \(WA\)](#)

Australian Standard AS 3590.2: Screen-based workstations – Part 2: Workstation furniture

Australian Standard AS/NZS 4442 Office desks

Australian Standard AS/NZS 4443 Office panel systems – Workstations

Australian Standard AS 1680.1 Interior and workplace lighting – Part 1: General principles and recommendations

Australian Standard AS 1680.2 Interior Lighting

Australian Standard AS/NZS 3827 Lighting System Performance

Standards Association of Australia SAA HB59: Ergonomics – The human factor – A practical approach to work systems design

[Western Australia Code of Practice: Manual Tasks 2010](#)

[Guidance Note for the Prevention of Occupational Overuse Syndrome in keyboard Employment \[NOHSC:3005 \(1996\)\]](#)

[Murdoch University ergonomics website](#)

### **References:**

There are no references.

### **Approval and Implementation:**

<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Director People and Culture
<b>Responsible Officer(s):</b>	Manager Safety Health and Wellbeing
<b>Approval Authority for supporting procedures:</b>	There are no supporting procedures
<b>Approval Authority for supporting guidelines:</b>	There are no supporting guidelines
<b>Approval Authority for supporting standards:</b>	There are no supporting standards
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Manager Safety Health and Wellbeing

### **Revision History:**

<b>Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b>Resolution No. (if applicable)</b>
Approved	23/02/2018	23/02/2018	23/02/2021	