

Hazardous Manual Tasks Policy

Purpose:

This policy establishes the role of JCUSA and duty holders in managing risks to health and safety relating to a musculoskeletal disorder associated with a hazardous manual task.

Principles:

JCUSA is committed to its duty in managing risks to health and safety and identifying reasonable foreseeable hazards that could give rise to risks to health and safety.

This will be achieved by:

- Managing risks to health and safety relating to a musculoskeletal disorder associated with a hazardous manual task;
- Managing risk by eliminating risks to health and safety so far is practicable in accordance with hierarchy of control measures;
- Maintaining and reviewing control measures;
- Provision of training, information and instruction that is suitable and adequate for the worker; and
- Availing this policy to all workers.

Scope:

This policy applies to all JCUSA Councillors, all workers (including contractors and volunteers) as well as students, staff, visitors, members of the public and JCUSA Clubs and Societies affiliated members.

Policy Statement:

Council takes very seriously its duty of care towards its staff and the public, and recognises its duty to comply with all relevant legislation related to ensuring the health and safety of workers.

The Policy will clearly state how JCUSA will:

- Manage the risk of musculoskeletal disorders;
- Identify manual tasks that are hazardous;
- Consult with workers;
- Conduct risk assessment of MSDs associated with the hazardous manual task;
- Implement suitable risk control measures;
- Review the effectiveness of control measures;
- Undertake workplace Inspections; and
- Identify implemented practices to reduce injury from a possible hazardous manual handling task for all workers.

Responsibilities:

JCUSA must eliminate risks arising from hazardous manual tasks, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Councillors, employees, volunteers and persons associated with JCIUSA affiliated clubs and societies have a responsibility to report any hazards and health and safety problems promptly so risks can be managed before an incident occurs. This includes using safe manual handling practices.

The responsibility health and safety ultimately rests with the person in control of the business or undertaking (PCBU), directors and management. Workers also have important responsibilities for health and safety in the workplace.

JCUSA Council has ultimate responsibility for all workers and club/society members to comply with approved policies, procedures, safe work procedures that:

- Support and align with current legislation, regulations and codes of practice;
- Are implemented and monitored; and
- Are reviewed to evaluate the continuing effectiveness and currency.

The Councillors as the WHS Officers have a duty to exercise due diligence to ensure that JCUSA complies with the WHS Act and WHS Regulation. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure that the business or undertaking has and uses appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks from hazardous manual tasks.

Workers and Club/Society members must:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety;
- Participate in hazardous manual handling training as part of induction;
- Take reasonable care that their conduct, acts or omissions does not adversely affect the health and safety of others or property;
- Comply, so far as they are reasonably able with instructions;
- Cooperate with reasonable health and safety policies or procedures that have been notified to them; and
- Use or wear supplied personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with the information and instruction and training provided.

Workers and Club/Society members are to report problems with manual tasks and signs of discomfort immediately so that risks can be managed before an injury occurs.

Workers and Club/Society members must work within their range of comfort and ability when undertaking manual handling tasks and not expose themselves or others to the risk of injury.

Affiliated Club/Society Executives must:

- Provide information on hazardous manual handling as part of their induction program as documented in POL048 Clubs and Societies Policy;
- Use and have members completed Form 104 Hazardous Manual Handling tasks;
- Provide training records to the JCUSA General Manager; and
- Follow any reasonable safety directions from JCUSA and/or JCU employees.

Definitions:

Association	James Cook University Student Association
Club	A Club is a group of like-minded individuals, the majority of whom are currently enrolled JCU, who gather to hold events and engage in activities for the mutual benefit of members and the wider JCU student cohort.
Control Measure	An action taken to eliminate or minimise health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
Force	Describes the amount of muscular effort required to perform a movement or task. Forceful muscular exertions overload muscles, tendons, joints and discs and are associated with most MSDs
Hazard	A situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include: noisy machinery, a moving forklift, chemicals, electricity, working at heights, a repetitive job, bullying and violence at the workplace
Hazardous Manual Task	A task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repetitive or sustained force; • high or sudden force; • repetitive movement; • sustained or awkward posture; and/or • exposure to vibration.
High force	Occurs when increased muscle effort is required in response to a task. It may be from the back, arm or leg muscles or by the hands and fingers. High force occurs in any task that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a worker describes as very demanding physically; • a worker needs help to complete because a greater force is required; and/or • requires a stronger person or two people to complete. Examples of high force include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lifting, lowering or carrying a heavy object; • lifting, lowering or carrying an object that cannot be positioned close to the body; • pushing or pulling an object that is hard to move or stop; • applying uneven, fast or jerky forces during lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling; • applying sudden or unexpected forces; and • restraining a person or animal.
Manual handling	Covers a wide range of activities including: lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, restraining, throwing and carrying. It includes repetitive tasks such as packing, typing, assembling, cleaning and sorting, using hand-tools, operating machinery and equipment, and handling and restraining animals.

<p>Musculoskeletal disorders (MSD)</p>	<p>The term “MSD” refers to an injury to, or a disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. It does not include an injury caused by crushing, entrapment or cutting resulting from the mechanical operation of plant.</p> <p>MSDs may include conditions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments and tendons; • back injuries, including damage to the muscles, tendons, ligaments, spinal discs, nerves, joints and bones; • joint and bone injuries or degeneration, including injuries to the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle, hands and feet; • nerve injuries or compression (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome); • muscular and vascular disorders as a result of hand-arm vibration; • soft tissue hernias; and/or • chronic pain. <p>MSDs occur in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gradual wear and tear to joints, ligaments, muscles and inter-vertebral discs caused by repeated or continuous use of the same body parts, including static body positions; and • sudden damage caused by strenuous activity, or unexpected movements such as when loads being handled move or change position suddenly. <p>Injuries can also occur due to a combination of these mechanisms.</p>
<p>Repetitive force</p>	<p>Using force repeatedly over a period of time. Examples of repetitive force may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lifting and stacking goods onto a pallet; and • repetitively pressing components with the thumbs or other part of the hand to assemble an item.
<p>Risk</p>	<p>The possibility harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.</p>
<p>Risk assessment</p>	<p>Overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation</p>
<p>Society</p>	<p>Refer to Club</p>
<p>Sudden force</p>	<p>Jerky or unexpected movements while handling an item or load. These movements are particularly hazardous because the body must suddenly adapt to the changing force. Tasks where force is applied suddenly and with speed also generate high force.</p>
<p>Sustained force</p>	<p>Occurs when force is applied continually over a period of time.</p>
<p>Workers</p>	<p>Employees, contractors, subcontractors, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students, volunteers and PCBUs who are individuals if they perform work for the business.</p>

Workplace	Any place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.
-----------	--

Acronyms

JCUSA	James Cook University Student Association
MSDs	Musculoskeletal disorders
PCBU	Persons conducting a business or undertaking
PPE	Personal protective equipment
WHS	Workplace Health and Safety

Policy

The Association must have regard to all relevant matters that may contribute to a musculoskeletal disorder, including:

- postures, movements, forces and vibration relating to the hazardous manual task; and
- the duration and frequency of the hazardous manual task; and
- workplace environmental conditions that may affect the hazardous manual task or the worker performing it; and
- the design of the work area; and
- the layout of the workplace; and
- the systems of work used; and
- the nature, size, weight or number of persons, animals or things involved in carrying out the hazardous manual task.

How JCUSA will manage the risk of musculoskeletal disorders

- identifying manual tasks that are hazardous;
- consulting with workers;
- if necessary, assessing the risks of MSDs associated with the hazardous manual task;
- implementing suitable risk control measures; and
- reviewing the effectiveness of control measures.



Identifying manual tasks that are hazardous

The identification of those tasks that have the potential to cause MSDs will be identified in accordance with POL026 Risk Assessment Policy and that hazards that arise from manual tasks generally involve interaction between a worker and:

- the work tasks and how they are performed;
- the tools, equipment and objects handled; and
- the physical work environment.

The Association will also review available information that could be included in workplace documents such as incident reports, inspection reports and any workers compensation claims made for MSDs.

The observation of manual tasks is another way in which JCUSA can identify if a manual task is hazardous by determining if any of the below characteristics are present:

- repetitive or sustained force;
- high or sudden force;
- repetitive movement;
- sustained and/or awkward posture; and
- exposure to vibration.

Things to look out for include:

- any changes resulting in new manual tasks or a changed environment;
- tasks involving tools, machinery or equipment that does not work properly or is difficult to use; and
- tasks where workers have made improvisations to avoid discomfort, like stacking mats or flattened cartons to stand on.

Consulting with workers

In accordance with POL010 Consultation and Participation Policy workers will be consulted when JCUSA:

- introduces new tasks or change existing tasks;
- selects new equipment;
- refurbishes, renovates or redesigns existing workplaces; and
- carries out work in new environments.

JCUSA recognises that workers who perform manual tasks provide valuable information about discomfort, muscular aches and pains that can signal potential hazards through identified tasks that:

- are difficult to do (or appear harder than they should be);
- are very tiring (muscle fatigue reduces work capacity);
- are awkward or dangerous (for example, difficulty controlling loads); and/or
- cause discomfort.

Workers are emailed for their feedback on hazardous manual tasks that they undertake and to identify hazardous characteristics of these tasks to ensure the associated risks can be mitigated. If received feedback suggests a risk exists then the employee completes Form 084 Hazardous manual handling tasks risk assessment that pertains to repetitive movements, sustained or awkward postures and repetitive or sustained forces and based on the duration of the task.

Form 071 Discomfort Survey is also to be completed by workers to assist in identifying hazardous manual tasks. Early reporting can lead to risk controls being put in place before injury occurs.

This sheet is to be completed to identify and record instances where workers experience discomfort that:

- Persists; or
- Re-occurs the next day; or
- Persists after days off, e.g. after a weekend.

Risk assessment of MSDs associated with the hazardous manual task

Overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation occurs based on feedback from workers via completed formal forms, email or by an observer. Therefore JCUSA will carry out a risk assessment for any manual tasks that have identified as being hazardous, unless the risk is well-known and one knows how to control it.

JCUSA will confirm if the task involves any of the following:

- repetitive movement;
- sustained or awkward postures; and
- repetitive or sustained forces?

A risk assessment can help JCUSA determine:

- which postures, movements and forces of the task pose a risk;
- where during the task they pose a risk;
- why they are occurring; and
- what needs to be fixed.

When conducting risk assessments, workers are to, think about the sources of any risks present in the task. These will be the things that could eliminate or reduce the likelihood of an MSD. For example:

- poor postures and movements may be due to the layout of the workplace;
- high mental strain may be due to high job demands;
- high forces may be due to the loads being handled;
- the frequency and duration of the task may be due to the work organisation, limited staff numbers or increased work pace to meet tight deadlines.

Assessing risk involves considering the potential consequence if a Worker or Other is exposed to the hazard and as a result, the likelihood that harm could occur. Once the likelihood and consequences have been decided, the inherent risk associated with a hazard is to be determined using the Risk Matrix below.

			Likelihood				
			May occur within every 10 year period or more	Could occur within a 5-10 year period	Could occur within a 1 to 5 year period	Could occur within a 3 to 12 month period	Likely to occur within a 3 month period or during the performance of an actual task
			Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Consequence	Fatality, prosecution or legislative non-compliance impacts a substantial part or whole of University with significant works > \$100k	Catastrophic	Medium	High	High	High	High
	Significant lost time injury (>6 months), notifiable event, finding, notice, suspension of work impacts a substantial part or whole of University with major works between \$50-\$100k	Major	Medium	Medium	High	High	High
	Lost time injury (<6 months), finding, ISOS combined extreme / high risk, impacts a moderate to substantial part of University with moderate works between \$10-50k	Moderate	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Incident including medical treatment, near miss, safety finding resolved in 3 days, impacts a minor part of University with minor works <\$10k	Minor	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Incident including first aid, workplace hazard contained immediately and no ongoing safety risk impact. No known similar risk with University	Insignificant	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

Implementing suitable risk control measures to control the risks

If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, the risk will be minimised by implementing options from the hierarchy of controls located on the following page. This illustrates the hierarchical order in which the control options are to be implemented to treat the work health and safety risk. The risk control measure selected must be the highest possible option in the hierarchy. In many cases, it will be necessary to apply more than one control method.

Personal protective equipment must only be used as a last resort or to complement other control measures implemented.

Hierarchy of control		Examples of control measures
Level 1	Elimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automate the manual task (such as using remote controls) Deliver goods directly to the point of use to eliminate multiple handling
Level 2	Substitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace heavy items with those that are lighter, smaller and/or easier to handle Replace hand tools with power tools to reduce the level of force required to do the task
	Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate vibrating machinery from the user, for example by providing fully independent seating on mobile plant
	Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use mechanical lifting aids Provide workstations that are height adjustable
Level 3	Administrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rotate workers between different tasks Train workers to use control measures implemented when carrying out manual tasks
	Personal protective equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat resistant gloves for handling hot items Shock absorbent shoes for work on hard concrete floors

Reviewing the effectiveness of control measures.

Risk assessments will be reviewed and maintained to ensure the controls applied are effective in minimising the risk to as low as reasonably practicable.

A risk assessment must be reviewed and any measures adopted to control the risk:

- when the control measure is not effective in controlling the risk before a change at the workplace that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control;
- if a new hazard or risk is identified;
- if the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary; and
- if a Health and Safety Representative requests a review.

In addition, the HSE Unit will periodically monitor and review the effectiveness of applied risk control strategies through a range of scheduled and unscheduled activities, including but not limited to:

- audits and inspections;
- workplace monitoring where necessary (hazardous noise or chemicals); and

- review of incidents and hazards.

Workplace Inspections

POL035 Workplace Inspections Policy and POL037 Workstation Ergonomics includes content for the workers that pertains to their WHS obligations for manual handling also.

JCUSA conducts annual assessment in July for all workers and Councillors that use a computer via Form 028 Computer Based Work Checklist.
Monthly assessments for the workplace layout is completed via Form 026 for the offices and Form 027 for the gymnasiums.

JCUSA implemented practices to reduce injury from a possible hazardous manual handling task for all workers and club/society members

Weight of items on a top shelf

Items no heavier than 5kg are to be placed on a top shelf. This will ensure that workers and club/society members know what the weight will be when they manually lift the item and hence reduce the risk of it being too heavy to lift and subsequently be dropped on self or others and preventing a musculoskeletal disorder.

Manual Lifting

When workers or club/society are to manually lift, they are to:

- Reduce the amount of twisting, stooping and reaching;
- Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads;
- Adjust storage areas to minimise the need to carry out such movements;
- Consider how you can minimise carrying distances;
- Assess the weight to be carried and whether the worker can move the load safely or needs any help; and
- Consider is the load can be broken down to smaller, lighter components.

Training

Workers and Club/Society members will receive training as part of their induction in safe manual handling practices and trained in the appropriate manual handling techniques for the tasks that they are required to perform in their jobs.

The below lifting techniques and stretching is to be undertaken by JCUSA workers and club/society members.



Lifting technique

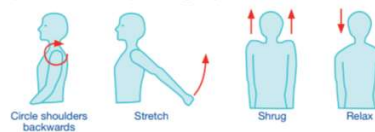
- Assess the load.
- What is the best method to move the load?
- Do you need someone to assist?
- Can it be divided into smaller loads?
- Make sure the pathway is clear.

How to lift

- Keep spine in a neutral position (i.e. S-shaped curve).
- Keep a wide base of support.
- Ensure you are balanced.
- Bend at your knees and hips.
- Brace your abdominal muscles.
- Keep the object close to you.
- Push up with your legs.
- Avoid twisting.

Stretching

It is important to stretch before attempting manual handling tasks. Stretching reduces muscular tension in your body and improves overall flexibility. It also improves circulation and promotes good posture.



How to stretch

- Always stretch slowly without 'bouncing'.
- Stretch to the point where the muscles you are exercising feel pleasantly stretched. The stretch should NOT be painful.
- Hold the stretch for at least 10 seconds.
- Remember to breathe normally and to try and remain relaxed.



PLEASE NOTE: Do not attempt stretches if you have a medical condition which could limit movement.

Moving a load

When moving a heavy item/load, a safe means of raising and lowering materials and should be undertaken via these control measures:

- handling equipment such as a trolley;
- following the safe working load limits and taking into account all relevant factors such as stability of ground conditions and the weight the trolley can hold;
- making sure the items/load is balanced and secure when the load is lifted;
- Adequate storage to prevent items being stored on the floor and
- Storage designed to minimise bending and reaching.

Manual handling practices

The back is particularly vulnerable to manual handling injuries. Safety suggestions include controlling risk factors in the workplace, in addition to personal controls:

- Lift and carry heavy loads correctly by keeping the load close to the body and lifting with the thigh muscles.
- Never attempt to lift or carry loads if you think they are too heavy.
- Pushing a load (using your body weight to assist) will be less stressful on your body than pulling a load.
- Use mechanical aids or get help to lift or carry a heavy load whenever possible.
- Organise the work area to reduce the amount of bending, twisting and stretching required.
- Take frequent breaks.
- Cool down after heavy work with gentle, sustained stretches.
- Improve your fitness – exercise regularly to strengthen muscles and ligaments, and reduce excess body fat.
- Warm up cold muscles with gentle stretches before engaging in any manual work.

Related Legislation and Documents

Work Health Safety Act 2011
 WHS Regulation 2011
 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, First Aid in the Workplace Code of Practice 2021
 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Hazardous Manual Tasks Code of Practice 2021
 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace 2021
 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Managing the Work Environment and Facilities Code of Practice 2021
 Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and coordination Code of Practice 2021
 POL001 WHS Policy
 POL006 Safe Work Procedures Policy
 POL010 Consultation and Participation Policy
 POL014 Falling Objects Policy
 POL018 General Working Environment Policy
 POL020 Health and Wellbeing Policy
 POL022 Incident Reporting Policy
 POL026 Personal Protective Equipment Policy
 POL027 Risk Management Policy
 POL034 Training and Supervision Policy
 POL035 Workplace Inspections Policy
 POL037 Workstation Ergonomics Policy
 POL038 Driving and Vehicles Policy
 POL048 Clubs and Societies Policy
 PRO012 Hazardous Work Procedure
 SWP007 Manual Handling Safe Work Procedure
 Safe Work Australia, Hazardous Manual Tasks, Code of Practice, February 2016
 Form 026 Workplace Inspection Checklist
 Form 027 Workplace Inspection Checklist – Gymnasium
 Form 028 Computer Based Work Checklist
 Form 071 Discomfort Survey
 Form 084 Hazardous Manual Handling Tasks Risk Assessment

Administration

Note: Printed copies of this policy are uncontrolled and currency can only be assumed at the time of printing.

Approval Authority	JCUSA Council
Version Number:	V1.3
Date for next review:	31/05/2022
Revision History	Located in the Document Record Management System