IS Equipment Manual Handling and Storage policy and procedures.

INTRODUCTION

This policy is to be used in conjunction with the University’s Manual Handling Policy which can be seen on the University website at: http://www2.ntu.ac.uk/safety/NTU%20Only/Policies/MHPolicy.htm and is meant as additional information specific to the tasks required by Information Systems staff only and no other department. Both policies are written in line with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. The IS Risk assessment for IS Equipment can be obtained from the Departments Safety Advisor.

A Manual handling operation is defined as ‘Any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force’. For the purposes of Information Systems this policy applies to the manual handling of all IS equipment (computers, monitors, printers, fax machines, laptops, data projectors, toner cartridges and accessories) boxed or unboxed. This definition pertains to those items likely to be moved by Human Effort alone which includes transportation or direct support.

PRELIMINARY HIERARCHY OF MEASURES FOR MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS:

1. Avoid manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable by either redesigning the task to avoid moving the load, or automating or mechanising the task.
2. If manual handling cannot be avoided, then a suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be made.
3. Reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as reasonably practicable either by the use of mechanical handling or by making improvements to the task, the load and the working environment.

It should be noted at this point that if the movement of heavy bulk is required (such as desks or office furniture) assistance should be sought from Auxiliary Services who should carry this operation out. IS Staff are not expected to or have the equipment to move such items other than that detailed in the introduction.

THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF A GOOD LIFTING TECHNIQUE:

- When lifting, adopt a satisfactory body posture: Feet should be firmly on the ground and slightly apart and there should be no stooping or twisting of the body. It should not be necessary to reach upwards as this will increase the stresses on the arms, back and shoulders.
- Place the feet apart, bend knees, straight back. Adopt a firm grip and lift close to the body. Lift with the back straight, lift smoothly to knee level and then waist level. With clear visibility then move forward without twisting.
- Boxes being lifted should be supported underneath and it should not be taken for granted that tape or fixings to the underside of boxes will support the load they contain.
- No load should ever be carried above shoulder height by any one person.
- No load should be lifted by reaching over another obstacle. Stresses on the back are greater if reaching over an object to lift
- Do not attempt to carry multiple loads in one go. Seek assistance.

IS MANUAL HANDLING POLICY:

- Any manual handling should only be undertaken by members of IS staff who have undergone the University’s Manual Handling course. All IS Staff are required to complete this course.
- A risk assessment has been carried out for Manual Handling and is available from the Safety Advisor.
• Assess the floor and distance before commencing the lift so that slips and trips may be avoided.
• Take extra care where frequent and prolonged physical effort is required. Assess if extra lifting and carrying equipment can be used to minimise the risk.
• During prolonged periods of physical activity, work in suitable rest and recovery breaks and/or a change of task.
• Health and Safety Executive guidance notes indicate that the maximum load that should be considered by an individual is 25 kilos for a man at the level of and adjacent to the thighs, this figure is 16 kilos for a woman at the same height. This is uniquely dependent on the individual and will vary from person to person. The weights listed are guidance and any lifting which is uncomfortable should not be done without re-assessment.
• The centre of gravity for the object should be considered and therefore as close to the body as possible, this is particularly important in the carrying of monitors where the glass screen edge holds the heaviest weight.
• If the load is too sharp, hot or cold, personal protective equipment (gloves, aprons etc.) should be considered.
• Consider the environment the job is taking place in. Consider lighting, State of the floor, room constraints and size, other furniture and objects.
• Use appropriate trolleys to move equipment:
  a) Tea Trolleys should be used to carry multiple items. Ensure that they are not overloaded. The recommendation is 2 monitors on the top shelf and 3 computer units on the bottom shelf depending on the construction of the trolley. This is for guidance only.
  b) Sack Trolleys can be used to move computer units and small boxes of accessories or boxed equipment. These must be used with care. Do not attempt to overload or drag up and down stairs; lifts should be used at all times between floors.

The Storage of IS Equipment:

• Consideration should be given to the storage of IS equipment so that it complies with the Manual handling policy and procedures and does not in itself create additional Manual Handling problems.
• The most difficult items to store are computers and monitors. Where possible – computer monitors should be stored at waist height. Otherwise, wherever possible, no lower than 12 inches off the ground. This will make it better for lifting and less likely to cause human injury.
• All Monitors smaller than 17 inch should be considered waste and disposed of using the approved contractor.
• When stacked, tower computer units should be stacked horizontally to allow maximum stability. Do not stack them higher than 5 units high. Desktop units should be stacked in their normal orientation, no higher than 5 units high. It is acceptable to place one computer monitor on top of such a stack, but no more than one at this height.
• Where possible waste and stock items should be segregated.
• Trolleys must be used to move from one location to another.
• Frequently used items should be stored at waist height.
• Existing shelving should be used with caution to ensure that items are stacked properly, no heavy items are stored above chest height, items are not piled on top of each other on shelves and general tidiness is observed.
• Once a locally agreed maximum number of stored items is reached, a waste contractor should be contacted for removal. This should be done through the department safety advisor who’s role it is to arrange the removal of such items. If timescales are in place for upgrading or removing large numbers from resource rooms, this should be arranged at the earliest time.
• It is the responsibility of all staff to report health and safety issues to the Departmental Safety Advisor as soon as possible.