

# WORK EQUIPMENT PROCEDURE

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[Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policies and Procedures \(ulster.ac.uk\)](http://ulster.ac.uk/Health_Safety_and_Wellbeing_Policies_and_Procedures)

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## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to support faculties and departments in the correct selection, maintenance, and the safe use of work equipment, ensuring that work tasks involving the use of work equipment are completed in a manner that is safe and without risk to the health and wellbeing of the user and others.

## 2 SCOPE & COMMENCEMENT

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all areas of operation within the University, with effect from April 2025. It applies to the use of work equipment used by University personnel (including students under supervision) and contractors.

## 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Incorrect or unsafe use of work equipment, lack of skills, knowledge and training and/or use of defective equipment can contribute to causing life changing injuries or fatalities to workers and others.
- 3.2 Injuries from equipment may result from: access to moving parts through entanglement, entrapment or crush injuries, ejected material, sharp edges or sharply pointed parts, electrical faults, emissions and/or machine products could be excessively hot or cold.
- 3.3 Work equipment must be suitably selected for use and the conditions it will be used in, be fit for purpose and a risk assessment conducted with appropriate control measures implemented.

## 4 DEFINITIONS

<b>Work Equipment</b>	<p>'The scope of 'work equipment' is extremely wide. It covers almost any equipment used at work, including:</p> <p>(a) 'toolbox tools' such as hammers, knives, handsaws, meat cleavers etc;</p> <p>(b) single machines such as drilling machines, circular saws, photocopiers, combine harvesters, dumper trucks etc;</p> <p>(c) apparatus such as laboratory apparatus (Bunsen burners etc);</p> <p>(d) lifting equipment such as hoists, lift trucks, elevating work platforms, lifting slings etc;</p> <p>(e) other equipment such as ladders, pressure water cleaners etc;</p>
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	<p>(f) an installation such as a series of machines connected together, for example a paper-making line or enclosure for providing sound insulation or scaffolding or similar access equipment (except where CDM imposes more detailed requirements)'</p> <p>'PUWER applies to work equipment whether it is new, existing, or second-hand.'</p> <p><a href="#">Safe use of work equipment. Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L22 (hse.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Specific to the University, spanners are defined as toolbox tools.</p>
<b>The use of work equipment</b>	<p>'The use of work equipment is also very widely interpreted and '...means any activity involving work equipment and includes starting, stopping, programming, setting, transporting, repairing, modifying, maintaining, servicing and cleaning''</p> <p><a href="#">Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) (hse.gov.uk)</a></p>
<b>Mobile Work Equipment</b>	<p>'Mobile work equipment is any work equipment which carries out work while it is travelling, or which travels between different locations where it is used to carry out work. Such equipment would normally be moved on, for example wheels, tracks, rollers, skids etc.'</p> <p><a href="#">Safe use of work equipment. Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L22 (hse.gov.uk)</a></p>
<b>Authority to Drive</b>	<p>This is the form whereby a manager formally gives an employee the permission to drive and operate mobile equipment. The form contains training and license information, evidence that a medical examination has taken place, expiry date and the manager's signature. (<b>Appendix 1</b>).</p>

## 5 KEY LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 requires employers to fulfil their duty to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety, and welfare of their employees and those not in their employment (contractors/visitors/students) that may be affected through workplace risks.

- 5.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work (NI) Regulations 2000 requires employers to plan, organise, control, monitor and review their health and safety management systems.
- 5.3 The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (NI) 1999 (“PUWER”) requires employers to protect employees through the proper selection and use of work equipment.
- 5.4 Any organisation undertaking lifting operations, or providing others with lifting equipment to use, must comply with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (NI) 1999 (“LOLER”). All lifting operations using lifting equipment must be properly planned, appropriately supervised by competent persons and carried out in a safe manner.
- 5.5 The Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 apply to Northern Ireland and require manufacturers to design, construct, and supply safe products that conform with the machinery directive. Machinery should be safe when supplied, CE marked, with written instructions in English and a declaration of conformity.

## **6 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 6.1 Please refer to the main Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy on the University’s website for further details on roles and levels of responsibility using the link below.

[Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy \(ulster.ac.uk\)](http://ulster.ac.uk/Health_Safety_and_Wellbeing_Policy)

### **6.2 Managers Must ensure that:**

- All work equipment selected is suitable and fit for purpose.
- Work Equipment has been purchased in accordance with the procurement procedure.
- Risk Assessments and safe systems of work must be completed and kept up to date for all work equipment.
- All employees required to use work equipment as part of their duties have been provided with the relevant training, information, instruction and appropriate supervision.
- There are provisions in place for the correct inspection and maintenance of equipment.

### **6.3 Staff Must ensure that:**

- They have undertaken relevant training to be deemed competent to use work equipment.
- They do not use, inspect, or maintain equipment if they have not been trained.
- They follow the safe systems of work and training provided.
- They withdraw from use and report any defect or safety hazard with work equipment (or the working environment) as soon as possible

#### **6.4 Health Safety and Wellbeing (“HSW”) Team**

The HSW team will:

- Provide health and safety advice and support to schools, faculties and departments on the safe use and maintenance of work equipment to ensure procedural, legal, and best practice compliance.
- Provide management and staff with the relevant health and safety training.
- Assist with queries relating to this procedure.

### **7 Procedure**

7.1 Work equipment, either provided by the employer or brought in by their employees, must be compliant with PUWER and should be:

- Suitable for the intended use and conditions during use.
- Safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and, in certain circumstances, inspected to ensure this remains the case.
- Used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction, and training.
- Accompanied by suitable safety measures, for example, protective devices, markings, warnings.

#### **Selection and Suitability of Work Equipment**

7.2 Work equipment should be suitable by design, construction, or adaptation for the work conditions it is being used in or provided and used as intended according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

7.3 For work equipment to be suitable, the source(s) of energy (pneumatic, electric etc) and substances should be supplied and removed in a safe manner.

- 7.4 Work equipment must be used only for tasks that it is fit for and in conditions for which it is suitable. The environmental conditions of the work location, and where the work equipment will be used should be considered. For example, is the environment wet, damp, a confined space or is the area considered as an explosive atmosphere.
- 7.5 All work equipment purchased should conform with the Machinery Directive. All manufacturers are required to provide equipment which is safe, CE marked, with written instructions in English and a declaration of conformity. This will be the responsibility of anyone purchasing work equipment to ensure these requirements are met.

## **Risk Assessments**

- 7.6 Staff and students must not be put at additional risk of injury and/or ill health because of the use of work equipment. Risk Assessments must be conducted of the work equipment prior to use, by a competent person, to determine its suitability and identify hazards and suitable control measures to reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable. A PUWER checklist, available at the link below, has been developed to assist with the completion of the risk assessment and ensure compliance: [Health and Safety Forms](#).
- 7.7 Risk assessments should consider the exposure to hazards from the work equipment (mechanical hazards) substances, working environment, ergonomics, and sources of power (non-mechanical hazards). There are specific requirements detailed within PUWER for power presses and wood working machinery.
- 7.8 Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated in line with the Ulster University Risk Assessment Procedure.

## **8 Inspection and Maintenance of Work Equipment**

- 8.1 PUWER requires the work equipment to be inspected by a competent person at suitable intervals. Inspection of work equipment ensures that the equipment remains in a good, safe working condition and prevents unsafe deterioration of equipment that could pose a risk to the user or others.
- 8.2 Inspections are required when work equipment has been installed for the first time to ensure that it has been installed correctly, the links or connections with other equipment, systems and services are securely in place and that it is safe to operate. Inspections should also be carried

out if work equipment is moved or relocated. Once it is in its new situation, it must be inspected to ensure safe installation and operation; it must be treated as though it were being installed for the first time.

- 8.3 Where work equipment is used in conditions that are likely to cause deterioration and affect its safe operation, it must be inspected more regularly.
- 8.4 Work equipment must be kept in a suitable condition, and it is necessary to have a maintenance schedule for equipment. The maintenance schedule should include both routine maintenance and planned preventive maintenance. It is not enough to put things right when they fail or break down.
- 8.5 A maintenance log must be kept for equipment and machinery as required and be kept up to date. The frequency of maintenance schedules will be dependent on the risk assessment outcomes, the manufacturer's instructions, the frequency/ intensity of use and the working environment.
- 8.6 The inspection and maintenance of work equipment must be undertaken by competent persons (see below) and records should be kept for a period of 3 years.
- 8.7 Where work equipment has been hired, there should be a clear agreement between the hiring company and the person responsible for hiring the equipment on the inspection and maintenance requirements.
- 8.8 Risk assessments should be completed for the condition-based maintenance (routine and planned preventive maintenance), and for breakdown maintenance a dynamic risk assessment should be completed.

## **9 Information, Instruction and Training**

- 9.1 Written instruction and information should be readily available to the user or the maintenance person of the work equipment. The information and written instructions should be easy to understand, be written in plain English (and/or other languages (where appropriate) and written in a logical order with illustrations and standard symbols (where appropriate).
- 9.2 Appropriate training must be given to all who will use or supervise the use of work equipment including Technicians, Academics and Students.



Training may be provided by equipment suppliers following the commissioning of equipment and prior to handover.

- 9.3 Training should be provided on commencement of employment, introduction of new machinery/ equipment or any changes to the risks/ safe systems of work. Competency is based on the knowledge, attitude, training and experience - training alone does not deem a person to be competent.
- 9.4 All records to include training, refresher training, inspection and maintenance logs should be kept by the relevant school, faculty, or department and with clear internal procedures to determine if records are paper based or stored on the Learning Management System ("LMS"). Records should be made available for internal and external audits/inspections.

## **10 Secondary Legislation**

- 10.1 In addition to PUWER, there are additional regulations that must be considered within the work equipment risk assessment to ensure compliance with specific duties, these include:
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (NI) 1999 ("LOLER");
  - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (NI) 2003 (COSHH);
  - Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (NI) 2016;
  - Electricity at Work Regulations (NI) 1991;
  - Control of Vibration at Work Regulations (NI) 2005.

## **11 Mobile Work Equipment**

- 11.1 PUWER covers specific duties for mobile work equipment such as Forklift Trucks (FLT), Tractors, Ride-On lawnmowers in addition to the general PUWER requirements.
- 11.2 This procedure should be read in conjunction with the working at height procedure which covers working at height on mobile work equipment to include ladders, Mobile Elevated Work Platform's etc.
- 11.3 Any work equipment that carries people must also be suitable and fit for purpose. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be completed ensuring that all risks are reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.

Specific risks underlined by PUWER require workers to be protected from:

- Falling out of the equipment and uncontrolled movement;
- Equipment Roll Over whilst travelling;
- Inadequate control, visibility, and lightning;
- Risks from drive shafts from a connected power accessory to the mobile work equipment.

### ***Driver Competence***

11.4 Any employee operating mobile work equipment must be trained and competent. Training should be undertaken by a qualified instructor. A qualified instructor will be recognised by the Road Transport Industry Training Board, ("RTITB") as an approved instructor.

11.5 Specifically, for FLT training, there are three training stages:

- Basic training - the basic skills and knowledge required for safe operation (course duration typically 5 days);
- Specific job training - knowledge of workplace and experience of any special needs and handling attachments (these stages may be combined but should always be off the job);
- Familiarisation training – driver on-the-job under close supervision.

11.6 Managers should periodically reassess all drivers to ensure that they continue to operate lift trucks safely and to identify a need for refresher training, particularly for those drivers who have not used trucks for some time or for those who only use them occasionally. It is essential that supervisors of drivers, even if they do not drive trucks themselves, have sufficient training to recognise unsafe practices. Training records, detailing the nature and content of the training and testing should be kept for each driver.

### ***Medical Certification***

11.7 A medical examination must be arranged with the Occupational Health Department for each prospective driver before training commences, and every 3 years thereafter, unless required sooner to confirm medical fitness.

11.8 A driver must be certified fit to drive and authorised by the Occupational Health Department. The Occupational Health

Department will indicate on the report any special conditions applicable to an individual driver.

- 11.9 Medicals must be completed within 3 months of the current expiry date otherwise the candidate will not be considered authorised to drive.

### ***Authority to Drive***

- 11.10 The Authority to Drive form must be signed and dated by the individual's manager. Personnel should not be allowed to operate mobile work equipment such as an FLT without a written authorisation. The authorisation should relate to a specific type of FLT and the work for which the employee has been trained. The keys should be removed from the cab of the mobile equipment when not in use and kept in a safe place to prevent unauthorised use. Authority to Drive forms will be held by the department and any special conditions monitored where appropriate.

### ***Inspection and Maintenance of Mobile Work Equipment***

- 11.11 As identified earlier in the procedure, all work equipment must be suitability inspected, maintained and records held by the relevant school, faculty, or department - these principles also apply to mobile work equipment.
- 11.12 All Mobile Work Equipment must be:
- Visually inspected prior to use;
  - Inspected daily and signed off in line with the pre user checklist detailed in **Appendix 2**, or detailed and logged using an online system;
  - Inspection details should be kept for a minimum of 1 year;
  - Maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions by trained and competent persons;
  - Equipment such as FLTs will be subjected to a routine maintenance programme;
  - Defective equipment should not be used where it presents a safety risk to the driver and/or others in the area;
  - Defects identified should be logged and reported to management to ensure equipment can be repaired;
  - All lifting equipment and accessories should be clearly marked with an affixed rating plate to identify the Safe Working Load ("SWL") or the maximum weight that the equipment can safely lift;

- There should be a thorough examination and test of the trucks on an annual basis. A certificate should be issued by the examiner to the effect that the truck is safe to use.

### **General Use of Mobile Work Equipment**

11.13 Operators of mobile work equipment must apply the techniques/ rules of operation learned during training and drive according to the work environment to ensure there is no risk of injury to the driver, others, and property.

11.14 All operators should ensure that:

- The speed limit is adhered to;
- Passengers are not carried unless the equipment is designed for additional passengers;
- They slow down and, if necessary, use an audible warning device when approaching a junction or intersection and where visibility is poor.
- They comply with the relevant safety signage, that is, stop/ speed limits etc;
- Equipment is parked in the designated area, not blocking entry/ exit, especially emergency exit routes;
- Key control to prevent unauthorised persons is implemented. Keys to the equipment should be kept in a secure place when the equipment is not in use. Keys should be issued to authorised operators only and be retained by such persons until the end of the work period, when they should be returned to the manager responsible for the operation;
- Drivers are advised to wear their seat belt (this rule does not apply to FLT's with retractable masts or equipped with another restraint system);
- The use of mobile phones are prohibited when the FLT is moving, regardless of the speed;
- The operation of equipment while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is strictly prohibited.

11.15 Specifically, for FLT's, operators should ensure:

- Adherence to the lifting capacity of the FLT;
- The use of a FLT as an elevating platform for personnel is prohibited;
- The route way is clear and sound the horn before setting off again;
- Travel with the load in the lower position with the mast inclined to the rear. When circulating without a load it is imperative that the forks are kept in the lower position, 20 to 30 cm from the ground;

- Travel in reverse gear only when strictly necessary and only if visibility in forward gear is insufficient, or when carrying a load down a slope;
  - When stopped, the FLT operator must ensure that the forks are kept on the ground, the parking brake is applied, and the ignition key is removed.
- 11.16 The work environment should be suitable for operations using mobile work equipment. This should consider:
- Floors and roadways should be of adequate load-bearing capacity and be smooth-surfaced and level;
  - Ramps should be installed to prevent displacement of the load at gutters, changes in floor level, etc;
  - Gradients should never exceed 10% and there should be a smooth gradual change of gradient at the bottom and top of the slope;
  - Lighting should be adequate with a minimum overall luminance level of 100 Lux;
  - Adequate general vehicle parking facilities should be provided away from the main operating areas and preferably in a secure compound.

## **12 Contractor Use of UU Equipment**

- 12.1 Providing contractors with the use of Ulster University owned mobile work equipment is prohibited. Contractors must come prepared to undertake the contracted works as agreed.
- 12.2 Contractors must adhere to this procedure and should be managed in line with the UU Contractor Management Procedure.

## Appendix 1

	<b>AUTHORITY TO DRIVE</b>
DRIVER NAME:	
DEPARTMENT:	
CAMPUS:	
MANAGER:	
TRAINING MODULE:	
DATE COMPLETED:	
TRAINER:	
LICENCES HELD:	
ATTACHMENTS:	
MEDICAL AUTHORISATION:	
ANY SPECIAL CONDITIONS:	
	<b>THIS CANDIDATE IS CONSIDERED MEDICALLY FIT TO DRIVE FOR WORK:</b>
SIGNED: (Occupational health department)	
DATE:	
MANAGERS SIGNATURE:	
DATE:	

**Appendix 2** *\*This is an example of a pre- user check sheet for a forklift truck. Amendments may be required to the checklist dependant on the equipment and the manufactures instructions.*

<h2 style="text-align: center;">PRE-USER MOBILE EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">(Forklift truck)</h3>							
<p><b>All mobile work equipment must be checked daily. If any defects are noted and equipment is deemed unsafe to use, equipment should be taken out of service immediately and reported to management.</b></p>							
Date - Week Commencing							
Circle day (of check)	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Employee Name							
Employee Number							
Equipment (Including Reference number)							
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Yes/ No</b>	<b>Defect description (Where applicable)</b>				<b>Reported (Y/ N)</b>	
Obvious Leaks							
Hydraulic Fluid Level							
Mast & Carriage							
Chain and Fixing Bolts							
Forks							
Backrest/ Extension							
Attachments							
Wheels, tyres and nuts							
Operating controls							
Steering							
Seatbelt and seat							
Alarms							
Warning Lights							
Brakes and parking brakes							
Horn							
Lights							
Gauges and Instruments							
Safety guards and covers							
Fuel Levels (Coolant, Fuel, Oil) * Petrol, Diesel, and LPG trucks only*							
Battery & Fan Belt * Petrol, Diesel, and LPG trucks only*							
LPG Bottle security * LPG trucks only*							
General Cleanliness *Electric trucks only*							
Battery Security & Cable connections *Electric trucks only*							
Electrolyte Levels *Electric trucks only*							
Employee Signature:							
Date:							
Managers Signature:							
Date:							
Detail corrective action for abovementioned defectives:							

## Resources

[Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 \(PUWER\) \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/PUWER/)

[The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 1999 \(PUWER\) | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland \(hseni.gov.uk\)](https://www.hseni.gov.uk/PUWER/)

[Introduction to machinery safety - HSE](#)

[Work equipment and machinery guidance | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland \(hseni.gov.uk\)](https://www.hseni.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery-guidance/)

[indg291.pdf \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

[Safe maintenance - hazards | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland \(hseni.gov.uk\)](https://www.hseni.gov.uk/safe-maintenance-hazards/)

[Are you a purchaser of work equipment | Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland \(hseni.gov.uk\)](https://www.hseni.gov.uk/are-you-a-purchaser-of-work-equipment/)

[Safe use of work equipment. Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L22 \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/PUWER/PUWER-Approved-Code-Practice-and-guidance-L22/)

[Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations \(LOLER\) \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/loler/)

[Buying New Machinery: A short guide to the law and your responsibilities when buying new machinery for use at work \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/buying-new-machinery/)