Work Equipment
Policy ✓ Code of Practice… Guidance… Procedure…
Organisation-wide ✓ Local…
Approved by the University Health & Safety Committee
Chairperson: Dr. Manuel Alonso Review date: October 2025 Next review date: October 2028
The purpose of presenting this document to the University Health & Safety Committee Standard 3 year review✓ Changes in practice and/or legislation… New policy document…

Contents

1. Introduction

This policy sets out Brunel University of London's approach to ensuring that all work equipment is safe, suitable, and properly maintained. It applies to all University staff, students, contractors, and visitors involved in the use, inspection, or maintenance of equipment. The University recognises its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER).

This policy also supports compliance with associated legislation, including the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER), Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 (PSSR), Building Safety Act 2022, and the UK Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 (as amended 2021).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all items of work equipment used on university premises, including machinery, laboratory equipment, lifting devices, pressure systems, IT equipment, and hand tools. It also covers mobile plant, vehicles, and any hired or loaned equipment. The requirements apply equally to equipment used by staff, students, contractors, and visitors.

3. Responsibilities

Executive Deans and Directors are responsible for ensuring that suitable arrangements are in place for the safe procurement, operation, maintenance, and disposal of work equipment within their areas of control.

Managers and Supervisors must ensure that all equipment is:
- Suitable for its intended use and compliant with current standards.
- Inspected and maintained in accordance with PUWER Reg. 5.
- Used only by trained and authorised individuals (PUWER Reg. 9).
- Accompanied by operating instructions and safety information.

Employees, researchers, and students must:
- Use equipment in accordance with training and instructions.
- Report any defects or unsafe conditions immediately.
- Not modify or interfere with safety devices or guards.
- Participate in training and competency programmes as required.

4. Procurement and Pre-Use Inspection

All work equipment procured after January 2025 must bear a UKCA mark and be supplied with a Declaration of Conformity in accordance with the UK Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 (as amended 2021). CE-marked equipment may only be used if placed on the market before December 2024 and is still compliant with safety requirements.

Before use, new equipment shall be subject to a pre-use inspection by a competent person to verify installation, guarding, and safety features. Risk assessments must be completed and documented for all new or modified equipment prior to operation.

5. Maintenance and Statutory Inspection

All work equipment must be maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order, and in good repair (PUWER Reg. 5). Maintenance regimes shall be proportionate to the risk presented by the equipment and recorded in maintenance logs or digital systems.

Equipment subject to statutory inspection (e.g., under LOLER, PSSR, or LEV) must be examined by a competent person at legally defined intervals. Certificates of Thorough Examination must be retained for inspection. A planned preventative maintenance (PPM) programme shall be maintained for all critical plant and equipment.

6. Risk Assessment

Risk assessments must be suitable and sufficient, identifying hazards arising from the installation, use, maintenance, and decommissioning of equipment. Assessments shall consider physical hazards, electrical safety, noise, vibration, and ergonomic risks. Where applicable, assessments must also address potential exposure to hazardous substances under COSHH 2002.

Noise and vibration risks shall be assessed in accordance with the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 and the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.

7. Training and Competence

All individuals operating work equipment must receive appropriate training, instruction, and supervision commensurate with the risk level of the equipment. Records of training and authorisation shall be maintained locally. Supervisors must ensure ongoing competence through refresher training and periodic review.

Reasonable adjustments shall be made under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that staff, students, or contractors with disabilities can safely access and operate equipment.

8. Incident Reporting

Any incident involving failure, malfunction, or near miss of work equipment must be reported immediately to the Health, Safety and Environment Team. If the incident results in serious injury or constitutes a dangerous occurrence, it must be reported under RIDDOR 2013 (Reg. 11).

9. Disposal and End-of-Life Management

End-of-life equipment shall be safely decommissioned and disposed of in accordance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013. All hazardous components must be removed and disposed of through approved contractors. Waste transfer and consignment notes must be retained for a minimum of three years.

10. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if legislative or operational changes occur. The Health, Safety and Environment Team will audit compliance annually and report findings to the University Health and Safety Committee.

Appendix 1

To ensure compliance with the regulations, those who purchase, use and maintain work equipment must use the **WORK EQUIPMENT RISK ASSESSMENT FORM.**

WORK EQUIPMENT RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Equipment:
Persons at risk:
Directorate / College Department /Research Group
Manager/Principle Investigator

Part 1: Pre purchase checks (complete this section if the equipment has yet to be purchased). Move on to Part 3 if the equipment is already in use.

WORK EQUIPMENT	**YES**	**NO**
Has enough space been set aside for the equipment (room for access, maintenance, repair etc.) and for any ancillary equipment (pumps, compressors, gas bottles, spares, consumables, etc.)?		
Is the flooring suitable/sufficiently strong to fix/support the equipment?		
Have service requirements been considered (including but not limited to electricity, gas, water, ventilation, extraction, drainage, etc.)?		
Has the equipment been designed according to good ergonomic principles (i.e. easy to use, clear controls, does not encourage awkward postures, all key areas of the equipment easily accessible, etc.)?		
Are spare parts and replaceable items readily available?		

Part 2: Pre-use inspections (complete if new or second-hand equipment used for the first time)

WORK EQUIPMENT	**YES**	**NO**
Has new and second-hand equipment been provided with written safety instructions?		
Does new equipment come with a Declaration of Conformity?		
Is all new and secondhand equipment CE or UKCA marked?		
Has new and second-hand equipment been checked and found to be in good order (clear controls/warning signs, guarding, no obvious damage, etc.)?		

Part 3: In-use checks

WORK EQUIPMENT	YES	NO	N/A
Have any written safety instructions provided with the equipment been incorporated into local operating procedures or passed on directly to the users?			
Do the local operating procedures include what to do in the event of an unexpected occurrence or emergency situation?			
Has someone been designated as the trainer/supervisor for the work equipment?			
Have all users of the equipment been given adequate training in the correct use, risks and precautions?			
Is a training record kept for all training delivered for work equipment?			
For high risk or complex equipment, has a list of authorised users been developed?			
Is the equipment being used in accordance with the procedures developed?			
Are control switches, other operating controls and contents of any containers clearly marked?			
Where applicable, are there clear warning notices (e.g. what PPE to wear) or makings on the equipment?			
Has an appropriate programme of PAT testing been agreed?			
Has a programme of checking safety devices been implemented?			
Where safety features could fail and result in injury, is there a programme of planned preventative maintenance in place?			
Are critical components/parts subject to periodic replacement/refurbishment before they reach the end of their useful life?			
Are the arrangements in place for undertaking maintenance activities appropriate and minimise the chances of injury?			
Have those involved in maintenance activities been given clear instructions and procedures?			
Has the equipment been designed and is used to prevent injury from items being ejected from the equipment?			
Has the equipment been designed and is used to prevent injury from the equipment overturning or collapsing?			
Has the equipment been designed and is used to prevent injury from items disintegrating or exploding?			
Has the equipment been designed and is used to prevent injury from overheating or fire?			

Has the equipment been designed and is used to prevent injury from substances being discharged from the equipment?			

WORK EQUIPMENT ISSUES	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
Where applicable, has the equipment been made stable by bolting, clamping or tying?			
Is there sufficient general and local lighting around the equipment?			
Is there adequate protection against parts of the equipment that are very hot/cold?			
If hot or cold parts of equipment cannot be fully protected, have other means of control the risk been adopted (i.e. signs, trainings, PPE)			
If pressurised equipment, lifting equipment or local exhaust ventilation used are they part of the statutory inspection/examination regime?			
If the equipment releases hazardous substances, has a specific COSHH assessments been prepared?			
Are all parts of dangerous machinery guarded?			
Are all guards in good working order?			
Do they permit an adequate view of the operation where this is necessary?			
Are the guards and/or interlock mechanisms difficult to by-pass or disable?			
Can the machine only be started when a specific labelled start control is activated?			
Is it impossible to start equipment just by resetting a safety device?			
Is there a readily accessible stop device which stops the machinery in a safe way?			
Where appropriate (i.e. where in a foreseeable emergency it could help) is there a prominent easily accessible emergency stop device?			
Can all controls be operated safely and easily?			
Is there a system of work in place that ensures nobody is in a dangerous position when the equipment is about to start?			
Does the equipment fail to safe in the event of a power failure or through a reasonably predictable failure of any control mechanism or safety device?			
Does the start device need to be activated to restart the machine if the power fails?			

If the power is isolated does the equipment come to rest safely without the possibility of access to dangerous parts?			
Can the equipment be securely isolated from the power, to prevent inadvertent reconnection (e.g. by removing a plug or locking off)?			
Where applicable, has noise and vibration issues been considered and addressed?			
Does the equipment contain a source of radiation?			
Does the equipment contain a laser?			

PART 4: Disposal or supplying to another user

WORK EQUIPMENT	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
If passing on the equipment to another user, is it provided in a safe condition (i.e. all hazardous materials/substances removed and records of inspections/tests and operating instructions provided)?			
If disposing of the equipment, have all hazardous substances been removed from the equipment and disposed of via an approved route and the equipment fully cleaned?			
If disposing of equipment that is electrically powered or has electronic components, has it gone through an approved recycling route to satisfy the WEEE Regulations?			
If disposing of equipment, have any residual hazards (e.g. holes in floors and ceilings, associated pipework, drainage systems, etc.) been made safe?			
If disposing of equipment that undergoes statutory testing, has its removal been brought to the attention of the Chief Engineers Office?			

Actions to be taken	**Responsibility**	**Timescale**

Assessment made by.....Date.....

Review date.....

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