

Work Equipment Assessment Guidance

The Health and Safety Regulation that governs the main principles of work equipment is the 'Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998' (PUWER). The primary objective of the regulations is to ensure the provision of safe work equipment and its safe use. Work equipment should not give rise to Health and Safety irrespective of its age or place of origin.

The PUWER regulations cover different kinds of equipment:

- New;
- Existing;
- Second-hand or leased.

Work equipment is defined as any equipment, machinery, appliances/apparatus, tool or installation for use at work.

Use includes starting, stopping, programming, setting, transporting, repairing, modifying, maintaining, servicing and cleaning.

Some key parts of the regulations:

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| Regulation 4 | need to assess risks to Health and Safety – suitability of equipment. |
| Regulation 5 | maintenance – general requirements for ensuring that work equipment is kept in a suitable condition, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Routine maintenance• Planned preventative maintenance• Maintenance/up to date |
| Regulation 6 | inspection – variety of requirements covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different situations where inspection of work equipment is required• Purpose of inspection• Who carries out inspection• Keeping records |
| Regulation 7 | specific risks – describes and deals with restricting use of equipment to those who are trained in the use of equipment, focussing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restricting the use of equipment to appropriate people• Designating particular people to use and maintain it• Training and instructing them in safe use of equipment |
| Regulation 8 | information and instruction – focussing on groups of people who should receive information, instruction and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Format the information and instructions should take |

- Suitability of information for people who receive it
- Regulation 9 training – provision of training to those who use work equipment; provide training to employees who manage or supervise the use of work equipment.
- Regulation 10 conformity with EU requirements.
- Regulation 11 dangerous parts of machinery – this section sets out mechanisms which we must take in order to protect employees and students from hazards associated with machinery:
- Measures to be taken, e.g. prevent access to dangerous parts or stop dangerous parts from moving before a person comes too close.
 - Purpose of measures.
 - How guards and protection devices satisfy the regulations.
 - Meaning of ‘danger zone’.
- Regulation 12 protection against specific hazards. Focuses on:
- Articles or substances falling or being ejected from work equipment.
 - Rupture or disintegration of parts of work equipment.
 - Work equipment catching fire or overheating.
 - Unintended or premature discharge of gas, dust, liquid, vapour or other substance.
 - Unintended or premature explosion of work equipment or an article or substance produced, used or stored in it; e.g. failure of pressure relief device.
- Regulation 13 high or very low temperatures – for example hot surfaces:
- Red surface temperature
 - Insulation
 - Shielding
 - Guarding
- Reduced risk of splashing, spilling and direct contact.
- Limiting maximum temperature
 - Providing doors, lids, corners etc.
- Reducing risk by:
- PPE
 - Training
 - Warning signs and symbols
 - Supervision
 - Operating instructions
 - Instructions for use
- Regulation 14 controls for starting or making a significant change in operating conditions, focussing on:
- Controlling starting and restarting

- Controlling change of operating conditions
 - Ensuring operating conditions cannot change accidentally
 - Use of interlock and sensing devices
 - Design and positioning of controls
- Regulation 15 stop controls:
- To be accessible, proper stopping sequence is followed.
 - Sources of energy can be switched off once equipment has stopped.
- Regulation 16 engaging stop controls, focussing on:
- The number of emergency stop controls.
 - Accessing of those controls.
 - Interaction with other controls in other requirements.
- Regulation 17 controls to be:
- Clearly identifiable – e.g. by design or marking
 - Locating controls so that neither the control operator nor any other people near equipment are at risk
 - In particular circumstances, of warnings to signal the use of equipment controls.
 - Giving advance warning to people exposed to risk.
- Regulation 18 control systems – taking realistic and practical allowances when choosing or specifying control systems.
- Regulation 19 isolation from sources of energy. Requirement that equipment must be capable of being isolated from ‘all sources of energy’. The most common are power, heat and pressure. There are others!
- Regulation 20 stability – stabilising fixed work equipment and mobile work equipment. Some machines should be bolted to the floor.
- Regulation 21 lighting – place where people use work equipment in suitable and sufficiently lit. Focussing on where and when local lighting should be provided and when additional lighting may be required.
- Regulation 22 maintenance questions – link to regulation 5. But this emphasises general requirements for maintenance of equipment in a suitable condition considering what must be done to ensure maintenance is carried out safely.
- Regulation 23 markings – if equipment is dangerous or has dangerous parts that project, it should be marked so that employees are not put at risk. For example, markings can be done in several ways:
- Using words, numbers, colours and shapes or symbols.

- Paint parts of equipment that protrude into a working space in such a way that they are easily seen.
- Signs used to comply with Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Symbols) Regulations.

- Regulation 24 warnings – to be clear, easily understood, unmistakable. May be visible or audible; e.g. flashing light or alarms.
- Regulation 25 ensuring safety of people carried by mobile equipment – for example, fitting locks to doors, providing safety belts or extra guarding.
- Regulation 26 rolling over of mobile work equipment. Focuses on devices which should be used and provided to reduce the risk of equipment rolling over. Protecting people being carried if rolling over occurs.
- Regulation 27 concerns operating of fork-lift trucks.
- Regulation 28 self-propelled equipment.
- Regulation 29 remote-controlled self-propelled equipment.
- Regulation 30 drive shafts.