WORK RELATED
UPPER LIMB
DISORDERS

A TUC SHORT COURSE: 2006-07
Work related upper limb disorders – A TUC Short Course

Your name
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Union ________________

Workplace______________
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Publisher's note

1. TUC Education has done its best to ensure that all legal references and extracts quoted in these short course materials were accurate at the time of writing. However, health and safety law and practice are evolving all the time and participants should not rely on these materials as an authoritative statement or interpretation of health and safety law. If you are in any doubt about where you stand legally, seek the advice of your trade union, the Health and Safety Executive or a qualified legal professional.

2. Throughout these course materials there are many references to useful web pages. Although all links were checked for accuracy some may expire over the life of this edition. In such instances participants may be able to find the information they need by going to the root website and navigating from there.

Acknowledgements

- The work related upper limb disorders (WRULDs) short course materials have been prepared for TUC Education by Peter Kirby. In developing these materials Peter has drawn upon a wide range of TUC health and safety material and other sources acknowledged below
- The use of WRULDs resources from the London Hazards Centre, UNISON and HSE
**Pre-Course Activity**

We want to ensure that the TUC work related upper limb disorders course you will be attending is useful for you and your members. Please try and take some time before the course to make a note of:

- your members’ awareness, and main concerns about work related upper limb disorders
- examples of injuries caused by work related upper limb disorders
- any successes you or your union has had in tackling work related upper limb disorders problems
- problems you or your union has had in dealing with work related upper limb disorders
- employer/management action on tackling work related upper limb disorders

Also try to bring along the following documents:

- information about any tasks that your members are involved in that may cause work related upper limb disorders
- management policies, procedures and risk assessments related to tasks that may cause work related upper limb disorders
- management accident and incident statistics concerning work related upper limb disorders and results of investigations
- any information you have had from your trade union on work related upper limb disorders

Don’t worry if you cannot get hold of all the information: you will still benefit from this course.
Activity  Introductions

Aims  This activity will help us to:
  • get to know more about each other
  • share our first thoughts about the course
  • practise interviewing, listening and note-taking skills

Task  Work with another person on the course (preferably someone you don’t know). Use the checklist below to find out some information about them.

  ✓ Name
  ✓ Union and their position(s) in the union
  ✓ Workplace and the job they do
  ✓ How many members they represent
  ✓ Other union courses they have done
  ✓ Initial thoughts on what they want to get out of the course and how the course should be run

Report back  You will be asked to introduce your partner to the rest of the course
How the course will work
Those of you who have attended TUC courses before know that they aim to be practical and to help you develop your knowledge, confidence and skills. The TUC Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (WRULDs) short course follows the same principles which include:

- Learning by doing - you learn far more by doing something yourself
- Collective work - work in small groups with regular reporting back
- Action at work - close links between you and your members
- Work on real problems – hazards, experiences and problems faced by members of the course
- Activities - specific tasks that you and other course participants undertake during the course
- Course file - a record of your work on the course. This is useful for a future reference point back at your workplace, and accreditation purposes

Course aims
You will have an opportunity to comment on the course aims and sample programmes which are reproduced below. They are based upon the TUC’s assessment of the needs of health and safety representatives. Your tutor will also draw your attention to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the course (Work Related Upper Limb Disorders) that has been accredited by the National Open College Network.

The course should help trade union health and safety representatives to:

- Identify the causes and symptoms of WRULDs
- understand the main legal requirements and policies in relation to WRULDs
- make proposals for prevention and control of WRULDs in the workplace

Different experience of safety reps on this course
Some safety reps attending this short course may have a lot of experience in tackling work related upper limb disorders problems from their workplace, trade union, and health and safety courses. Some other safety reps attending this short course may have less experience and have come on the course to understand and apply the basic principles. Whatever our experiences, it is important that we work together so that everybody can get the most out of the course, apply it in the workplace and gain NOCN credits for their learning.

The TUC has produced activities and resources in this short course pack that can be used in entirety or selectively to suit your needs. In addition, your tutor may introduce new activities to suit your needs.

Course programme
The course can be organised in a variety of ways. For example, it can be run as a three day course on a day release basis using the example programme on the next page.
Example: 3 day short course with workplace activities

### PRE-COURSE ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>PM</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
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</table>
| 1   | • Introductions, aims, agenda setting & how the course will work  
  • Reviewing experience  
  • Causes and symptoms of WRULDS | • The law and work related upper limb disorders  
  • Preparation for Workplace Activity | Workplace activity –  
  • Hazard Mapping and priorities |
| 2   | • Report on Hazard Mapping and priorities  
  • Risk assessments for WRULDs | • Practising ergonomic workplace solutions  
  • Information to members on WRULDs  
  • Preparation for Workplace Activity | Workplace activity –  
  • WRULDs policies  
  • Reporting back to members |
| 3   | • Policies for work related upper limb disorders  
  • Negotiating a policy | • Trade union strategy, action planning and steps that need to be taken  
  • Learning opportunities  
  • Course evaluation  
  • Accreditation | • Report back to members, unions & employer  
  • Action in the workplace  
  • Further training |

### Course guidelines

Equal opportunities are an integral feature of any TUC course. It is important that we identify rules for the course that incorporate equal opportunities principles. Your tutor will ensure that course guidelines are set collectively by the course participants.

### Jargon list

During the course you might come across terms that you are unfamiliar with. It is useful to keep a jargon list so that people can check what words, phrases and abbreviations mean or what they stand for. If anyone (including the tutor) uses a word, phrase or abbreviation you are not familiar with then say so. The word, phrase or abbreviation and the meaning can then be written on the jargon list.

### Your tutor’s role

Some of the things your tutor will be doing are:
- helping to organise the work, by suggesting tasks and ways of working
- organising resources, including basic information, internet access where possible, publications, and photocopying facilities, to help the course work
- giving advice and support
- leading some discussions and summarising key points
- giving guidance on the preparation of work for accreditation
Record of achievement
If you have previously attended a TUC Course, you will be familiar with accreditation of your learning by the National Open College Network. If you have not, your tutor will explain the basic principles.

An Achievement Record for the TUC Work Related Upper Limb Disorders short course is provided below. Your course file will normally contain the evidence of your learning.

Action at work
As the course is a practical one, there will be a number of matters that arise where you will need to take some action at work and in your union. It is useful to keep a record of what needs to be done, and when you need to do it.

Progression
As a trained and experienced safety rep you will be skilled and valued by your members. Good employers will appreciate a safety rep who knows what they are doing and can represent members effectively. But your training and development needs won’t stop at the end of this short course. And so as a part of your action planning at the end of the course, you will have the opportunity to think about what you need to do after the course has finished. Your tutor will give you details of other TUC core and short courses.
### UNIT TITLE: Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (3 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOMES</th>
<th>LEVEL 2</th>
<th>LEVEL 3</th>
<th>EVIDENCE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<td>The learner has achieved the outcome because s/he can</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Identify the causes and symptoms of WRULDS</td>
<td>1.1 Describe the main symptoms of WRULDS</td>
<td>1.1 Describe the different types of WRULDS which may be developed</td>
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<td>1.2 Identify the main causes of WRULDS</td>
<td>1.2 Relate the different causes of WRULDS to their effects</td>
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<td>2. Understand the main legal requirements and policies in relation to WRULDS</td>
<td>2.1 Outline the main legal provisions relating to WRULDS</td>
<td>2.1 Identify strengths and weaknesses in the main legal provisions relating to WRULDS</td>
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<td>2.2 Describe appropriate policies and procedures at work for dealing with WRULDS</td>
<td>2.2 Assess the appropriateness of policies and procedures at work for dealing with WRULDS</td>
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<td>2.3 Explain how information and advice on WRULDS can be communicated to members in simple form</td>
<td>2.3 Explain how information and advice on WRULDS can be communicated to members in simple form</td>
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<td>3. Make proposals for prevention and control of WRULDS in the workplace</td>
<td>3.1 Give examples of ‘ergonomic’ solutions to improving the working environment</td>
<td>3.1 Explain how ‘ergonomics’ can be applied at the workplace as part of a preventative strategy</td>
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<td>3.2 Make at least three proposals for preventing and controlling WRULDS in the workplace</td>
<td>3.2 Develop arguments for use in negotiating improvements with management on WRULDS</td>
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**KEY:**
- WS = Work Sheet
- TO/PO = Tutor/Peer Observation
- SS = Summary Sheet
- P = Plan
- O = Other

Level achieved ____________________________

Signed: Tutor ____________________________ Learner ____________________________

**OCN CODES:** AJ3/2/QQ/065  L3  AJ3/3/QQ/061
Activity
Agenda setting for work related upper limb disorders

Aims
To help us to:
- think about what we already know about work related upper limb disorders
- decide what will be helpful for us to do on this short course

Task
In your small group, discuss your knowledge and experience of work related upper limb disorders and what it will be helpful for you to cover on this short course. Some of the things you might consider are:
- legal requirements that you would like to find out about/revise/revisit
- safety reps’ rights in relation to work related upper limb disorders risk assessments and making sure that safety reps are more involved
- problems/issues to do with work related upper limb disorders that occur in your workplace and that you would like to tackle
- improving procedures, policies and risk assessments for tackling work related upper limb disorders,
- items about policies and risk assessments that were not addressed on previous courses that you attended
- other matters

Make a list of the priorities that you would like to address.

Report back  Elect a spokesperson to report back.
Activity  Reviewing experience

Aims
To help us to:

- share experiences
- identify concerns
- find out what’s happening in different workplaces

Task
In your group prepare a short report on:

1. Members’ awareness and main concerns about work related upper limb disorders
2. Examples of injuries caused by work related upper limb disorders
3. Any successes and problems you’ve had in dealing with work related upper limb disorders
4. Management action on tackling work related upper limb disorders
5. Information you have gathered about work related upper limb disorders

Report back
Elect a member of your group to report back to the rest of the course

Resources
- Pre-course activity
- Your experience
- Documents from your union or management

Assessment criteria - Work related upper limb disorders
Level 2: 1.1
Level 3: 1.1
**Activity**  What are work related upper limb disorders?

**Aims**  To help us to:
- define work related upper limb disorders
- analyse causes, effects and symptoms

**Task**
In your small group, using your own knowledge and information that you gathered from the pre-course activity, and Fact Sheet 1 below:
1. Discuss and agree a definition of work related upper limb disorders
2. Use the worksheet on the next page to analyse the different injuries, symptoms and causes

**Report Back**  Elect a spokesperson to report back.

**Resources**
- Pre-course Activity
- Fact Sheet 1 below

**Assessment criteria - Work related upper limb disorders**
Level 2: 1.1 & 1.2
Level 3: 1.1 & 1.2
### Worksheet: work related upper limb disorders

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<th>Injury</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Causes</th>
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**Worksheet: work related upper limb disorders**

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</table>
Fact Sheet 1: Basic facts about WRULDs
What are work related upper limb disorders?

According to the HSE, upper limb disorders (ULDs) is used as an umbrella term for a range of disorders of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder and neck. It covers those conditions, with specific medical diagnoses (e.g. frozen shoulder, carpal tunnel syndrome), and other conditions (often called repetitive strain injury or RSI) where there is pain without specific symptoms. Symptoms may include pain, swelling and difficulty in moving. The worst cases can result in permanent disablement if no action is taken. ULD cases can also mean production losses and compensation claims for employers.

The HSE uses the term ULDS instead of RSI because they say that RSI does not cover all ULDs. The TUC prefers to use the term RSI but, to avoid confusion with official standards and guidance, this course has been titled “Work-related upper limb disorders” (WRULDs). However, the terms WRULDs and RSI may be used interchangeably throughout the course.

The HSE estimates that 9.5 million working days (full-day equivalent) were lost in 2005/06 through musculoskeletal disorders caused or made worse by work. On average, each person suffering took an estimated 17.3 days off in that 12 month period. According to the HSE, musculoskeletal disorders are the most common cause of occupational ill health in Great Britain, currently affecting over one million people a year. Musculoskeletal disorders affect the muscles, joints, tendons and other parts of the musculoskeletal system and many of these will be upper limb disorders.

(For full details see the HSE web page on MSDs at www.hse.gov.uk/msd)

In the 2006 TUC Safety Representatives Survey, safety representatives identified MSDs as a major problem. Back strains were identified by 28% of all safety representatives, RSI by 38%, whilst 13% identified handling heavy loads. Back strains caused particular problems in the health service (53%) and distribution, hotels and restaurants (52%). An earlier TUC survey relating to the experience of women at work found out what workplace health and safety problems women suffer from and what were their priorities. In all, 53% said that RSI was a problem for women.

Physical hazards causing upper limb disorders are responsible for a heavy toll of suffering, much of it endured in silence and never fully reported. Thousands of workers have to leave their jobs each year and thousands more stay on only to suffer further. If a job feels uncomfortable then it is probably doing harm. The aim should be to fit the job to the worker, not the other way around.

Repetitive strain injuries
The TUC uses RSI as the collective name to describe a range of muscle and tendon conditions of the neck, shoulders, elbows, wrists, hands and fingers caused by:
- continuous, repetitive or pressurised finger, hand or arm movements
- twisting movements
- squeezing
- hammering or pounding
- pushing, pulling, lifting or reaching movements
- awkward postures

Other names used to describe these conditions include WRULDs (see above), Occupational Overuse Syndrome and Cumulative Trauma Disorders.

Symptoms include:
- pain in the fingers, wrists, arms or shoulders
- tenderness
- feeling of heaviness in the arms/wrists
- swelling
- tingling sensation at the fingertips
- numbness
- joint restriction

There are two main types of RSI – localised conditions and diffuse conditions. Localised conditions are where the symptoms are normally confined to a particular part of the body and are easier to diagnose. Examples of localised RSIs are explained in the table below. Diffuse conditions are characterised by general muscle discomfort, pain, burning and tingling. It is often difficult to determine the exact site of the injury.

According to the RSI Hazards Handbook by the London Hazards Centre (see www.lhc.org.uk/members/pubs/books/rsi/rsi_toc.htm), RSI is a progressive condition which can be divided into three broad stages:
- Stage 1 (mild): with pain, aching and tiredness of wrists, arms, shoulders, necks or legs during work, which improves overnight. This stage may last weeks or months, but is reversible
- Stage 2 (moderate) with recurrent pain, aching and tiredness occurring earlier in the working day, persisting at night and possibly disturbing sleep. Physical signs may be visible, such as swelling of the tendon areas. This stage may last for several months
- Stage 3 (severe) with pain, aching, weakness and fatigue experienced even when the sufferer is resting completely. Sleep is often disturbed and the sufferer may be unable to carry out even light tasks at home or work. This stage may last for months or years. Sometimes it is irreversible and the person never gets back full use of the affected part of their body

RSI is difficult to treat but it is important that treatment begins as early as possible. If the condition reaches the chronic stage, recovery may take years and it may be too late for a full recovery. The trade union priority is to prevent the injury occurring in the first place.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INJURY</th>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
<th>TYPICAL CAUSES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bursitis: inflammation of the soft pad of tissue between skin and bone or bone and tendon. Can occur at the knee, elbow, shoulder. Called ‘beat knee’, ‘beat elbow’ or ‘frozen shoulder’ at these locations.</td>
<td>Pain and swelling at the site of the injury.</td>
<td>Kneeling, pressure at the elbow, repetitive shoulder movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpal tunnel syndrome: pressure on the nerves which pass up the wrist.</td>
<td>Tingling, pain and numbness in the thumb and fingers, especially at night.</td>
<td>Repetitive work with a bent wrist, use of vibrating tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellulitis: infection of the palm of the hand following repeated bruising called ‘beat hand’.</td>
<td>Pain and swelling of the palm.</td>
<td>Use of hand tools, like hammers and shovels, coupled with abrasion from dust and dirt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epicondylitis: inflammation of the area where bone and tendon are joined. Called ‘tennis or golfer’s elbow’ when it occurs at the elbow.</td>
<td>Pain and swelling of the palm.</td>
<td>Repetitive work often from strenuous jobs like joinery, plastering, bricklaying. Common in meat packers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganglion: a cyst at a joint or in a tendon sheath, usually on the back of the hand or wrist.</td>
<td>Hard, small, round swelling, usually painless.</td>
<td>Repetitive hand movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osteoarthritis: damage to the joint resulting in scarring at the joint and the growth of excess bone.</td>
<td>Stiffness and aching in the spine and neck, and other joints.</td>
<td>Long-term overloading of the spine and joints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendonitis: inflammation of the area where muscle and tendon are joined.</td>
<td>Pain, swelling, tenderness and redness of hand, wrist, and/or forearm. Difficulty in using the hand.</td>
<td>Repetitive movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenosynovitis: inflammation of the tendons and/or tendon sheaths.</td>
<td>Aching, tenderness, swelling, extreme pain, difficulty in using the hand.</td>
<td>Repetitive movements, often non-strenuous. Can be brought on by sudden increase in workload or by introduction of new processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tension neck or shoulder: inflammation of the tendons.</td>
<td>Localised pain in the neck or shoulders.</td>
<td>Having to maintain a rigid posture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trigger Finger: inflammation of tendons and/or tendon sheaths of the fingers.</td>
<td>Inability to move fingers smoothly, with or without pain.</td>
<td>Repetitive movements, having to grip too long, tightly or too frequently.</td>
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Activity
The law and work related upper limb disorders

Aims
To help us to:
- analyse the legal requirements for work related upper limb disorders
- assess the application of the Regulations in your workplace

Task
In your small group:
1. Look at the risk assessment requirements in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Analyse the key legal requirements using the resources that are listed below

2. In your workplace, identify areas of good practice and/or areas for improvement

Report Back
You may find it helpful to use the worksheet below to record your findings. Photocopy it for all the other participants. Elect a spokesperson who will be asked to explain some of the key points

Resources
- Pre-course activity
- Fact Sheet 2 below
- HSE guidance literature
- TUC Hazards at Work – organising for safe and healthy workplaces
- Other resources from your Trades Union Studies Centre/Tutor

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 2.1
Level 3: 2.1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Standard and source</th>
<th>Current workplace practice</th>
<th>Good practice and/or improvements needed</th>
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Worksheet: Legal Standards for WRULDS

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<th>Legal Standard and source</th>
<th>Current workplace practice</th>
<th>Good practice and/or improvements needed</th>
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Fact Sheet 2
The law and work related upper limb disorders

Introduction
The table on the next page demonstrates in a graphical form some of the laws and standards that apply to work related upper limb disorders. More details are provided in the text on the pages following the table.
Work related upper limb disorders – examples of legislation & other standards

### Workplace Preventing WRULDs

**Health and safety legislation**
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

**Regulations**
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992

**Health & safety standards**

**Health and Safety Executive**
- HSE: MSDs risk assessments [www.hse.gov.uk/msd/risk.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/risk.htm)

**European Agency for Safety and Health At Work**
- Fact Sheet 4: Preventing work related musculoskeletal disorders; Fact Sheet 5 WRULDs and Fact Sheet 6: RSI

**Trade union advice/policies**

**TUC**
- TUC safety reps’ guide to RSI [www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-7697-f0.cfm%20](http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-7697-f0.cfm%20)
- TUC guide: Spotting the risks of RSI [www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-4462-f0.cfm](http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-4462-f0.cfm)
- TUC worksmart: RSI [www.worksmart.org.uk/health](http://www.worksmart.org.uk/health)

**Schedule 1**
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: general principles of prevention

**Your union**
Check your union website at [www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/unions_main.cfm](http://www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/unions_main.cfm)
- For example:
  - UNISON – RSI [www.unison.org.uk/safety](http://www.unison.org.uk/safety)
Laws of general application

There is no specific law dealing with work related upper limb disorders, however, employers have duties under both statutory and common law which are relevant. Common law principles have been determined by court decisions, rather than Acts of Parliament and provide employers with a general duty of care for their employees. Statutory duties are contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that employers’ workplaces are safe and healthy.

A considerable number of laws and regulations of general application apply to work-related upper limb disorders (see the relevant chapters of TUC Hazards at Work listed below). They include:

- SRSC Regulations 1977 – Chapter 3 and also see below, with reference to safety representatives’ rights and consultation
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 – Chapter 12, dealing with the general duties of employers and employees under Sections 2–9. Generally, the employer has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – Chapter 13, with the obligations placed upon employers to make suitable and sufficient assessments of risks to their employees. They must also make arrangements for the health and safety of employees by effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review (see below)
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 – Chapter 25, where the Regulations seek to reduce the health and safety risks from using visual display units in the workplace. Employers should: assess and reduce risks; provide breaks and changes of activity; provide training and information; provide eye tests where these are appropriate; and ensure workstations meet minimum ergonomic requirements
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 – Chapter 32, where the Regulations seek to reduce the health and safety risks to employees from handling and lifting loads. They give advice on how to handle and move loads to prevent poor posture or injury, including handling while seated. This may be useful to help assess jobs that are causing back pain and might involve the use of repetitive work
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 as amended – Chapter 43
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 – Chapter 45
- the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 – Chapter 49, where employers must notify their enforcing authority in the event of certain types of defined ULDs
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Employers have a duty to conduct risk assessments and implement protective and preventive measures taking account of ergonomic principles. Provisions in the 1999 Regulations that are important for upper limb disorders are reproduced below.

**Regulation 3: Risk assessment**
- Making a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks
- Identifying measures needed to comply with legal requirements
- Reviewing the risk assessment
- Recording the assessment where there are five or more employees

Risk assessments required under Regulation 3(1) of MHSWR should take account of the risks to new or expectant mothers where they may be exposed to any process, working conditions or physical, chemical or biological agents which may adversely affect their health and safety or that of their baby. The risk assessment should include consideration of the risks to those who are pregnant, those who have given birth or miscarried in the last six months or those who are breast feeding.

The employer needs to carry out the risk assessment before young workers start work and see where the risk remains, taking account of the control measures in place.

**Regulation 4 (and Schedule 1): Implementing preventive and protective measures**

On the basis of:
- avoiding risks
- evaluating the risks which cannot be avoided
- combating the risks at source
- adapting the work to the individual, especially as regards the design of workplaces, the choice of work equipment and the choice of working and production methods, with a view, in particular, to alleviating monotonous work and work at a predetermined work-rate and to reducing their effect on health
- adapting to technical progress
- replacing the dangerous by the non-dangerous or the less dangerous
- developing a coherent overall prevention policy which covers technology, organisation of work, working conditions, social relationships and the influence of factors relating to the working environment
- giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures
- giving appropriate instruction to employees
**Regulation 5: Health and safety arrangements**

Making arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures.

**Regulation 6: Health surveillance**

Ensuring that employees are provided with health surveillance having regard to the risks to their health and safety which are identified by the assessment.

**Regulation 7: Competent persons**

- Appointing one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking the necessary measures to comply with legal requirements
- Where there is a competent person in the employer’s employment, that person should be appointed in preference to a competent person not in his/her employment

**Regulation 10: Information for employees**

Providing employees with comprehensible and relevant information on:

- health and safety risks from the assessment
- preventive and protective measures
- procedures for serious and imminent danger
- competent persons

**Regulation 11: Training for employees**

- Taking into account employees capabilities when giving tasks
- Providing training when employees are recruited, when being exposed to new or increased risks and repeated periodically
- Training to be provided in working hours

**Regulation 14: Duties of employees**

- Using equipment etc. in accordance with training and instructions
- Informing the employer about serious danger and health and safety shortcomings

**HSE Guidance: ‘Upper limb disorders in the workplace’**

Useful guidance can also be found in the HSE publication ‘Upper limb disorders in the workplace’, which outlines what ULDs are, what causes them and preventive measures. The guidance stresses the need for risk assessment, and for applying ergonomic principles so that the job fits the worker rather than the other way round. The guidance also makes it clear that employers should look at the principal risk factors:

- task related – repetition, working postures, force and duration of exposure
- worker-related factors – individual differences
- environment-related factors – working environment and psychosocial factors
Involving safety representatives in work related upper limb disorders risk assessments

Example of guidance (Paragraph 39) for employers on the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)

“Consulting employees or their representatives about matters to do with their health and safety is good management practice, as well as being a requirement under health and safety law. Employees are a valuable source of information and can provide feedback about the effectiveness of health and safety management arrangements and control measures. Where safety representatives exist, they can act as an effective channel for employees’ views”. ”

Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations

Consulting with trade union safety representatives is a legal requirement that is placed upon employers. Safety representatives have extensive rights under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (SRSC). These are set out in full under Regulations 4, 5, 6 and 7 of SRSC and include the rights to:

- be consulted
- investigate health and safety matters
- inspect their workplace
- information

It is important that union safety representatives use these rights fully, to become constructively involved:

- by ensuring that the employer tackles work related upper limb disorders in the hierarchical way described above
- in the risk assessment process
- in checking their employers' risk assessments
- in checking plans for risk prevention and control, so that members’ health and safety is properly protected
Checklist for safety reps: Upper limb disorder risk assessments
Safety representatives and workers should be involved in the risk assessment process, and use some of the following points:

✓ Check that all tasks/operations have been covered, including work done away from the employer’s premises

✓ Where a range of problems has been found, try to agree priorities for action, with an agreed timetable for improvements

✓ Assessment is not an end in itself. The value of an assessment is to identify areas which need improvement to make work safer

✓ Be prepared to show that ULDs are likely and will cause pain and disablement if preventive measures are not taken. When cost is an issue, point out that ULDs cost employers money in lost working time, payments for sick leave and job cover, loss of trained and experienced staff; and successful compensation claims

✓ Tackling problems with ULDs is rarely a one-off exercise. It requires a sustained campaign with short-, medium- and long-term objectives

✓ Safety representatives have a right to information about new processes, including proposed workplace layouts. Involvement at the design stage gives the chance to eliminate problems before a new machine process or work system is installed

✓ Whenever ability among men or women appears to be a limiting factor, make sure they are not banned from such work but that the work is modified to suit their abilities

✓ When changes occur in a worker’s health, either permanently or temporarily, work should be suitably adapted or they should be allocated alternative work without loss of pay

✓ The effect of ULDs on women’s health is often underestimated or ignored because men appear to be handling more heavy loads. The injurious effects of repeated handling on muscles, joints and ligaments tend to be gradual and cumulative
Workplace Activity
WRULDs hazard mapping and priorities

Aims
To help us to:

- involve members in discussion about work related upper limb disorders
- use hazard mapping to find out about work related upper limb disorders
- use a priority plan to decide on an initial issue to be tackled

Task
1. Draw a simple plan/map of your workplace on a large piece of paper. You will be given time to draw this up on the course to take back to work. You can then check with your members to see if anything needs to be added
2. Get some "post- its", so that members can mark hazards that may cause work related upper limb disorders on to the map
3. Organise a session at work
   - Gather together members from a particular work area and give an explanation of what you are proposing to do
   - Ask members to pinpoint hazards that may cause work related upper limb disorders (using “post-its”) on the map/plan with an explanation of why they should be included
   - Keep notes of what members say around the hazard map
   - Discuss the findings with members. Common patterns can be identified. A lot of “post-its” will show that there is likely to be a problem that needs to be tackled
   - Give members a chance to think about and influence priorities
4. Explain that you will be investigating their priorities as part of your TUC Work Related Upper Limb Disorders course and reporting back to them. It is important that you further explain to members that all their concerns are worthy of tackling and will be taken up with management. Some of the hazards identified may be easy to tackle and could be prevented quite easily by management.

Resources
- Fact Sheet 3 below

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 1.1 & 1.2
Level 3: 1.1 & 1.2
### Prioritising hazards plan: what do members think?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard and work related upper limb disorder</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>What can be done?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Workplace Activity
WRULDs hazard mapping & prioritisation
Preparation
Your tutor will give you time to think about your workplace activity

How will you do it?

When will you do it?

Which group of members will you map with?

What do you need to do to prepare?

Are there any potential problems that you envisage?

What can you do to overcome the problems?
Fact Sheet 3: Hazard mapping

Introduction
It is important that we identify with our members whether the employer has prevented the important hazards that can cause work related upper limb disorders. The TUC is keen to promote new methods of identifying hazards with members. Hazard mapping is one of these methods which gives a much more visual picture than statistics from surveys etc. and should help to identify and prioritise hazards. With hazard mapping, a rough map of the workplace is used to highlight where problems are found.

How to hazard map
1. What you’ll need
   - a simple plan/map of the workplace on a large piece of paper. You can draw this up on the course to take back to work. You can then check with your members to see if anything needs to be added. If your members move around in their jobs, your plan should try to illustrate this
   - “post- its”, so that members can mark hazards on to the map

2. Organising the session
   - Members from a particular work area gather together and are given an explanation of what you are proposing to do
   - Members are now asked to pinpoint hazards that may cause work related upper limb disorders (using “post-its”) on the map/plan with an explanation of why they should be included
   - The plan should also include identification of where workers are situated
   - The safety rep should keep notes of what members say around the hazard map
   - The findings are then discussed with members. Common patterns can be identified. A lot of “post-its” will show that there is likely to be a problem that needs to be tackled
   - Links can be made to the symptoms of ill health and injuries from the results of body mapping
   - Members are given a chance to think about and influence priorities
   - (See the Workplace Activity above)

3. Examples of hazards and work related upper limb disorders
   Hazards where there is a risk of injury, for example, from repetitive work with a bent wrist; repetitive hand movements; having to maintain a rigid posture; use of hand tools and so on.

4. Planning the next steps
   Once the safety rep and members have identified the priorities, the causes, effects and action can be discussed.
Activity
Report on work related upper limb disorders hazard mapping and prioritisation

Aims
To help us to:
- analyse the results of the hazard mapping activities
- select priorities

Task
Your tutor will divide you into small groups based upon similar workplaces, to discuss the outcomes of the hazard mapping activities.

1. Look at the marked hazard maps and prioritisation charts in turn, for each person in your group. Each person should prepare a short report for their workplace explaining the priority work related upper limb disorders hazards identified.

2. Select one priority for each person for use in the next activity.

Report back
Elect a spokesperson to report back to the whole group on the priorities identified in Task 2.

Resources
- Hazard maps from the workplace

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 1.1 & 1.2
Level 3: 1.1 & 1.2
Activity
Work related upper limb disorders risk assessment

Aims
To help us to:
- identify a WRULDs hazard and evaluate the risk
- practise using a HSE risk assessment pro forma
- apply ergonomic solutions

Task
In your small group, choose a priority hazard from the previous activity, where the operation that potentially causes a WRULD cannot be avoided and a risk assessment needs to be carried out.

1. Use the HSE Risk Filter and HSE risk assessment worksheets in Fact Sheet 4
2. Complete a risk assessment for the priority hazard
3. Prepare a brief report to explain the remedial action that should be taken in relation to the priority hazard

Report Back
You will be asked to report back to a role play safety committee meeting.

Resources
- Fact Sheet 4: HSE Risk Filter and HSE risk assessment worksheets

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 3.1 & 3.2
Level 3: 3.1 & 3.2
Fact Sheet 4: HSE tools for upper limb disorders

Work related upper limb disorders: HSE Risk Filter
www.hse.gov.uk/msd/pdfs/riskfilter.pdf

Task
________________________________________________________

Assessor____________________________________________________

Date__________________________

IF YOU ANSWER YES TO ANY OF THE STEPS (on the next page), YOU SHOULD THEN MAKE A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE JOB. REMEMBER TO CONSIDER EACH OF THE BODY PARTS OF THE UPPER LIMBS (FINGERS, HANDS, WRISTS, ARMS, SHOULDERS AND NECK).
### Step 1: Signs and symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there any:</th>
<th>Are any of these present?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Move on to Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medically diagnosed cases of ULDs in this work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Move on to Step 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaints of aches and pains?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improvised changes to work equipment, furniture and tools?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Step 2: Repetition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there any repetitive elements such as:</th>
<th>For more than 2 hours total per shift?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Move on to Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeating the same motions every few seconds?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A sequence of movements repeated more than twice per minute?</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 50% of the cycle time involved in performing the same sequence of motions?</td>
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</table>

### Step 3: Working postures

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there any working postures such as:</th>
<th>For more than 2 hours total per shift?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Move on to Step 4</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large range of joint movement such as side to side or up and down?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awkward or extreme joint positions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joints held in fixed positions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stretching to reach items or controls?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twisting or rotating items or controls?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Working overhead?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Step 4: Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there any forces applied such as:</th>
<th>Sustained or repeated application of force for more than 2 hours total per shift?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Move on to Step 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pushing, pulling, moving things (including with the fingers or thumb)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grasping/gripping?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinch grips ie holding or grasping objects between thumb and finger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steading or supporting items or work pieces?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shock and/or impact being transmitted to the body from tools or equipment?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Step 5: Vibration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do workers use any powered hand-held or hand-guided tools or equipment or do they hand-feed work pieces to vibrating equipment?</th>
<th>Regularly (ie at some point during most shifts)?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If you answer YES to any of these steps, you should make a full risk assessment of the job.
### Work related upper limb disorders: HSE Risk Assessment worksheets

hse.gov.uk/msd/pdfs/worksheets.pdf

| Date: __________________________________________ |
| Name of assessor: __________________________________ |
| Task: __________________________________________ |
| No. of employees that conduct this task: __________ |
| How long is the task typically undertaken for: __________ |
| a) without a break: ____________________________ |
| b) in a typical shift (excluding breaks): __________ |

| How frequently is the task undertaken (eg daily, weekly): ____________________________ |

| Other tasks undertaken by worker that may pose risks of ULDs (include worksheet reference numbers): ____________________________ |
| Task: __________________________________________ |
| What hand tools are used in the task: ____________________________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task description:</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Repetition</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>For 2 consecutive hours per day:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Does the task involve repeating the same movements every few seconds?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Is there a cycle or sequence of movements that is repeated twice per minute or more? OR More than 50% of the task involves performing a repetitive sequence of motions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Are the wrists/hands/fingers used intensively?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Is there repetitive shoulder/arm movement (ie regular arm movement with some pauses or almost continuous arm movement)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Are tools used that require repetitive finger or thumb action?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Working posture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fingers, hands and wrist</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Is the wrist repetitively up and/or down?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Is the wrist held in apposition that is bent upwards or downwards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Are the fingers gripping or used while the wrists are bent?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Is the wrist bent repetitively to either side?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Is the wrist held bent to either side?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Are the hands repetitively turned or twisted so that the palm is facing up or downwards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Are the hand held with the palms facing up or down?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Is a wide finger and/or hand span needed to grip, hold or manipulate items?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 Do static postures of the fingers, hand or wrist occur, for more than 2 consecutive hours per work day?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 Are there tools, equipment and/or work pieces that are poorly shaped and/or do not fit the hand comfortably?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11 Are there any tools, hand held equipment or work pieces that are too large or small to be gripped easily?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12 Are tools designed for right handed use only?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### HSE Risk Assessment worksheets (Worksheet 3)

#### 3. Working posture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Armes and shoulders</th>
<th>Yes/ No</th>
<th>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s) Note problem postures and identify parts of the upper limb involved.</th>
<th>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</th>
<th>Control options (Not exhaustive list)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Is work performed above the head or with elbows above the shoulders for more than 2 hours total in a working day?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s) Note problem postures and identify parts of the upper limb involved.</td>
<td>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</td>
<td>Optimise working postures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Does the task involve repetitively moving the upper arms out to the side of the body?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Automate or mechanise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Does the task involve holding the upper arms out to the side of the body without support?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Modify operation or production method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Do static postures of the shoulder or elbow occur for more than 2 consecutive hours per work day?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Relocate equipment/items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Does the work involve any other postures such as:</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Present work items differently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Awkward forward or sideways reaching?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce amount of manipulation required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Awkward reaching behind the body?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure workplaces and equipment account for differences in worker size, shape and strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Awkward reaching across the body?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure working heights are appropriate</td>
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<td>Ensure items are within reach differences</td>
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<td>Provide suitable (and adjustable) seating</td>
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<td>Use fixtures/jigs</td>
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<td>Alter tools or controls</td>
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<td>Ensure tools are suitable</td>
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<td>Ensure tools do not require awkward posture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide arm support for precision work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head and neck</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s) Note problem postures and identify parts of the upper limb involved.</td>
<td>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</td>
<td>Control options (Not exhaustive list)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Does the task involve repetitively bending or twisting the neck?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Optimise working postures • Ensure visual requirements are not too demanding • Provide visual aids • Ensure lighting is suitable • Reposition items that workers are required to look at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Does the task involve holding the neck bent and/or twisted for more than 2 hours total per work day?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Do the visual demands of the task require the worker to view fine details and adopt awkward postures?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Do aspects of lighting such as dim light, shadow, flickering light, glare and/or reflections cause the worker to adopt awkward postures?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## HSE Risk Assessment worksheets (Worksheet 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Force</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s)</th>
<th>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</th>
<th>Control options (Not exhaustive list)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Does the task require repetitive or static application of force?</td>
<td></td>
<td>For example, drill handle is too small resulting in increased gripping force for up to 4 hours per day. Also high force applied to screws.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Is a pinch grip being used repetitively or statically for more than 2 hours total per work day?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Reduce forces necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Does the worker use the tip of the finger, thumb or hand as a pressing tool?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Use power tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Do tools require the application of pressure on a trigger or button?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Can the function be achieved differently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 Does the hand apply force by twisting objects/tools or squeezing items?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Use jigs to hold items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6 Is the hand or wrist used as a hammer?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Reduce weight of items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7 Is force being applied when the wrists are bent and/or with the arms raised?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Present items differently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8 Does the task require the wearing of gloves which affect gripping?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Increase mechanical advantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9 Do any objects, work pieces, tools or parts of the workstation impinge or create localised pressure on any part of the body?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Alter task to use stronger muscles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Use foot pedals</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- If gloves are used check that they are appropriate</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Maintain tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Ensure tools are suitable for the task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Improve handles</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Use light weight tools</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Use tool counterbalances</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Ensure tool handles fit workers comfortably</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### HSE Risk Assessment worksheets (Worksheet 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Working environment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s)</td>
<td>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>For example, workers exposed to hand vibration from drill up to 4 hours per day. Workers have cold air blowing on hands from exhaust.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Are vibration exposures likely to regularly exceed HSE's recommended action level of 2.8 m/s² A(8)?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.2 Do tools create or transmit jerky actions, shock or torque (twisting)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.3 Does the task involve working in cold or in draughts, particularly with cold air blowing over the hands?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Does the task involve holding cold tool handles, work items or other cold objects?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### HSE Risk Assessment worksheets (Worksheet 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Psychosocial factors</th>
<th>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s)</th>
<th>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</th>
<th>Control options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(These factors are best dealt with through discussion with workers. Sensitivity may be required)</td>
<td>For example, workers are on piecework system. Support from supervision and co-workers is low.</td>
<td>(Not exhaustive list)</td>
<td>Improve the working environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Is the work paced? That is the machine or team sets the pace, or the work rate is otherwise not under the worker’s control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduce monotony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Is there a system of work, or piecework, which encourages workers to skip breaks or to finish early?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure reasonable workload and deadlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 Do workers find it difficult to keep up with their work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure good communication and reporting of problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4 Do workers feel that there is a lack of support from supervisors or co-workers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5 Is there overtime/shiftwork that is unplanned, unmonitored and/or not organized to minimize the risks of ULDs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor and control overtime and shiftwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6 Do the tasks require high levels of attention and concentration?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduce or monitor productivity relatedness of pay systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7 Do the workers have little or no control over the way they do their work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide appropriate training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8 Are there frequent tight deadlines?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.9 Are there sudden changes in workload, or seasonal changes in volume without any mechanisms for dealing with the change?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.10 Do the workers feel that they have been given sufficient training and information in order to carry out their job successfully?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Individual differences</td>
<td>Describe any problem(s) and probable causes(s): For example, no system for a gradual return to work.</td>
<td>Describe any risk control options that you have identified</td>
<td>Control options (Not exhaustive list)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Allow for a gradual build up to full production speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide suitable training to develop the skills required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Seek advice on special requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 Are any workers potentially at increased risk of ULDs due to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ being new employees or returning to work after a long break?</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ differences in competence and skills?</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ being part of vulnerable groups such as older, younger workers, new or expectant mothers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ disability and health status</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**REMEMBER TO CONSIDER HOW THE RISK FACTORS INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER**
(For example, are forces applied repetitively in awkward postures etc?)
## ACTION PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worksheet reference</th>
<th>Controls to be implemented</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Who is responsible for implementing the controls</th>
<th>Target implementation date</th>
<th>Date of re-evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activity  Practising ergonomic workplace solutions

Aims  To help us to:
  • practise conducting a risk assessment
  • use an online ergonomic assessment tool

Task  Working in pairs, go to www.ergonomics.co.uk/rula.html

Follow the instructions to use a validated method for scoring postures.

Report Back  Prepare a report back to the rest of the group with your views on the use of this tool.

Resources
Rapid Upper Limb Assessment (RULA): An assessment for ergonomic investigations of workplaces where work related upper limb disorders (WRULDs) have been reported. The website below is the functional site when you can carry out an assessment online or offline.
www.ergonomics.co.uk/rula.html

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 3.1
Level 3: 3.1
Activity  Communicating with members

Aims  To help us to:
• identify how members are currently informed about WRULDs
• explain how information and advice on WRULDs can be communicated to members in a simple form

Task  Working in pairs:
1  Discuss the ways that members are currently informed about WRULDs and identify any strengths and weaknesses
2  Produce a plan explaining how information and advice on WRULDs can be communicated to members in a simple form

Report Back  Prepare a report back to the rest of the group.

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 2.3
Level 3: 2.3
Workplace Activity: WRULDs policies and procedures

Aims
To help us to:
- report back to members
- find information for the next session of the course

Task

1 Members
Report back to your members and other safety reps about the work that you have done on a priority WRULDs hazard. Get their ideas on the next steps that should be taken.

2 Employer
In case you did not have an opportunity to do the Pre-Course Activity, speak to an appropriate manager. Ask for:
- a copy of the employers safety policy
- management policies, procedures or agreements on work related upper limb disorders
- management accident and incident statistics relating to WRULDs and results of subsequent investigations

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 2.2; 3.2
Level 3: 2.2; 3.2
Activity  Policies and procedures for WRULDs

Aims  To help us to:
- review policies and procedures relating to WRULDs
- agree what should be covered in a policy

Task  In your small group:
1. Look at the health and safety policies and procedures that have been brought in from your workplaces
2. Analyse what has been written about WRULDs
3. Assess the strengths and weaknesses and improvements that are necessary

Report Back  Elect a spokesperson to report back to the rest of the group.

Resources
- Policies from your workplaces
- Pre-course and workplace activity
- Fact Sheet 5 below

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 2.2; 3.2
Level 3: 2.2; 3.2
Worksheet

Improving WRULDs policies and procedures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths and weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals to improve the situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Activity
Negotiating a policy to deal with WRULDs

Aims  
To help us to:
- negotiate policies that deal with WRULDs
- practise presentation and negotiation skills

Task
The course will be divided into a number of management and union sides. Each negotiating team should appoint an observer to report back on the outcome of the negotiations.

The trade union side has requested a meeting to discuss the development of an effective policy that deals with WRULDs. They are seeking to ensure that management adopt a much more effective policy for their workplace with the involvement of safety reps clearly built in.

1. Each side should prepare a negotiating plan
2. Conduct a role play safety committee meeting to try and reach an agreement
3. The observer will report back summarising the outcome of the meeting and the arguments and techniques used

Resources
- Negotiating plan below
- Fact Sheet 5 below

Report back
Observers from each small group will report back with the main points from the negotiation that they watched.

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 3.2
Level 3: 3.2
Worksheet: outline negotiating plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Aims</th>
<th>Fallback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Arguments</th>
<th>Management/Opposing Arguments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your Response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Fact Sheet 5: WRULDs Policies
The main emphasis of recent health and safety legislation has been on making employers manage health and safety, rather than deal with it in a piecemeal way. One main requirement is for the employer to have a health and safety policy. If a safety representative is able to influence the employer to produce, implement and monitor the policy, then health and safety standards will improve.

Legal requirements
Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires all employers with five or more workers to produce a written policy statement specifying the following:
- general policy – the employer’s overall objectives for health and safety
- organisation – which managers are going to do what to implement the general policy
- arrangements – the rules and procedures which will be applied to ensure that conditions are healthy and safe

Section 2(3) also requires:
- monitoring and revision – regular checking to ensure that the policy, organisation and arrangements work and are altered to suit new developments
- information to workers – ensuring that workers know about the policy and revisions to it

Involvement of trade union safety reps
Safety representatives can ensure that the employer’s procedures for the avoidance and the prevention and control of the risks from WRULDs form an integral part of the health and safety policy. An effective policy on WRULDs should:
✓ be jointly developed and agreed with unions
✓ have commitment from highest management
✓ ensure that adequate resources are committed to avoiding tasks that cause WRULDs, carrying out risk assessments and solving problems
✓ ensure that safety representatives and workers are consulted in relation to WRULDs problems and the way that they are tackled
✓ contain agreed arrangements for joint monitoring and review to assess the effectiveness of the policy

Guidance on procedures and policies
In Chapter 6 of the RSI Handbook, the London Hazards Centre identified some of the key points that should appear in a policy, which include:
- a management commitment to undertake risk assessments of all work procedures, with the help of competent persons including qualified ergonomists and in consultation with safety representatives, to identify RSI risk factors
• a management commitment to remove all risk factors from the workplace

• information, instruction and training to be given to management, supervisors and employees about RSI, its symptoms and its prevention

• clear procedures for the early reporting of symptoms on a no blame basis

• clear procedures for dealing with diagnosed cases

• an agreement that people with RSI symptoms will be offered temporary or permanent redeployment or time off for recovery with no loss of pay, conditions or status

• an agreement that the employer will pay for any specialist treatment that is required

• an agreement for a 15 minute rest break during every hour of continuous repetitive work

• the setting up of a joint union/management working group on RSI to oversee the implementation of the RSI prevention policy

• a commitment to monitor and review the policy

Full details and a model policy can be viewed at

www.lhc.org.uk/members/pubs/books/rsi/ch06.htm#_Toc401417247

**Monitoring the policy**

Safety representatives can also monitor the employer’s safety policy and systems of work regarding ULDs, and check that:

• there are competent personnel dealing with ULDs, and that they obtain expert advice when necessary from the Health and Safety Executive or reputable consultants

• there is consultation ‘in good time’ about work with risks of ULDs about arrangements for the appointment of competent people and for training and information

• where there is any potential risk, that their employer has given all their workforce appropriate training and information

• where there are changes or new developments, that steps are taken to ensure there are no adverse impacts upon workers
Activity  WRULDs and injuries

Aims  To help us to:
   • share information about injuries
   • identify the causes of the injuries and future prevention

Task  In your small group:
   1. Discuss the information that you found from your workplaces regarding WRULDs accidents and injuries
   2. What did subsequent investigations reveal as the main causes of the injuries and what steps were taken to prevent recurrence? Do you agree with these findings? If not, explain why

Report back  Elect a spokesperson to give a short report.

Resources
   • Workplace Activity
   • Fact Sheet 6

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 1.2
Level 3: 1.2
Fact Sheet 6: WRULDs injuries
Causes of injuries
When the causes of injuries and ill health are properly investigated it is clear that unsafe systems rather than careless workers are to blame. The HSE states in ‘Successful health and safety management’ (HSG65) that accidents, ill health and incidents “…usually arise from organisational failings which are the responsibility of management.”

With WRULDs, workers are sometimes blamed because: “their posture is poor” or “they hurt themselves at home and are now blaming work” or other excuses like this. Some employers are keen to promote the view that workers are to blame for injuries and ill health because:
- it draws attention away from the overall system of work and focuses attention on mistakes which individual workers make
- it coincides with the employer’s need to deny liability for injuries and ill health in order to avoid payment of compensation

The TUC feels that the use of the word ‘accident’ is inappropriate, because most injuries in the workplace are predictable and preventable. And the use of the word ‘accident’ encourages victim-blaming.

Prevention
The TUC is committed to the prevention of injuries and ill health. If the toll of suffering is to be reduced, it is important when work related upper limb disorders occur that:
- they are properly recorded
- they are notified to the authorities and safety representatives
- they are investigated jointly by employers and safety representatives, analysed and lessons are learned
- preventive action is taken to stop similar, future problems
- injured and ill workers are compensated through benefits and legal action
- there is a rehabilitation policy for injured or ill workers

Investigation
There is no specific legal duty to investigate injuries from accidents, diseases and near misses. The TUC has been pressing for this duty to be made a legal obligation. However, following consultation, the HSC decided not to legislate, but to issue Guidance instead. Investigating accidents and incidents: a workbook for employers, unions, safety representatives and safety professionals (HSG245) was published in 2004 (see www.hse.gov.uk/press/2004/e04094.htm).

The four steps featured in the guidance are:
- the gathering of information
- the analysing of information
- identifying risk control measures
- and the action plan and its implementation
The TUC recommends that safety representatives negotiate an agreement with employers featuring some of the following points:

- a commitment to investigate every injury, disease, case of work-related ill health and near miss
- the investigation to commence immediately or within four days as a maximum
- a commitment to feed the results of the investigation into the review of the relevant risk assessment
- safety representatives to be notified of the commencement of the investigation and permitted to play a full role in the investigation

Rehabilitation

There is a growing acceptance that greater effort is needed to retain employees who have been affected by poor health, injury or disability, in paid employment. Safety representatives can negotiate a rehabilitation policy framework (using TUC and HSE guidelines) and integrate this with those policies related to disability, sickness absence and retirement. Key elements of the policy could include the following:

- make rehabilitation a policy goal
- invest in employee health, providing access to good OH facilities and workplace health initiatives
- be responsive to absence: monitoring health, keeping in touch with sick employees, responding early with referral for medical checks, being alert to disability issues and applying practical rehabilitation measures
- not make health a disciplinary matter
- assume in the first instance that sickness absence is due to work-related causes which should be investigated
- involve all levels of management in rehabilitation, including line managers, personnel/human resources managers, OH and senior managers
- work with unions and their members, being open on health and absence issues, and involving them fully in the development of relevant policies

One of the main purposes of medical examination must be to see how the employer can help people adjust to the demands of their work, assessing permanent disabilities or those which arise temporarily from injury or illness or age or other factors. Employees – who may need alternative work or adjustments in their work regime or continued medical surveillance, up to the time of full resumption of normal work – should have the benefit of an Occupational Health Service (OHS).

Confidentiality and mutual trust are vital in this process. Disclosure by workers of difficulties in coping with their work must not lead to transfer, down-grading or even redundancy. As advised by the OHS, employers should arrange for alternative and comparable employment or suitable retraining. These new arrangements should be put in place only after discussion between management and trade union representatives.
**Activity**  Trade union strategy

**Aims**  To help us to:
- decide what to do next
- implement plans for improvement

**Task**  In your small group:
1. Decide upon your action plan in relation to work related upper limb disorders in your workplace based upon what we have done on this short course
2. Use the Worksheet below to:
   - Identify what needs to be done in relation to work related upper limb disorders
   - Devise a trade union action plan to make sure that the changes are made

**Report back**  Elect a spokesperson to report back to the rest of the course.

**Resources**
- Previous activities
- Workplace activity
- Fact Sheets 7 & 8 below

Assessment criteria – Work Related Upper Limb Disorders
Level 2: 3.2
Level 3: 3.2
### Worksheet: Action planning on work related upper limb disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action you need to take in relation to:</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>What needs to be done?</th>
<th>When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other union representatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (including information)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Fact Sheet 7
Action planning for work related upper limb disorders

Now that you have established what should be happening in relation to WRULDs, you must work out what you want to achieve. This will depend on:

- the problem
- what you have found out
- short and long term aims
- members’ support and union negotiating strength
- management’s attitude to manual handling

So, you need to think in advance about what the minimum is that you will accept.

Involving your members

It is important to involve trade union members, get them to discuss problems with each other, and to make them aware trade union action can improve their health and safety at work. If members feel strongly, and are prepared to support you, this will be your main source of strength. So:

- keep them informed about what you are doing
- involve them in identifying hazards, planning an approach and deciding what to accept
- discuss whether management plans and procedures are adequate
- provide an opportunity for workers to express/register their concerns – by holding meetings, conducting surveys and using body mapping and hazard mapping techniques
- inspect the workplace regularly
- encourage workers to report problems to management and safety representatives
- win their support

Pro-active safety reps

Safety representatives can identify whether WRULDs are a problem in their workplace. Safety representatives can:

- do a special inspection on WRULDs
- survey their members to identify WRULDs
- use mapping techniques to identify problems. (See the Hazards workers’ guide to body mapping, hazard mapping and interactive hazards detective [www.hazards.org/tools/](http://www.hazards.org/tools/))
- report their concerns and those of their members to management in writing

Risk management

You can urge your employer to prepare and implement a plan to avoid, eliminate, prevent and control the risks from WRULDs. You should:

- be consulted by management
- monitor how management is following their plan
- keep the workforce informed of progress
Ask for copies of the risk assessments that the employer has done to ensure that they are preventing and controlling the hazards, and make sure that the employer is fully consulting you and other safety representatives. Where control measures are in place you can check that they are being adhered to and maintained and also that they are effective in preventing injuries and ill health.

Finally, check that where there is any potential risk, your employer has given the workforce appropriate training and information.

**Health and safety policy and WRULDs**

We have already seen that employer’s safety policies should effectively address the problem of WRULDs.

**Taking up the issue with management**

Sometimes, minor issues can be sorted out informally by direct contact with relevant managers. But if there are problems with manual handling, it is likely that you will need to raise the matter formally. Obviously you know the best way of getting things done in your workplace, but you may need to consider such things as:

- raising the matter in writing
- encouraging other safety representatives to support you and back you up
- using special safety procedures or an agreed procedure for resolving problems, in which case you should always involve other relevant union representatives
- raising the problem directly with senior management if it is urgent
- using safety committees which can sometimes help to make plans for implementation

**Union pressure and arguments**

You will need a well-argued case and you should refer to your research on manual handling. But the main source of negotiating strength is a well organised union with the support of your own members, and their determination to secure improvements.

**Evaluating the outcomes**

When you have carried out the appropriate action in the workplace, you should evaluate the outcomes. This is important because it allows you to reflect upon what has happened and determine what, if anything needs to be done next.
Fact Sheet 8
Further information

Disability Rights Commission
News and information
www.drc-gb.org/

Ergonomics Society
News, resources and registered consultancies at
www.ergonomics.org.uk/

Hazards magazine website
- Excellent news and resources on the Hazards web resource page at www.hazards.org and computer workstations web page at www.hazards.org/workstations/index.htm
- International RSI day resources at www.hazards.org/campaigns/campaigns.htm#international

Hazards magazine factsheets
- No. 83: Drop dead: overwork
- No. 68: Europe under strain
- No. 61: Body mapping
- No. 56: Ergonomics: making the job fit
- No. 46: Pregnancy and work
- No. 45: visual display units
- No. 44: Risk assessment: No hazard – no risk
- No. 38: Strain injuries and work
£1.50 each for union subscribers, £6 for non-subscribers

HSE upper limb disorders website
The HSE have a specific web page which draws together HSE information on upper limb disorders in one place at www.hse.gov.uk/msd/hsemsd.htm#manual

HSE upper limb disorders risk filter
www.hse.gov.uk/msd/pdfs/riskfilter.pdf

HSE upper limb disorders risk assessment worksheet
www.hse.gov.uk/msd/pdfs/worksheets.pdf

HSE priced and free publications on upper limb disorders
- For all the latest documents containing general standards and guidance on ULDs, go to the HSE web page: www.hse.gov.uk/msd/information.htm
- Alternatively, obtain a free copy of the latest HSE Books catalogue, CAT 34, by telephoning 01787 881165
Labour Research Department
- Pain at work: an LRD guide to musculoskeletal disorders. £4.50
- Women’s health and safety. £4.75
- RSI: a trade unionist’s guide. £3.15

London Hazards Centre
RSI hazards handbook
www.lhc.org.uk/members/pubs/books/rsi/rsi_toc.htm

RSI Association
(An RSI website now sponsored by Keytools Ltd)
www.rsi.org.uk/index.asp

TUC
- The TUC RSI web page www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/index.cfm?mins=397
- TUC RSI: the basics www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-7697-f0.cfm%20
- TUC spotting the risks of RSI www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-4462-f0.cfm
- Essential information for safety representatives. Keep up to date on health and safety by reading Risks, the TUC’s weekly e-bulletin for safety representatives at www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/index.cfm

Trade union information
- Many trade unions provide guidance on RSI. The website addresses of all trade unions are on the TUC website at www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/unions_main.cfm. Hazards magazine has listed the health and safety pages of most trade unions at www.hazards.org/links/ukunionlinks.htm
- Contact your union or visit your union’s website to find out if they produce any guidance on manual handling. For example, UNISON have produced a safety representative’s guide to preventing RSI at: www.unison.org.uk/safety/doc_view.asp?did=179
Activity  Learning opportunities

Aims  To help us to:
• identify future learning needs
• consider ways you will meet those learning needs

Task  In your pair:
1 Identify your other learning needs for health and safety
2 What learning opportunities are provided by the TUC or your union to meet your learning needs?
3 Identify the steps that you need to take to make use of the learning opportunities

Resources
• Details of TUC core and short courses from your tutor
• Details of your union courses from your union website

Report back  Prepare a short report for the rest of the group.
Course review and evaluation

We hope that you have enjoyed the course. To help us make future courses more effective we would like your feedback. Please:

- contribute to a collective feedback session that your tutor will organise
- fill in the evaluation form on the next two pages and return it to her/him
End of Course Evaluation
Please take time to complete the following. Considered and constructive feedback will help us to ensure that the course is relevant to your needs as union representatives.

1. What were your aims/expectations for the course?

_____________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________

2. To what extent have these been met?

_____________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________

3. What, if anything, do you feel you have gained/achieved that you did not expect at the outset?

_____________________________________________________

4. How would you rate the support you have had?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Type</th>
<th>Rating 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Weak</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutor support</td>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group support</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course materials</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other resources</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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Comment
_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________


5. How did you find the teaching and learning methods used on the course?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Exercises</td>
<td>too much</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written work</td>
<td>too much</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace Activities</td>
<td>too much</td>
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</table>

Comment

__________________________________________________________________________

6. How do you think what you have got out of this course will help you in your work/union?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

7. Having successfully completed your course, what are your learning priorities now?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

8. Any other comments?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________