



LAURUS
TRUST

Working at Height Policy

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Policy

The Laurus Trust; is committed to managing the hazards of working at height in accordance with current health and safety legislation, with particular regard to safe methods of work and the use of appropriate access equipment. The implementation of the key objectives below is delegated to the 'responsible duty holder'. (CEO or Headteacher, who may delegate this responsibility to others like the Estates Director but cannot totally absolve the responsibility)

Objectives

The Trust has the following key objectives to secure safety for work involving working at height.

- To take all necessary steps to ensure that Trust employees, contractors and any other persons affected by its activities, are made aware of significant working at height hazards.
- To treat all working at height, once identified, in accordance with the relevant legislation, Approved Codes of Practice and current best working practices
- To carry out such identified 'working at height' tasks in a planned manner based upon prior risk assessment.
- To check that risk assessments for generic working at height tasks address issues arising from the site specific working environment.
- To ensure that all relevant contractors adopt a planned approach to working at height, particularly in emergency repair situations.
- To ensure that commissioned works and programmed maintenance contracts allow sufficient resources, so far as is reasonably practicable, in order to control any risks from working at height.
- To implement a management system for situations where a risk assessment determines that working at height has to be strictly controlled so that risks continue to be minimised, e.g. 'a permit to work.'
- To ensure that in high risk situations emergency rescue plans have been prepared e.g. 'suspension trauma' from fall arrest equipment
- To ensure the provision of appropriate training for Trust employees, with Contractors providing evidence of appropriate training during the selection process.

GUIDANCE

Background

According to the latest HSE statistics, 2023/24, 50 fatal injuries were due to falls from a height accounting for 36% of all worker deaths over the year. This proportion is slightly elevated from previous years, and falls from a height remains the lead cause of fatal injury to workers. A significant proportion of these injuries were from low level falls from heights of 2m.

Over 30% of deaths during work at height involve falls from ladders scaffolds, working platforms and roof edges and through fragile roofs.

Regulations

The Trust will fully apply The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (Appendix 1). These regulations apply to all work activities and work equipment where there is a risk of a fall liable to cause personal injury.

The regulations place duties on employers, the self-employed, and any person who controls the work of others (e.g. Estates Director) to the extent they control the work. Such persons are referred to as 'duty holders'.

Duty Holder Responsibilities

The overriding principle in these regulations is the requirement for duty holders to carry out a risk assessment to establish whether all reasonably practicable measures have been taken to prevent employees falling from any height. In the event of a serious accident this is the standard by which the risk assessment is expected to be judged.

Basic Principles

The Regulations set out a simple hierarchy for managing and selecting equipment for work at height.

- Avoid 'working at height' tasks if possible,
- Use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls in situations where 'working at height' tasks cannot be avoided,
- Where it is not possible to eliminate the risk of a fall, then work equipment or other measures must be assessed to minimise the distance or the consequences of a fall, should one occur.

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 requires duty holders to ensure that:

- All work at height is properly planned and organised.
- All work at height takes account of weather conditions that could endanger health and safety.

- Those undertaking tasks working at height are trained and competent.
- The location or immediate environment where work at height is undertaken is safe.
- Equipment for work at height is appropriately inspected.
- Risks from fragile surfaces are properly controlled.
- Risks from falling objects are properly controlled.

Other alternatives are not risk free and also need to be risk assessed. For example where MEWP's (Mobile Elevated Work Platforms) are assessed as providing a safer option, then relevant regulations, e.g. LOLER (Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations) must be applied and best practice precautions such as the use of short lanyards to prevent operatives from being thrown from the platform in the event of a collision.

The Trust notes that The Work at Height Regulations 2005 neither specifically prohibit the use of ladders or stepladders nor do the Regulations promote their use. The use of such equipment should be the logical outcome of the relevant risk assessment.

In other words, the risk assessment will determine whether or not there is a safer method or better equipment that would allow the working at height task to be undertaken.

Monitoring and Review

The 'Duty Holder' will ensure that all working at height risk assessments are monitored on an annual basis.

This Policy and associated Guidance will be reviewed annually or following any significant changes in legislation, etc.

Appendix 1 Safe use of Ladders and Stepladders



Safe Use of Ladders and Stepladders

A brief guide

Guidance Document LA455



Produced by the Ladder Association
in co-operation with the HSE

ladderassociation.org.uk



Working at height

A brief guide



This is a web-friendly version of leaflet INDG401 (rev2), published 01/14

Introduction

This brief guide describes what you, as an employer, need to do to protect your employees from falls from height. It will also be useful to employees and their representatives.

Following this guidance is normally enough to comply with the Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR). You are free to take other action, except where the guidance says you must do something specific.

Falls from height are one of the biggest causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries. Common causes are falls from ladders and through fragile roofs. The purpose of WAHR is to prevent death and injury from a fall from height.

Work at height means work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. For example you are working at height if you:

- are working on a ladder or a flat roof;
- could fall through a fragile surface;
- could fall into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

Take a sensible approach when considering precautions for work at height. There may be some low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary and the law recognises this.

There is a common misconception that ladders and stepladders are banned, but this is not the case. There are many situations where a ladder is the most suitable equipment for working at height.

Before working at height you must work through these simple steps:

- avoid work at height where it is reasonably practicable to do so;
- where work at height cannot be avoided, prevent falls using either an existing place of work that is already safe or the right type of equipment;
- minimise the distance and consequences of a fall, by using the right type of equipment where the risk cannot be eliminated.

Figure 1 gives further guidance and examples for each of the above steps to help you comply with the law.

You should:

- do as much work as possible from the ground;
- ensure workers can get safely to and from where they work at height;
- ensure equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly;

Equality Impact Statement

Names and title of people involved with this assessment	Rachel Robinson Assistant Trust Director of Inclusion
Impact assessment carried out with regard to identified characteristics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious belief <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment
Summary of any issue/proposed changes	Statistical data updated Page 4 and updated Appendix 1 & 2 to new versions
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