



# Guidance on the New Manual Handling Training System





## What is the background to this new Manual Handling Training System?

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) carried out a review of manual handling training (MHT) in Ireland. The review found that MHT lacked consistency and the skills of the trainers varied. It concluded that there was a need to establish:

- Standards in manual handling instruction
- A system or process for registering training providers

In June 2006, the HSA set up a Manual Handling Training Advisory Group. Since then, the group has worked in conjunction with the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) on developing the new Manual Handling Instruction Standards.

## What is FETAC?

The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) was set up in 2001 under the Qualifications Act (Education and Training) 1999. It is the awarding body for further education and training in Ireland. The Awards Framework has 10 Levels. FETAC makes awards at Levels 1 to 6 and HETAC (the Higher Education and Training Awards Council) makes awards at Levels 7 to 10.

FETAC is responsible for ensuring that training providers develop and implement assessment procedures in a fair and consistent way. Its main functions are to:

- Make and promote awards
- Determine national standards
- Validate providers' programmes
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of programmes
- Ensure fair and consistent assessment of learners
- Ensure access, transfer and progression

FETAC also operates an ongoing quality assurance process with registered training providers.

## What are the main elements of the new MHT system?

When the Manual Handling Training Advisory Group was set up, it focused primarily on developing standards. As the work of the group evolved, it became clear that a number of elements were required. These include:

- Developing two new FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Certificates for Manual Handling Instruction and People Handling Instruction
- Agreeing a policy on the need for FETAC Registration of Training Providers who deliver instructor training programmes
- Agreeing a validation process to be used by FETAC to determine if new instructor training programmes submitted are consistent with the requirements of the relevant Level 6 standard
- Agreeing a process for recognising prior learning for existing instructors



The table below summarises the main features of the proposed new MHT system, compared with the current system:

Current MHT system	Proposed new MHT system
<p><b>The training provider:</b> the training company or sole trader that delivers a Manual Handling or People Handling Instructor training programme</p> <p><b>The instructor:</b> Person who has completed a 5-day Manual Handling Instructor course or an 8/9-day People Handling Instructor course</p>	<p><b>The training provider:</b> providers register with FETAC and develop instruction training programmes in line with the new standards</p> <p><b>The instructor:</b> all new instructors need to attain a FETAC Level 6 Manual Handling or People Handling Instruction Award</p> <p>Existing instructors apply for Recognition of Prior Learning</p>

## What is the purpose of this guide?

This factsheet presents key information and facts on each element of the proposed new MHT system. Its main elements are:

- **Element 1:**  
Development of two new FETAC Level 6 Standards for Manual Handling Instruction and People Handling Instruction
- **Element 2:**  
FETAC Registration for Training Providers who currently deliver instructor training programmes
- **Element 3:**  
Validation Process for Approving Training Programmes developed in line with the requirements of the new Level 6 Standards
- **Element 4:**  
Process for Recognition of Prior Learning for existing instructors

## Further information

See the FETAC website: [www.FETAC.ie](http://www.FETAC.ie)



## When is the new MHT system expected to be fully operational?

It is expected that the standards will be released during 2010. In the first half of 2010 the Manual Handling Training Advisory Group will work closely with FETAC to finalise arrangements for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process.

It will take time for everyone to understand the different elements of the new system. The Advisory Group will thus make every effort to manage its implementation in an appropriate way. There will be a phasing-in transition period of two years during which the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) will recognise existing manual handling instructors and new manual handling instructors with a Level 6 FETAC Award. This will give space for training organisations to become registered with FETAC and for existing manual handling instructors to go through the RPL process.

It is expected that by 2012 all manual or people handling instructors will have a FETAC Level 6 Award in Manual or People Handling Instruction.

During 2010, the HSA will provide updates on the latest developments on its website at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

The table below shows provisional timelines for implementing key elements of the new Manual Handling Training System. These dates are a useful reference but may be subject to change.

**Table: Timelines for implementing main elements of the proposed MHT system**

End 2009	2010	2011
<p><b>ELEMENT 1: Development of two new FETAC Level 6 Standards</b> for Manual Handling Instruction and People Handling Instruction</p>	<p><b>ELEMENT 2: FETAC Registration for Training Providers</b> who currently deliver instructor training programmes</p>	<p><b>ELEMENT 3: Validation Process for Approving Training Programmes developed</b> in line with the requirements of the new Level 6 Standards</p>
		<p><b>ELEMENT 4: Process for Recognition of Prior Learning</b> for existing instructors</p>

**FETAC approves 2 new Level 6 MHT standards**

FETAC releases 2 standards

**Training providers are registered with FETAC (ongoing process)**

Training providers ready to submit new programmes for validation

**FETAC starts validating programmes**

Training providers ready to provide Level 6 programmes

*Provisional timelines (subject to change)*

**RPL providers are registered with FETAC and ready to assess existing instructors**

*Key milestones*



## Elements 1-4 of the proposed MHT system

### Element 1:

#### **Development of two new FETAC Level 6 Standards for Manual Handling Instruction and People Handling Instruction**

The Manual Handling Training Advisory Group has worked with FETAC on developing the standards for the Specific Purpose Certificates for Manual Handling Instruction and People Handling Instruction.

Under the new system, it will be expected that all new manual handling or people handling instructors will attain a FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Award. **The training programmes for these FETAC Level 6 awards can only be delivered by a FETAC-registered training provider.** (For further information, see Element 2 on FETAC registration.)

The standards have undergone extensive review within FETAC. They were posted on the FETAC website for a public consultation process before being formally approved by the FETAC board in late 2009.

The standards specify the knowledge, skills and competence that must be attained in order to achieve a FETAC Level 6 Certificate in Manual Handling Instruction or People Handling Instruction.

#### ***FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Certificate: Manual Handling Instruction***

This contains one component: Instructing Manual Handling. The component specification details the learning outcomes that the learner who has completed the training programme will be able to demonstrate as well as the assessment requirements.

The learner will be equipped with the knowledge, skill and competence to effectively design and deliver manual handling instruction in the workplace.

#### ***FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Certificate: People Handling Instruction***

This contains two components: Instructing Manual Handling and Instructing People Handling. The candidate cannot attain this certificate unless both components are completed successfully.

The two component specifications detail the learning outcomes that the learner, who has completed the training programme, will be able to demonstrate as well as the assessment requirements.

It may be possible to run together the training programmes for both components and to complete the assessment at the end of the second component. The assessment must assess the learning outcomes for each of the components. Only when both components are completed will the candidate be equipped with the knowledge, skill and competence to effectively design and deliver people handling instruction in the workplace.





## Element 2:

### **FETAC Registration for Training Providers who currently deliver instructor training programmes**

*A training provider is a person or body that provides, organises or procures a programme of education and training.* Registered training providers are responsible for delivering courses based on FETAC standards and for providing fair and consistent assessment of learners.

As part of the new system, training providers who want to develop training programmes – for a FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Certificate for either Manual Handling or People Handling Instruction – will need to apply to become quality-assured, FETAC-registered training providers.

When a training provider is FETAC-registered, they can then develop training programmes to meet the requirements of the new Level 6 Standards. However, the standards must first be formally approved and released by FETAC.

Once a training programme is validated, it will then be for the training provider to offer the programme to candidates who want to become instructors.

Candidates who complete the training programmes successfully should attain a FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Award.

The FETAC website outlines the process required to become a registered provider: see [www.FETAC.ie](http://www.FETAC.ie)





### Element 3:

#### **Validation Process for Approving Training Programmes developed in line with the requirements of the new Level 6 Standards**

When the new Level 6 Manual Handling Instruction and People Handling Instruction Standards are formally approved and then released by FETAC, the FETAC-registered training provider will be in a position to start developing a training programme to meet the requirements of the relevant standard.

As part of the validation process, the training provider will have to submit an application that includes outline details of the proposed training programme and of the assessment methodology.

FETAC will assess the programme by cross-referencing it against the relevant Level 6 Standard.

If everything is in order, FETAC will approve the programme and the FETAC-registered provider can then offer the programme to new candidates.

Candidates who complete the training programmes successfully should attain a FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Award.

FETAC will also have an ongoing monitoring function to ensure that standards are maintained.







## Element 4:

### Process for Recognition of Prior Learning for existing instructors

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process by which prior learning is given a value. The RPL process provides current manual handling instructors with an opportunity to have their existing qualifications and learning recognised.

RPL will be offered to people across all workplaces who currently provide manual handling or people handling instruction. The RPL process will facilitate existing instructors to attain either of the FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Awards.

As part of this process, FETAC-registered training providers may submit an application to FETAC to allow them attain specific approval from FETAC to offer RPL for the two FETAC Level 6 Specific Purpose Certificates. In order to apply to provide RPL to existing instructors, the provider must:

- Be registered with FETAC
- Have offered instructor training programmes in the past
- Have a good track record with FETAC

To apply for RPL, an existing instructor should:

- Make initial contact with a FETAC-registered training provider who is registered to offer RPL
- Submit an application form along with a curriculum vitae to the training provider
- Complete all sections of the application form
- Submit the requested supplementary information

Applicants will be notified if they have been successful or not, or if they need to provide more information. In the next stage of the RPL process, successful applicants will be invited to attend a formal assessment, which will include:

- Examination
- Assignment
- Skills demonstration

The assessment is designed to assess the learning outcomes for the relevant FETAC Level 6 Certificate.

Feedback should be provided to applicants who are unsuccessful and an appeals procedure must be in place.

The RPL process has not been finalised and will not be in place until the standards are approved and FETAC has registered and approved RPL providers. The RPL process will be agreed in 2010. Guidance on this process will be available on the HSA website ([www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)) and the FETAC website ([www.FETAC.ie](http://www.FETAC.ie)).





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