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## **Ergonomics Safe Working Practices**

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The study of people in their work situations. Knowledge about inter-relationships between people, the equipment they use, their environment and their tasks is applied to provide the optimum of condition in terms of health, comfort and efficiency at work.

One of the main concerns of ergonomics is ensuring that equipment is fit for human use. Failure to take account of human limitation may lead to errors, reduced performance, discomfort and perhaps risk of injury. Failure to take account of human strengths may be wasteful, reduce efficiency and may resort in boring and tedious work.

Good ergonomics design is important in any equipment designed for human use but it is especially important when the use is intensive or the accuracy or speed of the user's performance is critical.

European Community legislation, applicable to the UK working environment, targets the ergonomic design of the work station in various directives. UK legislation follows the principles contained in EC Directives.

Areas of particular concern include any work station be it indoors, machine based or work in the open air. The office environment, manual lifting and carrying and the use of electronic office equipment are typical examples of work that are particularly sensitive to ergonomic discipline and design.

The Health and Safety at Work Act commits the employer to the maintenance of safe and healthy working conditions. Attention to ergonomic design is one way of meeting the employer's obligations in this respect.