

Table 19: Summary of the specific recommendations made for each of the tasks observed.

Tasks	Recommendations for risk reduction
Loading out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of mechanical aids: Where possible mechanical aids, such as cranes, lifts, and trolleys, should be used to transport the pallets/stacks of plasterboard as close to where they are required as possible. • Avoid handling up stairs: Creating access routes (e.g. through floors or external openings) for the movement of plasterboard can reduce the need to adopt awkward postures when handling. • Planning: A safe system of work should be developed to reduce the level of MSD risk individuals are exposed to, which should consider how the plasterboards are going to be delivered to the area where they are required.
Cutting and measuring plasterboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid cutting boards on edge: This would eliminate the need to squat or kneel in front of the plasterboard, reducing the strain placed on the lower limbs and the amount of twisting and bending required to find a suitable working position. • Use trestles to raise working height: Raising the working height that the boards are measured and cut at will improve the posture of workers, as they will spend less time in a forward stooped posture.
Lifting and handling plasterboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce dimensions of board: Reducing the dimensions of plasterboard will improve its handling characteristics. • Reduce the weight of loads: Many of the boards can be easily lifted, however handling becomes problematic when loads are handled above head height and there are limited opportunities for rest. • Use of mechanical aids: Where possible mechanical aids such as ceiling lifts and adjustable props should be used to alleviate the burden associated with holding the board above head height.
Ceiling installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve handling postures: Reducing the dimensions of plasterboard will improve its handling characteristics. • Reduce the weight of loads: Many of the boards can be easily lifted, however handling becomes problematic when loads are handled above head height and there are limited opportunities for rest. • Use of mechanical aids: Where possible mechanical aids such as ceiling lifts and adjustable props should be used to alleviate the burden associated with holding the board above head height. They can help reduce the amount and duration of forces applied during manual handling operations. • Increase job rotation: Plasterboard installers generally work in pairs with one cutting and measuring and the other fixing the plasterboard. Job rotation and job enlargement may be useful in breaking the monotony of highly repetitive tasks. • Examine the drills used: Workers use drills to fix plasterboard for a large part of the working day and are likely to benefit from having lightweight, low vibration drills to help minimise the amount of muscle fatigue. Furthermore, cordless drills would reduce the risk of tripping associated with mains supply drills.