

DSO update - Display Screen Equipment (DSE/VDU) Assessment

Occupational Health

Background

Long periods of computer work can result in:

- Varying degrees of musculoskeletal problems:
 - Upper Limb Disorders (ULDs) commonly known as Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI)
 - neck, shoulder or back pain
- Eyestrain
- Fatigue and stress
- Rarely reported now: epilepsy, facial dermatitis, radiation

How it can occur?

- prolonged poor posture
- awkward position(s) when using equipment
- repetitive movements
- too much force
- inadequate rest breaks
- poor work organisation
- or a combination of the above

Why bother?

- you / employees will work more comfortably
- problems are mostly avoidable and generally improve with rest or improved posture
- BUT rest reduces productivity and therefore often ignored and...
- symptoms increase
- worse case scenario stop work/studies with associated consequences and...
- it's the law

The Law

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations
1992 – updated 2002 - to protect people who work with DSE /
computers



University Policy and Guidance

Policy and Procedure

- HSD005P Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Guidance Leaflets

- HSD116P Working Safely with Display Screen Equipment – Desktop/General Guidance
- HSD161P Working Safely with Display Screen Equipment Laptops



Workstation Assessments

- Regulations require DSE assessments of users workstations to assess health and safety risks
- Ideally complete the Workstation Assessment Checklist at induction then every 2 years (DSE Policy Appendix 4)
- Keep the assessment in the individual's personnel file
- Review if:
 - no longer valid
 - change (equipment / health)
- Aiming to reduce identified risks as far as reasonably practicable

DSE self-assessment form

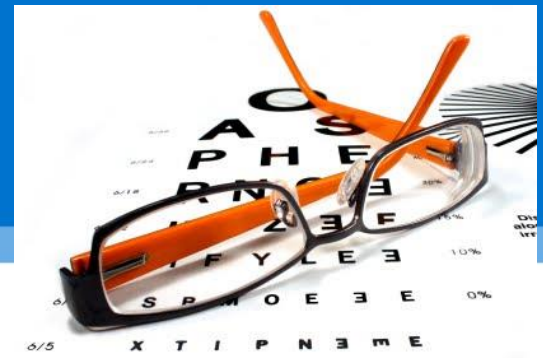
Risk factors	Tick answer		If 'no' - some things to consider
	Yes	No	
Chair			
Is the chair in good condition and stable?			Is it a suitable chair or if faulty check whether it is still under guarantee - chairs are mostly guaranteed for 5 years.
Is the seat height adjustable?			
Is the back height adjustable and tiltable?			
Are the castors suitable for the type of flooring?			Hard castors are suitable for carpet. Soft / rubberised castors or "glides" are recommended for vinyl / hard floors.
Display Screen			
Does the screen swivel and tilt?			Is it damaged or unsuitable?
Are the brightness and contrast adjustable?			Adjust them for comfortable viewing – they may need adjusting during the day as ambient lighting conditions change.

Minimum Equipment Requirements

- Display screen
- Keyboard
- Work desk / surface and Document holder if needed
- Chair and footrest if needed



Eyesight testing



- No reliable evidence that DSE work damages eyes, but users may become more aware of problems
- Staff who are DSE users can request an eye test (not agency, student, self-employed)
- Form to complete in DSE policy and return to OH to process (Appendix 5)
- Refund eye test to maximum of £21, plus £50 for spectacles if for specific VDU/DSE use
- Problems – bifocals, dry atmosphere, glare, no breaks

Common set-up problems

- Chairs not adjusted
 - Too high/low
 - Lumbar support
- Awkward arm / wrist posture
 - Stretch to mouse
 - Typing position
- Screen position
- No rest breaks

Ergonomics

Ergonomic principles:

- Are you sitting comfortably?
- fitting/adapting the task to the person
- ensuring a good interactive 'fit' between person and the equipment used
- ergonomics of a workstation should be risk assessed i.e.,
 - body posture and arm positions
 - mouse/keyboard technique



Using portable DSE



Where possible use docking station or stand to obtain an improved posture

- requires a separate attached or wireless mouse / keyboard

Individual responsibilities

Following health and safety training:

- be aware of possible health risks
- stay active and take breaks
- undertake a DSE/VDU risk assessment
- report ergonomic problems to supervisor / safety officer initially
- Report / refer any possible work / health related problems to supervisor and Occupational Health



Further help and advice

- Occupational Health – Introduction to DSE assessment training
- Department Safety Officer
- Departmental Administrator
- University Information Service / Assistive Technology support
- Disability Resource Centre (student advice only)
- www.hse.gov.uk/msd
- www.posturite.co.uk
- www.rsi.org.uk
- www.abilitynet.org.uk
- www.backpain.org

Contact us

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Questions

