

**UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH
HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

Reader Information

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Sign off;	20 th September 2017
Signature	
Name	Gordon Stewart Registrar and Secretary Chair of University Safety Committee

Document Review History

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1.1	July 2017	Head of Health and Safety	New CoP replacing existing CoP
1.2	October 2017	University Safety Advisor	Removed version column and link to form amended.
1.3	March 2018	University Safety Advisor	2.2 Typo corrected; 3.5 updated to include DSE assessors 5.6 DSE form link updated; 7.1 updated; 7.2 amended;

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Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Code of Practice

1 Introduction

This Code of Practice (CoP) has been developed to ensure that Plymouth University complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002

2 Purpose and Scope of this CoP

- 2.1 Compliance with this CoP will ensure staff are not exposed to unnecessary health risk associated with the use of Display screen equipment. By, setting out the minimum (workstation) standards to be adopted, the University will be able to fulfil its health and safety responsibilities.
- 2.2 This document will advise on management responsibilities and the controls necessary to ensure the safety of university staff using Display Screen Equipment, this includes permanent, temporary including contract staff, agency and home workers.
- 2.3 This document applies to all workstations (as defined by the DSE Regulations) used for University work activities, regardless of who has provided them. However, it does not apply to equipment supplied and used by self-employed staff engaged by the University.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 **Display Screen Equipment (DSE)** - is a device or equipment that has an alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved; it includes both conventional display screens and those used in emerging technologies such as laptops, touch-screens and other similar devices such as mobile phones and personal organizers/tablets that can be used to compose and edit text, view images or connect to the internet.
- 3.2 **User** – An individual who habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work and;
 - a) The individual depends on the use of DSE to do their job, and has little or no discretion as to the use of the DSE.
 - b) The individual uses DSE for continuous spells of an hour or more on a more or less daily basis.
 - c) The individual requires significant training and or skills in the use of DSE to carry out the job.
 - d) The system demands high levels of concentration by the user, for example, where consequences of error may be critical.
 - e) Fast transfer of information between the user and screen is an important requirement of the job.

- 3.3 **Operator** – A self employed person who habitually uses DSE as a significant part of their normal work activities.
- 3.4 **Workstation** – this term includes the display screen equipment, keyboard, mouse or any other input devices; the immediate work environment, work chair, work desk, work surface, printers and document holder. This policy also applies to portable DSE in prolonged use (i.e. more than an hour), including laptop, handheld computers and personal digital assistant used to view images or connect to the internet.

Note: A workstation may be permanent, temporary and/or based at home.

- 3.5 **Safety Co-ordinator / DSE Assessors** - is a person trained to complete risk assessments, including DSE risk assessments. This may be the Safety Coordinator or the duties designated to someone else who is trained.
- That doesn't mean that DSE work is risky – it isn't. Upper Limb Disorders (ULD's) can be avoided if users follow effective practice, set up their workstations properly and take breaks during prolonged use. By just taking a few simple precautions, work with DSE can be more comfortable and productive.

4 Duties & Responsibilities

- 4.4 **The Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer** have overall responsibility for all aspects of this CoP, and designates duties down through the management structure as required to ensure compliance with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.
- 4.5 **Executive Deans, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Chief Finance Officer, Directors, Registrar and Secretary level managers** are responsible for implementing this CoP across their area of responsibility. In discharging this duty, Executive Deans, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Chief Finance Officer, Directors, Registrar and Secretary level managers are supported by the following individuals.
- 4.6 **Heads of Service, Schools and Faculty Business Managers** must ensure suitable arrangements are in place to manage DSE work activity and safeguard the health, safety and welfare of employees.
- 4.7 **Managers/supervisors** must ensure;
- a) All reasonable steps are taken to ensure the needs of DSE users are met (this includes all temporary and home workers).
 - b) All users under their control complete a self-assessment of their workstations as soon as possible on commencement of employment and workstations adjustments or remedial action is undertaken for any health risk identified by the self-assessment.

- c) Maintaining and keeping records of all workstations and user risk assessments and the actions taken by them to ensure a safe working environment has been provided.
- d) DSE assessments are reviewed when;
 - * major changes are made to the equipment, furniture, work environment or software;
 - * users change workstations;
 - * the nature of work tasks change considerably;
 - * it is thought that the controls in place may be causing other problems.
- e) Users receive training and information relating to their work with display screen equipment. The HSE booklet “Working with VDU’s” should be made available to all users. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>
- f) Work allows periodic changes of activity e.g. mix of screen-based activity and non-screen based work or breaks if this is not possible.
Breaks from screen-based work should taken before the onset of fatigue and short frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional longer breaks e.g. 5-10 minute break after one hour continuous DSE work is likely better than a 15 minute break every 2-3 hours. Wherever possible, staff should be allowed discretion to organise their own work and to plan the distribution of screen-based and non-screen based activity.
- g) If a user or a potential user requests an eye test for DSE work you are required to provide one (see Sec 6).
- h) Contact your Safety Co-ordinator or Health and Safety Department for further advice or guidance.

4.8 **Safety Coordinators**

- a) Liaise with the DSE assessor unless the assessor is the Safety Coordinator
- b) Ensure new staff have a DSE assessment within three weeks of starting in post and then as and where required thereafter
- c) Coordinate the information with regard to DSE and maintain records within schools/service areas.

4.9 **Employees** have a legal duty to take care of their own health and safety when working with DSE and must ensure,

- a) They complete a workstation self assessment as soon as possible following commencement of employment or significant changes have been made to their workstation or work location.
- b) They inform their manager of any health issues that may require changes or adaptations (specialist equipment) to the workstation to enable their job to be done safely.

5 Assessment and Reduction of Risk

- 5.4 The principle risks associated with the use of DSE are physical (musculoskeletal) problems, visual fatigue and mental stress. In DSE work, as with other work, ill health can result when the work, workplace and work environment does not take account of user requirements. Problems can be prevented by good workplace design, training and consultation.
- 5.5 An assessment should be undertaken when a new workstation is set up, when a new user starts work, or when a substantial change is made to an existing workstation (or the way it is used). Assessments should be repeated if there is any reason to suspect they may no longer be valid – for example, if a user starts to complain of pain or discomfort. It may be useful to undertake annual self assessment reviews to identify any health issues being experienced by users.
- 5.6 All users should undertake a self-assessment in the first instance by downloading the HSE's "Working with display screen equipment (DSE)" guide by following the link- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf> and the University of Plymouth's "[Display screen equipment \(DSE\) Assessment Form](#)"
- 5.7 Managers/supervisors will review completed assessments and arrange any remedial actions. If further assessment is required or the user has a pre-existing health condition affecting DSE work, contact the Health and Safety Department or Safety Co-ordinator for additional guidance, an Ergonomic Assessment/referral to Occupational Health may be required.
- 5.8 **Home working**
Workstations used on a regular basis at home must be assessed, irrespective of who provides the workstation or the type of DSE being used.
The University is not obliged to supply home workers with a workstation but will provide suitable advice on the safe use of laptops or other devices. Where the University provides home workers with workstation equipment, equipment must meet the requirements of the DSE Regulations e.g. the chair is adjustable the desk is stable and a footrest is provided where necessary.
Self employed staff (Operator) are responsible for their own assessment of risk and any remedial action necessary.

6 Medical Issues (including eye, eyesight test and corrective appliances)

- 6.1 Any new staff who may require specialist equipment following completion of a self-assessment must receive a follow up assessment within 3 weeks of starting in post.
- 6.2 A review of the self-assessment may indicate staff require specialist equipment such as arm/wrist rest, lumbar support, specialist keyboard, chair etc. These will be provided on the advice of the Health and Safety Department and/or Occupational Health following an ergonomic assessment of the individual concerned.

- 6.3 **Eye sight test** - There is no evidence that working with display screen equipment caused any permanent damage to eyes or eyesight.
- 6.3 Users are entitled to ask the University to provide an eye test if they are employees who habitually use DSE as a significant part of their normal day to day work. This is a full eye/eyesight test by an optometrist (or Doctor) Eye tests are not an entitlement for the self-employed (Operator).
- 6.4 When necessary users should make a request to their line manager for an eyesight test and, once approved make arrangements for the test.
- 6.5 The University is responsible for the provision of (paying for) a basic pair of frames and lenses, if the test shows that the user needs glasses specifically for DSE work. The University will not be responsible for special coatings, tints or designer frames although users may pay the additional cost if they so wish.
- 6.6 Reimbursement for the test will not be greater than the value of an NHS sight test, nor will it exceed the cost shown on the receipt if less than this. For current Sight Test Fee visit Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing website Opticians website: <http://www.fodo.com/resource-categories/nhs-sight-test-fees> (currently £21.31).
- Reimbursement for corrective appliances will only be to the value of the NHS Optical Voucher Values. Visit Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians website: <http://www.fodo.com/resource-categories/gos-vouchers> (Currently £39.10).

7 Information, instruction and training

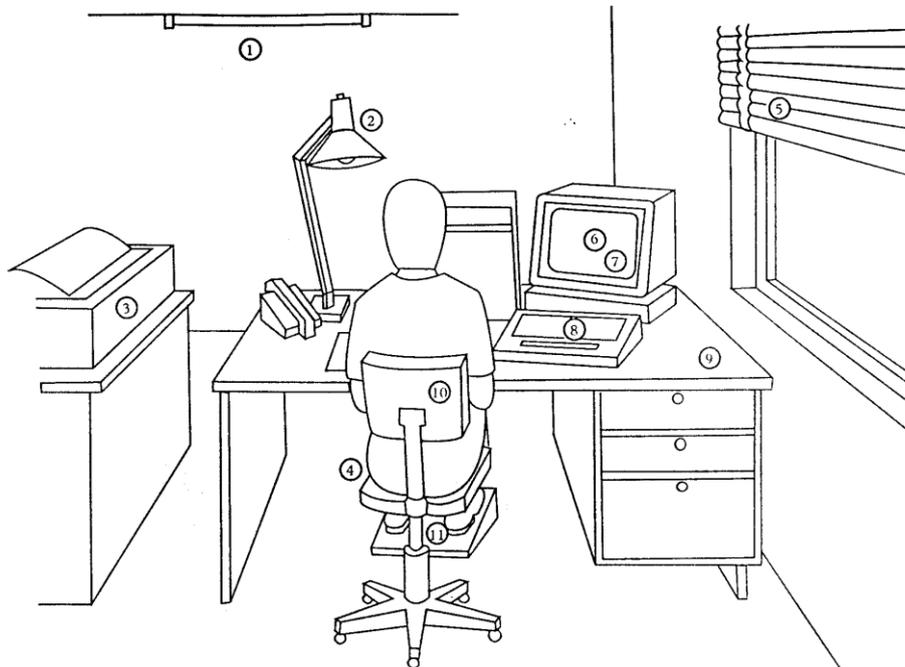
- 7.1 Information on DSE self-assessment is provided to new staff as part of their corporate/workplace induction. This is included in the online Mandatory Health and Safety Training module.
- 7.2 Full DSE assessment training will be provided to nominated DSE assessors, who will advise manager/supervisors and staff on suitable workstation adjustments and or where necessary refer to the Health and Safety Department or Occupational Health.
- 7.3 All DSE users should download the HSE's guide "Working with display screen equipment (DSE)" <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf> and the HSE's "Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist" <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf> in order to understand;
- The importance of a comfortable posture and postural change
 - Sensible positioning of workstation equipment (Appendix A)
 - How to adjust furniture and equipment (Appendix B)
 - Requirements for screen cleaning and other maintenance
 - The importance of taking breaks.

8 Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

8.1 To ensure the continued effectiveness of this Code of Practice it should be adequately monitored and evaluated. This will be carried out by:

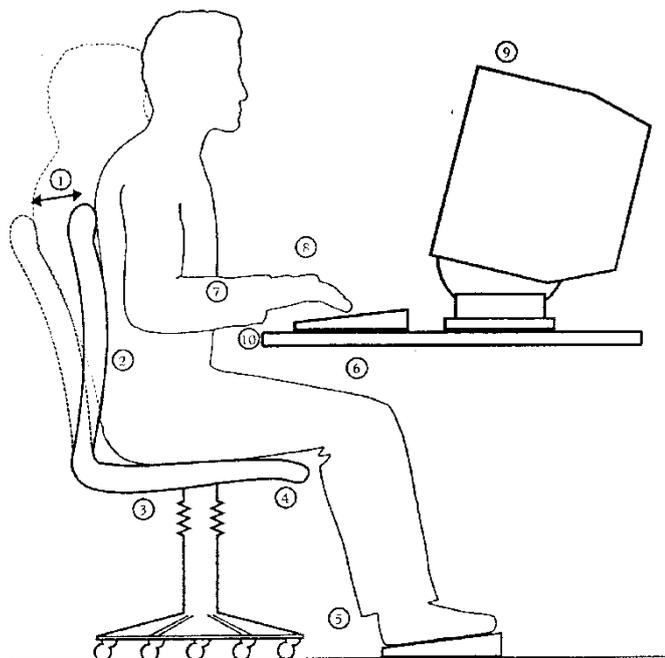
- a) Departments during regular safety audits for display screen equipment.
- b) The departments Health and Safety Committee will monitor compliance with this Code of Practice by reviewing incidents/Occupational health referrals related to the use of Display screen equipment annually and through Health and Safety Audits.
- c) This Code of Practice will be reviewed every three years or sooner should there be a significant change in legislation or evidence of increased health risk.

Sensible positioning of workstation equipment



- ① ADEQUATE LIGHTING
- ② ADEQUATE CONTRAST, NO GLARE OR DISTRACTING REFLECTIONS
- ③ DISTRACTING NOISE MINIMISED
- ④ LEG ROOM AND CLEARANCES TO ALLOW POSTURAL CHANGES
- ⑤ WINDOW COVERING
- ⑥ SOFTWARE: APPROPRIATE TO TASK, ADAPTED TO USER, PROVIDES FEEDBACK ON SYSTEM STATUS, NO UNDISCLOSED MONITORING
- ⑦ SCREEN: STABLE IMAGE, ADJUSTABLE, READABLE, GLARE/REFLECTION FREE
- ⑧ KEYBOARD: USABLE, ADJUSTABLE, DETACHABLE, LEGIBLE
- ⑨ WORK SURFACE: ALLOW FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS, SPACIOUS, GLARE FREE
- ⑩ WORK CHAIR: ADJUSTABLE
- ⑪ FOOTREST

Recommended seating and posture for typical office tasks.



- ① SEAT BACK ADJUSTABILITY
- ② GOOD LUMBAR SUPPORT
- ③ SEAT HEIGHT ADJUSTABILITY
- ④ NO EXCESS PRESSURE ON UNDERSIDE OF THIGHS AND BACKS OF KNEES
- ⑤ FOOT SUPPORT IF NEEDED
- ⑥ SPACE FOR POSTURAL CHANGE, NO OBSTACLES UNDER DESK
- ⑦ FOREARMS APPROXIMATELY HORIZONTAL
- ⑧ MINIMAL EXTENSION, FLEXION OR DEVIATION OF WRISTS
- ⑨ SCREEN HEIGHT AND ANGLE SHOULD ALLOW COMFORTABLE HEAD POSITION
- ⑩ SPACE IN FRONT OF KEYBOARD TO SUPPORT HANDS/WRISTS DURING PAUSES IN KEYING

Display Screen Equipment Audit Tool

Details of the DSE Procedure should be collated on audit form as exemplified below:

Member of Staff	DSE info provided (HSE guides) on	Self assessment to be completed by	Self assessment completed	Additional equipment required; Chair, foot rest, wrist support etc	Date ordered	Ergonomic Assessment Required	Date for Ergonomic Assessment	Assessment Review Date
Bill Bates	24/04/2017	15/05/2017	11/05/2017	Y	19/05/2017	N	N/A	15/05/2018
Ann Friend	04/05/2017	18/05/2017	22/05/2017	y		y	13/06/2017	