



## Display Screen Equipment Policy

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University of Sussex

Display Screen Equipment Policy

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## 1. Introduction and Scope

All employers are under a general duty to assess the risks to the health and safety of their employees and to anyone else who may be affected by their activity, so that reasonably practicable control measures can be identified and actioned. As part of this general assessment, work with display screen equipment (DSE) must be assessed against the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 (amended 2002).

## 2. Purpose

To ensure that the University of Sussex fulfils its obligations with respect to the relevant health and safety legislation by means of:

- the provision of suitable work equipment;
- providing users with information on the associated risks to health and the operational arrangements to minimise risks to health;
- providing users with a DSE Users self-assessment tool
- arranging for a local DSE assessor to undertake assessments of workstations and the task(s) being undertaken using DSE Assessment documentation, where self-assessment identifies problems with the workstation or user issues;
- referring users with DSE work related ill health to the University's Occupational Health Department.
- the provision of eye and eyesight tests for users, and the provision of spectacles where these are required specifically for DSE work.

## 3. Definitions

**Display Screen Equipment:** means an alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved. This includes CCTV, microfiche etc.

**Workstation:** means an assembly comprising:

- The screen, keyboard, other parts of the computer, mouse or other input device;
- The desk and work surface, chair, telephone, modem, printer, document holder;
- Immediate work environment.

**User:** means an employee who habitually uses DSE as a significant part of their normal work.

**Designated Optician:** Specsavers have been approved by the University for the purposes of carrying out eye and eyesight tests.

**Approved Display Screen Equipment:** equipment for DSE use approved by the University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office. (See HSWO website)

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/displayscreenequipment>

#### 4. Responsibilities

##### Responsibility for Managers Heads of schools and services

- Ensure there are systems in place to identify and address risks and issues arising from the use of display screen equipment in their areas of responsibility

##### Line managers must:

- Plan the activity so as to reduce the workload at the workstation;
- Ensure new starts are informed of the risks of DSE use and the local and University systems in place for identifying and mitigating these risks;
- Arrange for new users to complete a self-assessment on commencement of work;  
<http://www.learninglink.ac.uk/keepfit/index.htm>
- Where the self-assessment form identifies risks and issues, ensure that all workstations and users are assessed by trained DSE assessors.
- Ensure that sufficient DSE assessors are available (suggested ratio 1:20-30), and attend refresher training.
- Take the required remedial action if deficiencies are reported to them;
- Where any DSE related physical/medical problem reported by staff cannot be resolved by the workstation and /or work adjustments recommended by the DSE assessor, refer the employee to Occupational Health
- Ensure that a record of the assessment and any remedial action taken is kept and that School/Unit records are amended accordingly;
- Upon request from a user make arrangements for an eye and eyesight test. The test should be repeated either every two years or as instructed by the Optician.
- If the assessment identifies the need for any DSE equipment specific to the user only approved DSE equipment should be supplied.

##### Responsibilities for staff

- a) To complete the DSE self-assessment form as soon as possible after starting work
- b) To comply with University and local guidance on the safe use of DSE workstations
- c) To follow good working practices, i.e taking frequent short breaks from the VDU
- d) To report DSE related physical/medical problems to their DSE assessor, and arrange for the DSE Assessor to carry out a DSE assessment;
- e) Discuss the outcomes of the assessment with the DSE assessor;
- f) Make any changes indicated by the assessment or when recommended by a DSE Assessor;
- g) Notify the DSE Assessor of any significant changes associated with the DSE;
- h) Report any health problems related to DSE work to their Manager/Supervisor, DSE Assessor and Occupational Health.

### **Responsibilities of DSE Assessors**

- i) Ensure new and existing users are made aware of the potential hazards and risks associated with the use of DSE;
- j) Carry out face to face DSE Assessments where self-assessment indicates there may be problems/issues with the workstation and / or user, or where the user has indicated there is a problem;
- k) Where necessary, follow up assessments to seek to ensure that problems are resolved;
- l) Seek to ensure the provision of any equipment recommendations;
- m) Refer DSE users' to Occupational Health where appropriate;
- n) The assessment shall be repeated or reviewed if major changes are made to equipment or furniture; If workstations are relocated; If the nature of the work changes; If the health of the user changes or if there is any reason to believe the assessment is invalid.
- o) Review all DSE assessments every 3 years, or sooner if users are experiencing musculoskeletal problems.

### **Responsibilities of the Occupational Health Department**

- p) Assess referred individuals with identified work related health issues;
- q) Provide support and advice on ill-health issues related to work with DSE
- r) Assist in the assessments for individuals with identified additional requirements (e.g. Mobility, Visual impairment etc.);
- s) Make recommendations to individuals and managers following assessments; and
- t) Advise the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office of cases of DSE work related ill health

## **5. Details of procedure/operational details**

### **DSE Workstation Assessment**

All DSE workstation assessments must be undertaken by competent assessors, using the approved form to ensure compliance with the DSE Regulations.

Where the assessment demonstrates that the workstation is below the standard required then the line manager must take remedial action to correct the deficiencies identified. The assessment and any remedial action must be recorded and retained by the line manager.

Assessments should be undertaken where self-assessment undertaken at commencement of employment or after significant changes to the work or workstation has identified issues.

Self-assessment should be repeated if:

- Workstation conditions alter (change in location, office layout changed);
- Work practices or software significantly change;
- Equipment is changed;
- The assessment is older than three years
- The DSE Assessor should repeat the assessment if the user is referred to Occupational Health for DSE related health issues;

### **Eye and Eyesight Testing**

All employees who are DSE users can request an eye test. The purpose of the test is to establish the need for glasses specifically for DSE work; typically between 5% and 10% of the workforce are affected. Under this legislation NO other types of glasses will be paid for e.g. glasses also needed for far vision correction – driving, or near vision correction (reading glasses), multiple lenses such as bi-focal or varifocal, tinted or coated lenses.

The cost of the eye test will be paid by the University. A basic pair of DSE glasses (frames & lenses) up to the agreed rate (see website for details) will be paid for.

Retesting is advised every two years unless the user experiences visual difficulties before the retest is due.

The University's approved Optician is Specsavers who will offer eye and eyesight tests to all users in accordance with the DSE Regulations. The cost of the test and, where identified by the optician, the cost of the pair of basic, single prescription spectacles will be borne by the University **only if the following procedure is adhered to.**

(No other procedure should be used without prior consultation with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office. Examples of unauthorised procedures include visiting the optician without approval or using a non-approved optician).

#### Procedure

- The user informs their line manager of any visual difficulties and requests a test or retest.
- The line manager/supervisor/budget holder completes the online request for Eyesight Test Form

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/displayscreenequipment/eyetestrequestform>

- The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office will issue a Specsaver VDU Eye care eVoucher to the user; this voucher covers the cost of a full eye and eyesight examination and also includes the provision of a pair of single vision glasses, selected from the designated optician, when glasses are required solely for VDU use.
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- A recharge will be made to the school/unit for the cost of the voucher.
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- NB: Users can add their own contribution to upgrade to any of the glasses ranges, taking advantage of in-store offers such as 2 for 1, whilst still benefiting fully from the agreed rate towards the total purchase.
- The User requests an appointment at one of the designated optician practices [www.specsavers.co.uk](http://www.specsavers.co.uk)

## Notes

**Payment** – The University is only liable to pay for those costs of any spectacles chosen which are attributable to the requirements of the DSE work.

**Cancellation** – A minimum of 24 hours notice must be given when cancelling appointments to avoid the school/unit being billed for the cost of an eye test at the agreed rate for non attendance or late cancellation without extenuating circumstances.

### 6. Training

DSE Assessors will be trained to provide assistance and advice in the assessment of the suitability of workstation equipment, the adjustments required to make best use of the equipment and in identifying and reducing the health effects associated with DSE work.

DSE users must also be provided with training in the use of DSE and associated health risk by competent staff (DSE Assessor). The training should be given at the time of the local induction.

### 7. Reporting

#### Managers reporting injuries associated with DSE

If informed by a user that they have sustained an injury or suffer a health problem that might be associated with DSE work, the manager must report this via their Health and Safety Coordinator to the online University of Sussex Incident Reporting System.

#### Staff reporting injuries associated with DSE

Staff who sustain an injury or suffer a health problem that might be associated with DSE work must report this to their line manager and the school/unit Health and Safety Coordinator. Anyone reporting to Occupational Health for the above should arrange for an accident/incident report to be completed.

#### RIDDOR

Some DSE related physical conditions are reportable under the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, Where such a case is confirmed in writing by an occupational physician or other clinician then a work- related disease report must be submitted by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Department to the HSE. Managers, the Occupational Health Service provider or Human Resources staff must ensure that the HSWO is informed of any DSE related reportable condition.

### 8. Monitoring (effectiveness of policy/awareness/uptake, etc?) & review

Heads of Schools and Units should ensure that there are effective DSE Assessment arrangements in place within their School / Unit.

Managers should ensure that DSE Assessments have been completed within their areas of responsibility.

Schools / Unit DSE arrangements may be monitored as part of a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Audit as to provide University Council and the University Health, Safety and Environment Committee with assurance that the University is complying with statutory requirements.

## 9. Specialist Considerations

Where an Individual has been identified as requiring additional alterations to the workstation due to mobility or visual requirements then it may be necessary to contact Occupational Health and include them in the DSE Assessment process for that individual.

Other areas of consideration may include but are not exhaustive of the following:-

### **New or Expectant mothers**

Although there has been considerable concern regarding ill-health among new and expectant mothers using DSE, the results of scientific studies do not show any link between miscarriages or birth defect and working with display screen equipment.

The layout of workstations may need to be routinely re-assessed over the pregnancy period for new and expectant mothers to make working arrangements more comfortable. Repetitive twisting movements should be avoided to prevent back and shoulder ache and an increase in breaks away from the workstation may be required.

### **Young Workers**

It is important to take account of any special risks that arise from the employment of a young person under the age of 18 years. This is primarily to do with their possible lack of experience. The DSE Assessment form should be completed once the new person has begun work, in addition to a Risk Assessment being done prior to them starting work (including work experience and training schemes). The DSE Assessment must be done under the supervision of the local DSE Assessor on a one-to-one basis.

### **Student accessible workstations**

Although there is no legal requirement to formally assess student workstations for each individual user, the workstations provided should be flexible and meet general ergonomic requirements e.g. an adjustable chair and/or have a selection of other equipment provided in order to meet individual needs. This includes provision for those with any conditions covered by the Equalities Act e.g. wheelchair accessibility, visual disabilities.

## 10. References/Related Documents

- a. Health, Safety and Wellbeing web site DSE guidance and further information  
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/displayscreenequipment>
- b. Eye test request form  
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/displayscreenequipment/eyetestrequestform>
- c. Occupational Health referral  
<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/humanresources/occupationalhealth/referrals>
- d. The Health and Safety Executive DSE guidance  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/>