

Display Screen Equipment Safety Policy

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Approval History

Version	Reviewed by	Amendment history	Approved by	Date
1.0	Nick Izzard Health and Safety	First Draft (old format)	Health and Safety Committee Executive Board	May 2016
2.0	Paul Daniell and Rebecca Paul, Health and Safety	Second Draft (2018 format)	Health and Safety Committee	15 th Feb 2019

1	Introduction
1.1	Purpose
1.1.1	<p>It is the policy of the University of Surrey to provide a safe and healthy working environment for employees, which includes particular measures to protect their health and safety when using Display Screen Equipment (DSE).</p> <p>The University will fulfil its obligations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing all workstations, using a self-assessment approach supported by a network of trained DSE assessors. • Having suitable arrangements for referral to Occupational Health, when health issues related to DSE are suspected. • The provision of suitable work equipment • The provision of information and training for users supported by on-line training. • The provision of eye examination and testing for all users, and the provision of corrective glasses, where these are required solely and specifically for DSE work.
1.2	Scope
1.2.1	This policy applies to all staff and students using DSE within the University of Surrey.
1.3	Definitions
1.3.1	<p>DSE = Display Screen Equipment WSA = Workstation Assessment</p>
1.3.2	<p>The HSE guidance states: It will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as a “User” or “Operator” if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use DSE for continuous or near continuous spells of one hour or more at a time. • Use DSE in this way more or less daily
1.3.3	<p>Occupational Health, Safety and Environment is defined as “the measures and systems aimed at preventing harm and ill health to those at work, whilst protecting the environment from damage that could result from work practices.”</p>
1.3.4	<p>Competence, Training and Briefing</p> <p>Competence is based upon training and is used to equip staff and students (and others where the University has a duty-of-care) with relevant skills and knowledge to deal appropriately with a given health and safety situation.</p> <p>Briefing is informing such persons of relevant knowledge in relation to health and safety.</p> <p>Training and briefing will be made available in a range of formats according to the needs of the trainee and different groups of staff, students and others.</p>
1.3.5	<p>Accessibility</p> <p>The duty to make reasonable adjustments, as far as possible, to ensure that all staff and students (and others where the University has a duty-of-care) with a disability have equal access to everything they need to do a job or studies as those persons without a disability.</p>

2	Policy
2.1	Principles
2.1.1	<p>It has been established that the following health problems may arise from the intensive use of DSE.</p> <p>Upper limb disorders and lesser problems of temporary backache, muscle fatigue etc., caused by bad posture.</p> <p>Temporary visual fatigue caused by such factors as poor lighting, glare, reflections, flickering screen, concentrated DSE work and poorly positioned DSE. (There is no evidence of DSE work being associated with permanent damage to eyes).</p> <p>Soreness of the eyes from low humidity.</p> <p>Fatigue and general stress related to such factors as unfavourable environmental conditions and task planning.</p> <p>Other concerns are effects on pregnant women (no medical evidence to suggest there is any link between DSE work and miscarriage or birth defects) and electromagnetic radiation (no harmful emissions).</p>
2.1.2	Policy Procedures
	<p>a) Workstation Assessments</p> <p>The legal requirement is for the University to carry out suitable and sufficient assessment and, where necessary, bring up to acceptable standards, all workstations where the individual is classified as a User.</p> <p>Workstation self-assessment shall be carried out by all employees who use DSE, using the electronic form issued by the health and safety teams and DSE Assessors, or can also be found on the University Health and Safety web site pages. The results of this assessment will then be reviewed where necessary by the DSE Assessor, who will provide assistance to resolve any outstanding problems.</p> <p>A more formal one-to-one assessment may be carried out by the assessor if required e.g. if the assessor has specific concerns about the individual or workstation. A referral to Occupational Health for a Workstation Assessment (WSA) will be made by the DSE Assessor if issues are of a health nature and cannot be resolved by the DSE Assessor alone. All referrals should in the first instance be forwarded to the Users line manager.</p>
	<p>b) Minimum Requirements for Workstations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Display screen should have well defined characters of adequate size, a stable image, and easily adjustable brightness and contrast. The screen should be easy to tilt and swivel with no reflective glare. • The keyboard should be adjustable (with legs to raise the rear slightly from the desk), separate from the screen, and have a matt surface with adequate and contrasting symbols on keys. There should be sufficient space in front of the keyboard and it should be easy to use. • The mouse (or other non-keyboard device) should be suitable for the task. • The work surface should be sufficiently large and low reflecting, and allow a flexible arrangement of equipment and adequate space. The work chair should be stable allowing

	<p>the User easy movement and comfortable position. It should have adjustable height seat, and an adjustable seat back (height and tilt). Footrests should be available on request.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be space necessary to allow the User to change positions. • The lighting should be satisfactory with appropriate contrast between screen and background, and prevention of glare through positioning of artificial lighting. • Positioning must prevent sources of light, such as windows, from causing distracting reflections on the screen. • Noise must not cause distraction of attention or disturbance of speech. • Heat must not be excessive such to cause discomfort, and an adequate level of humidity should be established and maintained. • The software systems must be suitable for the task, easy to use, and adaptable to the level of the User's knowledge. No quantitative or qualitative checking facility may be used without the User's knowledge.
	<p>c) Laptop Computers & Portable Devices</p> <p>Laptops must comply with the full regulations when they are used for continuous periods of more than one hour per day, on most days. Ideally the keyboard and screen should be separate, and there are several options to achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use with a docking station (preferred) • Connect to a desktop computer • Use with a separate monitor • Use with a separate keyboard and mouse <p>Work from a smart phone or tablet device should be kept to a minimum. The use of a Bluetooth keyboard should be considered if the device is going to be used for an extended period of time. The phone/tablet device should also be put on a stand or tilted forward when in use.</p> <p>All laptops, portable devices and their accessories should be as light as possible. It is highly recommended that a rucksack type carrier is considered, if a laptop or portable device is to be carried frequently. Avoid branded laptop cases for security.</p>
	<p>d) Eye Examination & Testing</p> <p>The University will provide the means for all employees who are identified as "Users", to have an eye examination and test when requested. Retesting is usually every two years, exceptions would be on the advice of the optician.</p> <p>A voucher system is in operation, which can only be used at any Specsavers outlet. The vouchers are held by all Faculty Health & Safety Advisors, and also the central Health & Safety department.</p> <p>The voucher entitles the User to a full eye test and examination, as well as a pair of standard, intermediate, corrective glasses. These glasses will be solely and specifically for DSE use, and cannot be combined with lenses for other uses (such as driving etc.).</p> <p>Further information on eye care and Display Screen Equipment (DSE), can be found on the University Health & Safety website.</p>
	<p>e) Rest Breaks</p> <p>Breaking up long spells of DSE work helps to prevent fatigue, eyestrain, upper limb disorders and backache. Most employees within the University will have some control over their own</p>

	<p>working arrangements, and will be able to organise their work to take this into account.</p> <p>The best way to break up work is to alternate sedentary work with more active tasks, such as filing, photocopying etc. Where this is not possible, more formal breaks may be necessary.</p> <p>Frequent mini breaks every 15-30 minutes are preferable to longer breaks, taken every couple of hours.</p>
	<p>f) Home Working</p> <p>Where University employees are contracted to work from home, the full requirements of the DSE Regulations in terms of provision of equipment and suitable set up must be implemented. A DSE self-assessment must be carried out in the home setting. DSE Assessors are not expected to visit the User at home. If the User assessment identifies issues that need to be addressed then the following methods can be used to resolve them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone discussion, e-mail etc. • Photographs of workstation i.e. equipment and/or layout and/or posture <p>In most cases, staff are not required to work from home but may choose to take work home at the discretion of line managers etc. In these cases, although not coming under the DSE Regulations, the employee should ensure that their work area is set up in accordance with good DSE working practices.</p>
	<p>g) Specialist Considerations:</p> <p>Pregnant Workers – Although scientific studies have not discovered any link amongst new and expectant Mothers and DSE use, the layout and working arrangements should be routinely assessed over the pregnancy period.</p> <p>This can be carried out at the same time as the University Pregnancy Risk Assessment process. Special consideration should be given to achieving a comfortable seating position and an increase in the frequency and duration of rest breaks.</p> <p>Post Graduate Students – Post Graduate Students who have an employment contract with the University will be covered by this policy, in the same way as other members of staff. They will be entitled to the complete DSE Risk Assessment process, as well as free eyesight testing, DSE glasses and training.</p> <p>Post Graduate students who are not employed by the University, are not covered by this policy, and the University are not obliged to provide them with free eyesight testing, glasses and training. However, the University does recognise it has a “Duty of Care” to them and every effort will be made to provide those students having difficulties, with advice and information.</p> <p>Where the University provides a computer or workstation for a Post Graduate Student, whether employed by the University or not, there is a “Duty of Care” to ensure this is suitable for the task.</p> <p>Undergraduate Students – Are not covered by the DSE Regulations and therefore not covered by this policy. However although it is less likely that an Under Graduate Student would be required to make sufficient concentrated use of DSE to be classed as a “User”, should a student report difficulties, every effort should be made to advise that student as necessary.</p>

	<p>h) Monitoring and Review</p> <p>Heads of Faculties and Schools should ensure that there are effective DSE arrangements in place, and department heads and managers should ensure that DSE assessments have been completed in their areas of responsibility.</p> <p>Existing DSE assessments should have a review of their validity on a regular basis, in this case a period not exceeding 3 years is recommended.</p> <p>If there are significant changes to a workstation, it must be re-assessed and actions implemented to meet the requirements of the Regulations. Examples of significant changes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the workstation is relocated • A major change in workstation furniture • A substantial increase in the amount of time required to be spent using DSE • A major change to software being used • A major change to the hardware being used • A substantial change in other task requirements (e.g. more speed or accuracy) • If any environmental conditions such as lighting are significantly modified • As part of an Expectant Mothers (Pregnancy) Risk Assessment • Following recovery from an injury or illness, where the User has been absent from the workstation for a substantial period of time • When a User requests a new assessment due to a DSE issue
2.2	Roles and Responsibilities
2.2.1	<p>Director of Health & Safety</p> <p>Director of Health and Safety is responsible for monitoring and regularly reviewing this Policy, and reporting to the Health and Safety Committee.</p> <p>The Director of Health and Safety is also responsible for reporting any incidents under RIDDOR.</p>
2.2.2	<p>Faculty Managers/Heads of Departments/Heads of Sections</p> <p>a) Ensure all DSE assessments are carried out in your area of responsibility.</p> <p>b) Support the DSE Assessors in carrying out their duties.</p> <p>c) Ensure furniture and equipment provided for users is of a suitable and sufficient standard.</p> <p>d) Implement appropriate recommendations made by DSE Assessor and or Occupational Health Advisor.</p>
2.2.3	<p>Users</p> <p>a) View the online training package when sent out, initially as part of the induction process, and thereafter as part of the refresher training process.</p> <p>b) Carry out DSE Self-Assessment, initially as part of the induction process, and again as part of the review process.</p> <p>c) Seek advice from the DSE Assessor to resolve any issues arising from a DSE Assessment, and make any necessary changes recommended by the DSE Assessor.</p>

	<p>d) Repeat self-assessments as required e.g. if there are any significant changes to work equipment or environment, or if advised to do so by a DSE Assessor.</p> <p>e) Report any health problems which may be related to computer work, to line manager and/or Faculty/School Health & Safety Advisor.</p>
2.2.4	<p>DSE Assessors</p> <p>a) Ensure new starters undergo training and self-assessment as part of the induction process, and keep records to show this has been done. DSE assessors should not retained user DSE self-assessments for longer than 3 years (GDPR retention period).</p> <p>b) Advise existing Users to undergo training and assessment as required, and send reminders to this effect.</p> <p>c) Ensure all Users know where to seek help if they have difficulties with an issue which relates to DSE health and safety.</p> <p>d) Follow up self-assessments to resolve any problems identified.</p> <p>e) Carry out face to face assessments where necessary.</p> <p>f) Make referrals to Occupational Health (through Human Resources) where appropriate.</p>
2.2.5	<p>Occupational Health Advisors</p> <p>a) Assist assessors with assessments on request.</p> <p>b) Carry out assessments for individuals with work related health problems.</p> <p>c) Make recommendations to individuals and managers following assessments.</p>
3	Governance Requirements
3.1	Implementation / Communication Plan
3.1.1	<p>The policy is communicated to all staff as part of the University Policy website – and through specific, relevant training notably as part of induction; reviewable with change of circumstances (e.g. office move or related to changes in health).</p> <p>Relevant information is also published on the University Health and Safety intranet site and Health and Safety Handbook, as appropriate.</p>
3.2	Exceptions to this Policy
3.2.1	There are no exceptions
3.3	Review and Change Requests
3.3.1	<p>This Policy is regularly reviewed by the Director of Health and Safety; and assigned reviewer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Minor changes will be reviewed and agreed through Health and Safety Committee; ➤ Major changes will be reviewed through Health and Safety Committee and submitted to Executive Board for approval. <p>Review will generally be every three years or in line with any relevant changes to Legislation (if sooner). Health and Safety Consultative Committee will be consulted during the review process, as required.</p>

3.5	Legislative context
3.5.1	<p>The legal requirement placed on the University is to provide a safe and healthy working environment for employees and students, when working with DSE. The requirements are laid out under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) places significant emphasis on the requirement for a formal system, that deals with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments. The system adopted by the University of Surrey is a statutory duty, which is designed to minimise the risks associated with workstation equipment and its prolonged use.</p>
3.5.2	<p><u><i>Health and Safety Policy legal statement</i></u> This Policy complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.</p>
	<p>This policy sets out to comply with the required ‘duty of care’ placed upon the University. Under Health and Safety Law a ‘duty of care’ is generated between organisations and individuals when carrying out activities that could foreseeably cause harm.</p> <p>The primary duty of care is owed through the employer-employee relationship in which the employer owes a duty of care to ensure that work activities that could result in harm to the employee are assessed and controlled. That duty of care is put into practice by the line management responsibilities as set out in the hierarchy of the organisation.</p> <p>This duty of care cannot be delegated away; instead the act of delegation must be accompanied by a realistic and workable system of monitoring or supervision to ensure that the delegated task has been adequately implemented (i.e. the responsibility is not met by giving directions; it is met when those directions have been confirmed as carried out). The result is a cascade of delegated accountability that runs through the organisation via the line management network, accompanied by a system of monitoring, supervision and feedback.</p> <p>The duty of care extends to assurance that services provided by others (be they another department of the University or contractors) are undertaken safely. The level of assurance required should be commensurate with the risk of the activity.</p> <p>In addition, anyone carrying out an activity owes a duty of care to anyone who may be put at risk by the activity, such as students, staff and visitors.</p>
3.6	Stakeholder Statements
3.6.1	<p>Equality: Consideration is given to the protected characteristics of all people groups identified in the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage/civil partnership.</p> <p>The University recognises the need for specific measures to ensure the health and safety of each of these groups. This policy and all other associated Health and Safety related policies take this into account.</p>
3.6.2	<p>Health & Safety: This Policy forms part of the overarching statement on health and safety for the University.</p>
3.6.3	<p>Executive Board, Health and Safety Committee, and Health and Safety Consultative Committee Changes to this policy will be reviewed and approved at the appropriate level; in line with policy guidance.</p>