

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) POLICY

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Applies to:	All Trust staff who use computer screens

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Lead Director	Director of Governance and Corporate Development		

CONTRIBUTION LIST Key individuals involved in developing the document

Name	Designation or Group
Andrew Sinclair	Head of Corporate Business
Steve Parker	Trust Health and Safety Advisor
Members	Health, Safety and Security Management Group
Members	Joint Policy Review Group
Members	Joint Management Staff Side Committee

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Incorrect use of any Display Screen Equipment (DSE) can potentially give rise to symptoms of ill health such as musculoskeletal disorders, upper limb disorders, visual fatigue and mental stress. While the risk of ill health to users of DSE is generally low, these risks can increase if good practice is not followed. The Trust aims to provide all DSE users with a workstation which meets the minimum legal standards, therefore minimising risks.
- 1.2 DSE management relies on the participation of those staff defined as DSE users and their managers, to ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out. Staff cooperation with the Trust DSE policy is a legal requirement set out under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

2. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

- 2.1 The procedures and guidelines in this policy are made in compliance with the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health & Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.
- 2.2 The DSE Regulations 2002 apply to employees covered as users and are designed to protect users whether they work:
- at a Trust workstation;
 - at a workstation at home;
 - at another organisation's workstation
- 2.3 This policy is applicable to all staff who are expected to use display screen equipment as part of their working day.

3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Managers / Supervisors

- 3.1 Any person who has managerial responsibility for a DSE user will:
- ensure DSE users carry out an annual DSE self-assessment (available on the Trust Intranet), or after a significant change in their circumstances;
 - follow up those who fail to carry out a DSE self-assessment;
 - ensure all DSE users have safe systems of work and a safe workplace including provision for rest breaks, recommended as a break from the workstation to perform other duties for 5 minutes of every hour;
 - take all reasonable steps to make any improvements necessary to a DSE users workstation;
 - purchase suitable and sufficient DSE equipment and where reasonable adjustments are required, take into account the advice and recommendations from the Trust's 'Well@Work' Team or Competent Health and Safety Adviser;

- authorise DSE eye tests, the costs of which staff should be reimbursed for through the Trust staff expenses procedure;
- refer staff to Occupational Health if DS- related health problems become apparent;
- ensure a process is in place to identify new DSE users who may have changed jobs and become a DSE User.

3.2 Where a manager and a DSE user disagree about whether they meet the DSE user requirements, the manager must contact the Competent Health and Safety Adviser for ADVICE AND clarification.

DSE Users

3.3 Any person who is a DSE user:

- must use the information provided in this policy to set up their workstation correctly before any DSE work is started (Appendix 1);
- DSE Users must undertake work station self-assessment (see Appendix 2 - DSE Self-assessment) at least annually or after any change to their work environment;
- return completed DSE self-assessments to their line manager;
- take reasonable steps to ensure own health, safety and welfare whilst using DSE including taking a five minute break away from the screen every hour (to carry out other work related, non DSE tasks);
- make use of any measures deemed necessary by the DSE self-assessment;
- seek authorisation for DSE eye test from their line manager and apply for reimbursement of its cost through the expenses claim procedure.

Occupational Health

3.3 In the event a member of staff experiences physical problems, and this has been verified by a GP, which they attribute to the layout of their DSE workstation, their line manager will complete an occupational health referral so that a health assessment and advice in relation to reasonable adjustments can be made.

Competent Adviser (DSE)

3.4 Where DSE self-assessments score Red or Amber, the Trust Competent Adviser should be contacted via e-mail: healthandsafety@sompar.nhs.uk. The Adviser will provide advice and support to the employee by email, phone or in person to ensure work place risks identified in the assessment are reduced to the lowest level possible.

3.5 The Competent Adviser will also act on behalf of the Trust to carry out annual compliance audits where appropriate to seek assurances on levels of compliance with this policy and procedure.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 **Display Screen Equipment (DSE)** covers both conventional display screen and other types such as liquid crystal or plasma displays used in flat panel

screens, touch screens and other emerging technologies. The term DSE includes any portable DSE i.e. laptop and handheld computers, personal digital assistant devices and some portable communication devices.

4.2 **DSE User** is defined as being an employee who habitually uses DSE equipment as a significant part of their job requirements. Where it is clear the use of DSE is more or less continuous on most days, the individual concerned should be considered as a “DSE User” and all necessary arrangements set out in this procedure will be applied.

4.3 Where there is less continuous or less frequent use of DSE, other factors connected with the job must be assessed. It will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as a DSE user if they:

- Normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time **and**
 - use DSE in this way on a more or less daily basis; or
 - have to transfer information quickly to or from the DSE; or
 - the performance requirements of the system demand high levels of attention and concentration by the user where for example, the consequences of error may be critical.

4.4 A **Workstation** can be broadly defined as a combination of the following items used to undertake a job: Display screen, mouse, disk drive, printers, telephone, modem, document holder, work chair, work desk, work surface, and the immediate environment surrounding the display screen equipment.

5. ARRANGEMENTS FOR DSE MANAGEMENT

DSE Workstation Self-Assessment (risk assessment)

5.1 All DSE users are required to assess their own workstation using the Trust DSE self-assessment form, which can be found on the Trust Intranet. These assessments should be undertaken annually, or whenever significant changes in the workstation occur. For new staff, these assessments should be undertaken as soon as a computer password and workstation is provided.

5.2 DSE users will carry out the following steps to ensure their workstation is fully assessed:

- review the workstation set-up using the advice in Appendix 1;
- carry out a DSE self-assessment and score their workstation;
- send a copy of the DSE assessment to their line manager.

5.3 On receipt of the assessment, the manager will:

- review the score and identify any areas that can be improved easily (such as space / cleanliness etc.);
- make any necessary referral to Occupational Health;
- make any necessary referrals to the Competent Adviser;
- act on advice / recommendations given from these referrals;

- keep records in the employee's personal file.

Eye sight tests

- 5.4 The DSE Regulations require the Trust to provide DSE users, who so request it, with an appropriate DSE eyesight test. An appropriate eye and eyesight test means a sight test as defined by the Opticians Act Legislation and includes a test of vision and an examination of the eye.
- 5.5 The Trust will offer reimbursement for a DSE eyesight test to staff when:
- the line manager agrees the employee is a DSE user; and
 - at any time thereafter an optician suggests a re-test.
- 5.6 The Trust will ensure any DSE user who requests a DSE eyesight test from their line manager is reimbursed to a maximum value of **£30.00** through the normal staff expenditure claim procedure and this must include a valid receipt for the test from a registered optician's practice.
- 5.7 The Trust will also cover the cost of basic lenses and frames from the basic range if the DSE user requires glasses solely for the use with DSE. The DSE User can choose to upgrade to a more expensive range but this cost will be covered by the user. 'Special' corrective appliances (normally spectacles) provided to meet the requirements of the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 will be those appliances prescribed to correct vision defects at the viewing distance or distances used specifically for the display screen work concerned. 'Normal' corrective appliances are spectacles prescribed for any other purpose. In many cases where a user requires special glasses to carry out their DSE work, a single lens prescription will be appropriate. However, there may be some circumstances where bifocal or varifocal lenses may be necessary. These may include situations where the person is required to mix their DSE tasks with other tasks (for example dealing with people) which require a different viewing distance. However, caution is necessary in reaching a decision as there can be side-effects associated with the use of multi-focal prescriptions for DSE work. These disadvantages could prove to be more problematic than swapping spectacles, for instance by inducing neck pain. The decision on which is the most suitable solution is best taken in discussion with the optometrist; this will require information being provided by the member of staff about the nature of the work, workstation and workplace layout. The Trust will also cover the cost of basic lenses and frames from the basic range if the DSE user requires glasses solely for the use with DSE. The DSE User can choose to upgrade to a more expensive range but this additional cost will be covered by the user.

Further information / instruction and training for staff

- 5.8 Further information on DSE can be found at www.hse.gov.uk

6. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 The Trust will work towards all staff being appropriately trained in line with the organisation's Staff Mandatory Training Matrix (training needs analysis).

All training documents referred to in this policy are accessible to staff within the Learning and Development Section of the Trust Intranet.

7. MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

Process for Monitoring Compliance

- 7.1 The Competent Advisor will also act on behalf of the Trust to carry out annual compliance audits where appropriate to seek assurances on levels of compliance with this policy and procedure.

8. REFERENCES, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

8.1 References

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (amendments 1999 & 2002)

Equality Act 2010

8.2 Cross Reference to Other procedural documents

Health and Safety Policy

Sickness and Absence Management Policy

Development & Management of Organisation-wide Procedural Documents Policy and Guidance

Risk Management Policy and Procedure

Untoward Event Reporting Policy and procedure

All current policies and procedures are accessible in the policy section of the public website (on the home page, click on 'Policies and Procedures'). Trust Guidance is accessible to staff on the Trust Intranet.

9. APPENDICES

- 9.1 For the avoidance of any doubt the appendices in this policy are to constitute part of the body of this policy and shall be treated as such. This should include any relevant Clinical Audit Standards.

Appendix A Setting up your workstation

Appendix B DSE Self-assessment

Setting up your Workstation

Setting up your workstation correctly is vital to ensuring you reduce the risk of pain and ill health that can be associated with DSE use. It is the responsibility of DSE users to ensure they have followed the DSE policy, set up their workstation and completed a DSE self-assessment. By following the steps below, you should alter the layout of your workstation to ensure you are working safely. Remember, if items are bulky or heavy you should not attempt to move them on your own. The correct set up of your workstation may not feel right at first but it will encourage correct posture and safe working practices.

Step 1 - Your Chair

- Adjust the height of your chair so that when you put your fingers on the middle row of the keyboard your hands and forearms remain horizontal.
- Your elbow joint should be at 90 degrees.
- There should be no angled wrist – keep straight
- This may mean your feet are dangling (don't worry, we will alter this next)
- Your knees must also be at about 90 degree angle
- You may require a foot rest in order to ensure that there is no pressure on the bottom of your thigh



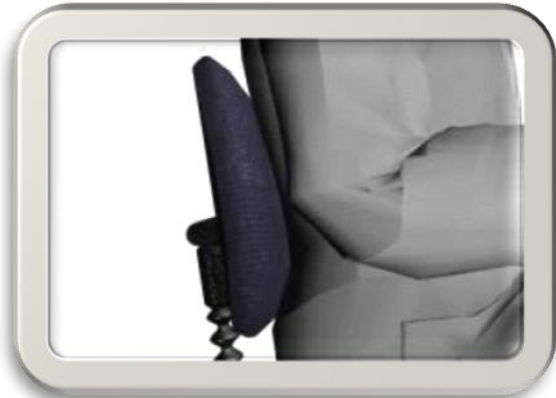
Step 2 – The Monitor

- Adjust the height of the monitor to ensure that you are looking horizontally at it.
- Your eyes should be level with the top of the screen
- You can adjust the height of your monitor by using supports or maybe even a strong box or book. Please ensure that this is safe. Some monitors can be adjusted by pulling upwards on the frame of the screen
- Ensure your monitor screen is clean
- Check the distance of your eye to the monitor
We recommend that your eye should be between 450mm and 650mm from the screen, whichever distance is most comfortable
If these distances are not comfortable consider referring to the eye and eyesight test section of the DSE policy
- Also consider the screen quality or settings. These images can be enlarged – contact IT for support if needed
- Tilt monitor between 5-15% off of the vertical line – this will reduce glare



- Adjust the angle of your back rest and / or your bottom cushion to ensure that your back is supported in your work position

- If you cannot sit back and upright without your knees touching the front of the seat you may need to change your chair to one with a shorter seat.
- Adjust the back rest support so that it supports the small of your back
- If the back rest does not fit into the small of your back, you may benefit from a back support
- Ensure that your feet are flat on the floor and your knee is at a 90 degree angle
- If your feet are dangling, you may need a footrest



Step 4 – Arm Rests

- If you cannot get close enough to your desk because of the arm rests you may have to have them removed
- Your elbows should be vertical under your shoulders and you should avoid resting your arms (adding pressure) whilst typing
- Arms rests can cause the shoulder to hike up under the ears, this would cause back, neck and shoulder pain
- Ensure that you are sat directly in front of the monitor and keyboard
- Sit close to your desk, allowing for your wrists to be supported by the desk
- never put anything between the keyboard and you
- If you often have to refer to documents whilst typing, you may benefit from a document holder
- This should be placed at the same height and distance from your monitor
- Do not let cables trail from the desk
- Avoid using extension leads
- Never use pieces of equipment you have brought in from home



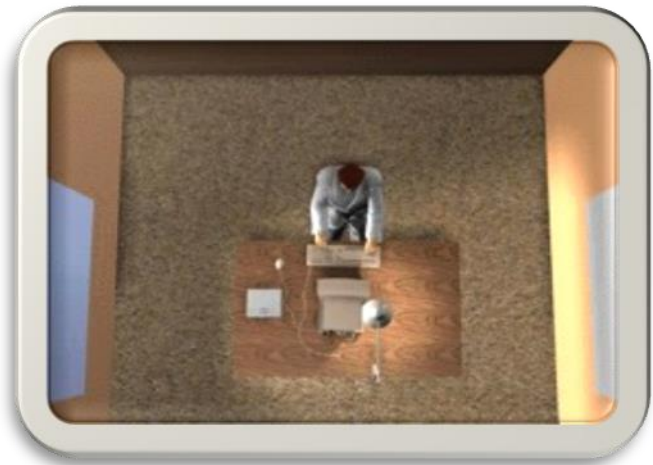
Step 6 – The Mouse

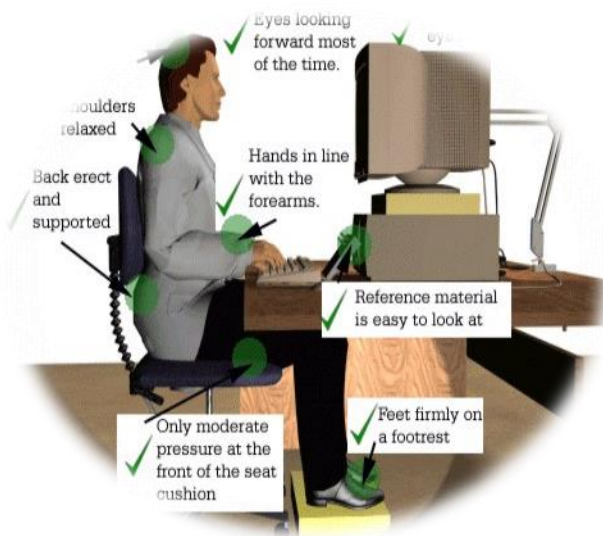
- The mouse needs to be positioned as close to you as possible so to avoid straining your shoulder
- Aim to work with the mouse with your elbow vertically under your shoulder, by your side
- if you have a laser mouse you don't need a mouse mat, if you have a mouse with a ball you need a mouse mat

- Position any additional equipment e.g. phones, paper trays and notes in an accessible place to avoid twisting and overstretching

- **Step 7 – Environment**

- Temperature and humidity should be adjusted to ensure you are comfortable
- There is no max temperature in law, but managers must ensure that temperature is reasonable.
- If you suffer from dry eyes you should report this to your manager, but eye drops can be very helpful
- Eliminate glare or reflections on your screen, close blinds or move workstation so that it is at right angles with the window
- Use blinds that are in place
- Turn off over head lights if not needed (If colleagues all agree)





Graphics, www.openerg.com

Setting up your work station
(Portable Equipment Users)

Use this in addition to the guidance in Appendix one for fixed DSE

Option 1

Use a separate keyboard and mouse; with most Laptops you can just plug them in. You will then need to raise the screen level up to the normal position of a monitor – top of the screen Level with your eyes. This solution is good so long as your screen is large enough



Option 2

The second option is to use a separate monitor and use the laptop's keyboard. You must ensure that your eyes are the correct 450mm-650mm from the screen and that your screen is straight in front of you



Option 3

You could consider using a separate monitor and keyboard. This is the most expensive option, but for those people using the laptop for all daily work, it could be the most comfortable.



APPENDIX B

DSE User Self-assessment:

Answer all of the questions, and for those with **NO** as your answer (unless otherwise indicated), please circle the score and add the points together at the end of the assessment. Use your total score to determine if any action needs to be taken. If you needed to mark any questions with an asterisk (*) please contact your manager despite the score.

Name of DSE User		
Ward/ Department / Base		
Date of Assessment		
Manager		
DSE Component	NO	Action Required / Comments
Is there enough space on your desk top for the flow of work?	1	
Have you got enough leg room?	2	
Is the desk deep enough for you to have the monitor set between 450mm and 650mm from your eyes, when you are seated in the correct position?	2*	
Is there enough room for a space between your keyboard and you for your wrists to rest on the desk (4-6 inches / 10-14cm recommended)	2*	
Is your desk surface free from reflection?	1	
Is your chair at a height where the bottom of your elbows are at the same height as the keyboard when using the keyboard?	2	
Does the back rest support the small of your back in an upright posture?	1	
Can you sit back into the chair seat fully without any pressure behind the knees?	2	
If fitted, are armrests set up correctly ie not preventing adequate movement of the chair?	1	
Can you get close to the desk to type with the elbows vertically under the shoulders?	2	
Is the chair comfortable?	1	
Is the chair stable and all adjustment levers working?	2	

DSE Component	NO	Action Required / Comments
With seat height adjusted correctly for the elbows, can you place your feet firmly on the floor without compressing the underside of your thighs?	2	
If a footrest is required, have you got access to one?	2	
Is the monitor / screen between 450mm-650mm away from your eyes?	2	
Is the monitor directly in front of you?	2	
Are your eyes level with the top of the screen?	1	
Is the screen free from glare / reflections?	2	
Is the information on the screen well defined and easy to read?	1	
The image is flicker free?	2	
Do you clean the screen regularly?	1	
Is the monitor tilted between 5 and 15% off the vertical?	1	
Can you adjust the brightness and contrast easily?	1	
Is the keyboard at the correct angle to prevent any up or down bending of the wrist?	2	
Is your keyboard far enough away from you to ensure your elbows are directly under your shoulders when typing?	2	
The keyboard digits are clear and not faded?	1	
Is the mouse close enough to you to avoid extending the arm at the elbow?	2	
If you have a roller ball mouse (laser mouse do not need a mouse mat), do you have a mouse mat?	1	
Does the mouse run freely on the mat and work accurately?	1	
Do you regularly clean your mouse and internal mouse ball?	1	

DSE Component	NO	Action Required / Comments
Do you reduce the time using your mouse to the lowest period possible by using keyboard short cuts?	2	
Do you have a document holder (if required)?	1	
Can you refer to documents and papers without having to move your head?	1	
Is all equipment and items around you necessary? (or can it be removed to give you more desk space?)	1	
Is all other equipment (phone etc.) in a position to ensure that you can maintain your posture when using them?	1	
Can you move in and out of your workstation easily?	2	
Is there adequate space to manoeuvre your chair?	2*	
Is the area free from trailing cables which pose a trip hazard?	2	
Is lighting adequate?	2	
Do windows have blinds to prevent glare and reflection?	1	
Do you find the work station quiet enough?	1	
Is the temperature comfortable for most of the time?	1	
Are you free from any upper body pain/soreness or any soreness in your hands or wrists	2*	
Have you had an eye test in the last 2 years?	2	
Do you organise your work to ensure you take a 5 minute break for every hour you are using the DSE?	2	
Is your workstation set up to ensure that you have a flow of work (you don't have to keep getting up or twisting for things)?	1	
Do you feel you understand and can effectively use all of the computer programmes you have to use as part of your job?	2	
Do you have an existing medical issue that you feel is being aggravated by your workstation?	Y* = score 2	Please give details

DSE Component	NO	Action Required / Comments
Do you suffer from dry or sore eyes when using your DSE?	Y* = score 2	
Do you feel you require extra DSE information or training?	Y* = score 2	Please give details
Total Score (add all indicated scores together)		Now use scoring compliance (below) to identify action required
Score 0-15		Workstation is ok, however if you have any concerns speak to your manager
Score 16 – 30		Manager: Contact Health and Safety competent person for help and advice
Score 31+		Manager: Contact Health and Safety competent person for workstation visit

Action Plan: Please indicate in the section below what action is required to address the hazards identified in your assessment. You may find it useful if your local DSE assessor helps you with this.

Action Required	Responsible Person	Date for Completion
Copy of the DSE assessment must be sent to Manager	DSE USER	IMMEDIATE
Date of next assessment / follow up		
Manager Sign Off		
Employee Sign off		