



Health & Safety Directorate

# **DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE)**

Health and Safety Policy,  
Arrangements and Guidance for QMUL

(Ref: QMUL\_HS\_101)

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

This Health and Safety Policy establishes the framework for using Display Screen Equipment (DSE) by Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). The objective of the Policy is to minimise harm, loss or damage, enable legal compliance and promote best practice in the use of DSE across the Institution. The DSE guidance and appendices within the Policy give advice on the operational arrangements to take for safe DSE use, including completion of the online DSE training and risk assessment as well as arrangements for eyesight testing and DSE spectacles.

The DSE policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if legislation / QMUL circumstances change.

## 2.0 Introduction

This policy supersedes the previous QMUL DSE policy and arrangements documents (reference QM/H&S/0087 & 88 Version 01/01/2005).

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 appropriate preventative measures can be identified and put in place. As part of this general assessment, work with DSE must be assessed against the requirements of the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (amended 2002).

## 3.0 Scope of Policy

The policy applies to all QMUL staff on payroll who use DSE. The term 'QMUL staff' refers to anyone with a QMUL payroll number and a QMUL employment contract (types of QMUL employment contracts are noted at <http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/procedures/contracts/types/index.html>). They must complete the DSE Risk Assessment process and training, and are entitled to a free eyesight test and DSE spectacles (where applicable).

QMUL Post Graduate Research (PGR) Students who have an employment contract with the University will be covered by this policy, in the same way as other QMUL members of staff. They must complete the DSE Risk Assessment process and training, and are entitled to a free eyesight test and DSE spectacles (where applicable).

QMUL recognises it has a "Duty of Care" and every effort will be made to provide all PGR students having issues with a DSE workstation, with appropriate information and support. Where the University provides a computer or workstation for a PGR Student, whether employed by the University or not, there is a "Duty of Care" to ensure the workstation is suitable for the task.

QMUL PGR students who are **not** employed by QMUL should be provided with induction training and are recommended to complete the DSE checklist provided at induction (Appendix 1) for equipment used on a regular basis and the hot-desking checklist (Appendix 3) for occasional use equipment. If required, PGR students who are not employed by QMUL should seek advice from the local safety coordinator and/or the Health & Safety Directorate (HSD) / Occupational Health Service if problems associated with DSE are identified. The University is however **not** obliged to provide PGR students who are **not** on QMUL payroll, with a free eyesight test or DSE spectacles.

QMUL Undergraduate (UG) and Post Graduate Taught (PGT) Students are **not** covered by this policy. However, if an UG or PGT student reports issues with a DSE workstation, every effort should be made by QMUL (e.g. via their course tutor, facility maintainer, student representative or HSD/OHS Teams) to ensure compliance.

## 4.0 Purpose

It is the policy of QMUL to fully comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002). This policy applies to all QMUL staff users and their workstations used in the undertaking of University business (see definitions below for 'users', 'operators', 'workstations' and 'staff').

## 5.0 Definitions

### 5.1. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

DSE is defined in the Regulations as 'any alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process'. A display screen usually forms part of a computer showing text, graphics or numbers (i.e., desktop, laptop, iPad/tablet or smartphone). The definition also applies to display systems such as microfiche and CCTV.

## 5.2 DSE User

A DSE 'User' means any employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work. The Regulations apply to users whether they are employed to work at their employer's workstation, a personal workstation or 'hot-desking'. This includes periods of 'working at home as part of their contract'. The majority of University employees (including PGR students on QMUL payroll, and temporary staff who have an employment contract with the University) will be classed as 'users'. It will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as a 'user', if they meet the two criteria below:

- (a) Normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; or
- (b) Use DSE in this way more or less daily.

## 5.3 DSE Operator

DSE 'Operator' means any self-employed person or PGR student who does **not** have an employment contract with the University, who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work in connection with QMUL. This policy applies to 'operators' whether they are employed to work using the University workstations, a personal workstation or 'hot-desking'.

It will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as an operator if they meet the two criteria below:

- (a) Normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; or
- (b) Use DSE in this way more or less daily.

## 5.4 Agency Worker

An Agency Worker is a worker supplied by an employment agency that temporarily becomes an employee of QMUL whilst under the agency contract with the University.

Agency workers are **not** eligible for free eyesight test or DSE spectacles, if they have signed an agency employment contract with QMUL for less than **12 weeks**. (see <http://www.hr.qmul.ac.uk/workqm/agency/index.html#HandS>). Those eligible for free eyesight test or DSE spectacles will be requested to provide an employment letter or suitable document stating their start date with QMUL.

## 5.5 Workstation

A workstation includes:

- The display screen;
- Chair, work surface / desk, keyboard or other input device;
- Telephone, document holder, printer etc;
- Any optional accessories to the display screen equipment;
- The immediate work environment around the display screen equipment;
- Environmental considerations such as space, heat, lighting, noise and humidity.

## 6.0 Legislation

The following legislation is relevant to this policy: - DSE equipment and its operation should conform in general to the Health and Safety at Work *etc.* Act 1974 and specifically, with the requirements set out in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002).

## 7.0 Responsibilities

### 7.1 Responsibility of Heads of Schools, Institutes and Directorates:

Each Head of School, Institute and Directorate should ensure that:

- a) There is a management procedure in place to assess workstations and reduce risks for staff identified as DSE 'Users'.
- b) Sufficient resources are available to ensure appropriate equipment is provided so the risk of injury or ill health from DSE use is reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.

### 7.2 Responsibility of Managers/Supervisors

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** It needs to be noted here that if an individual instructs or issues tasks to another individual or group of individuals, then whether a 'designated' line manager or **not**, they become responsible for the health and safety of those they have instructed.

Managers should ensure that for **DSE 'Users'**:

- a) DSE Users are given adequate information and training (using the QMUL DSE online training module (<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/training/online-learning/>) with regard to working with DSE, including the importance of taking regular breaks;
- b) User workstations are assessed by means of online self-assessment (or as appropriate, DSE checklist in Appendix 1 or 3) and any associated risks are reduced as far as possible;
- c) Workstations meet specified minimum requirements (See section 7.5);
- d) Information is provided to DSE Users on eyesight testing and DSE spectacles (as per the 'Employee Eye Care Scheme for QMUL staff' ([http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/dse\\_eye-care/](http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/dse_eye-care/))).
- e) Accidents / incidents, injury and ill health involving DSE equipment are reported and investigated as per section 8 below; and any remedial action is implemented and records maintained.
- f) Seek advice from the HSD (for non-medical issues) or Occupational Health Service (for medical issues) if significant issues associated with DSE are identified.

Managers should ensure that for **Agency Workers**:

- a. User workstations are assessed by means of self-assessment (using the DSE checklist in Appendix 1 or 3) and any associated risks are reduced as far as possible;
- b. Workstations meet specified minimum requirements (See section 7.5);
- c. DSE Users are given adequate information and training with regard to working with DSE, including the importance of taking regular breaks;
- d. Information is provided to DSE Users on eyesight testing and DSE spectacles (where an employment contract with QMUL is greater than 12 weeks - the 'Employee Eye Care Scheme for QMUL Staff' ([http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/dse\\_eye-care/](http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/dse_eye-care/))).
- e. Accidents / incidents, injury and ill health involving DSE equipment are reported and investigated as per section 8 below; and any remedial action is implemented and records maintained.

- f. Seek advice from the HSD (for non-medical issues) or Occupational Health Service (for medical issues) if significant issues associated with DSE are identified.

### 7.3 Responsibility of all DSE 'Users'

It is the responsibility of the DSE 'user' to:

- a) Complete the QMUL DSE online training module **and** self-assessment (see link below) and follow specific requirements outlined for safe working practices;  
<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/training/online-learning/>  
(Completion of the DSE self-assessment checklist in Appendix 1 or 4 may also suffice for the self-assessment).
- b) Report any problems that they may be experiencing while working on DSE to their line manager and if accidents / incidents, injury and ill health occur, complete an Accident / Incident Form (<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/Accident%20Reporting/index.html>) with their manager, and comply with remedial action/s.
- c) Seek advice from the HSD (for non-medical issues) or Occupational Health Service (for medical issues) if significant issues associated with DSE are identified.

### 7.4 Responsibility of all DSE 'Operators'

It is the responsibility of the DSE 'operators' to:

- a) Complete the QMUL DSE Operator Induction and complete the DSE checklists (Appendix 1 and/or Appendix 3).
- b) Report any problems that they may be experiencing while working on DSE to their manager / supervisor and if accidents / incidents, injury and ill health occur, complete an Accident / Incident Form (<http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/Accident%20Reporting/index.html>) with their manager / supervisor, and comply with remedial action/s.
- c) Seek advice from the HSD (for non-medical issues) or Occupational Health Service (for medical issues) if significant issues associated with DSE are identified.

### 7.5 Responsibility of Safety Coordinators and/or local Trained DSE Assessors

It is the responsibility of Safety Coordinators and/or local Trained DSE Assessors to:

- a) Liaise with the HSD in matters concerning DSE related concerns.
- b) Ensure that DSE related accidents / incidents, injury and ill health are reported to the Health and Safety Directorate and also Occupational Health Service (for medical issues) on the appropriate form.
- c) Advise and assist in promoting and supporting completion of DSE assessments.
- d) Advise and assist in ensuring that health and safety monitoring is carried out on DSE use, through regular safety inspections (peer review and/or self-inspections) and safety audits, to:
  - Identify unsafe or unhealthy conditions or work practices in relation to DSE use;
  - Share best practice with QMUL colleagues.

### 7.6 Responsibility of Health & Safety Directorate (HSD) and Occupational Health (OHS)

The HSD is responsible for the provision of advice and guidance on DSE 'User / Operator' non-medically related matters. HSD maintains, review and updates the QMUL DSE Policy, and the Employee Eye-Care Scheme for QMUL Staff.

The Occupational Health Service (OHS) at QMUL will carry out an on-site workstation assessment (WSA) on any DSE 'user' who has a medically related condition which impacts on safe DSE use.

The user will be seen in the OHS where a private consultation take place. Prior to the WSA, the OHS will forward to the user a medical history questionnaire for completion. This form will need to be available either electronically or hard copy at the time of consultation. The user will have the opportunity to discuss their medical concerns with an Occupational Health Adviser (OHA). The OHA will discuss the contents of the questionnaire with the user. He/she will go through the basic seating and posture requirements for typical office tasks. Where applicable, the user will have the opportunity to try out one of the sample DSE chairs in OHS to assess suitability. The user department can purchase these chairs from QMUL approved furniture supplier. Based on the outcome of this initial assessment, OHS will determine whether a visit to the user's place of work required.

OHS accepts Employee self-referrals and Line Management referrals (see <http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/referrals/>).

OHS also carries out pre-employment assessments where an employee has declared on their health questionnaire a pre-existing musculoskeletal condition. Should adjustments or specialist equipment be required Human Resources and the line manager will be notified via a clearance email. The employee will be given information on how to contact Access to Work<sup>1</sup> where the user may be able to obtain funding for specialist equipment.

## **8.0 QMUL Procedural and Operational Arrangements for safe DSE Use**

### **8.1 Managers reporting incidents, injuries or ill health associated with DSE**

If informed by a DSE 'user / operator' that they have had an accident / incident, sustained an injury or suffer ill health that might be associated with DSE work, the DSE User / Operator and Manager must complete an accident / incident report <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/Accident%20Reporting/index.html>) and the manager must report this via their Health and Safety Coordinator to HSD and also to Occupational Health (when a medical / physical condition occurs which impacts on safe DSE use, - see procedure at <http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/referrals/>).

### **8.2 Reporting of DSE related incidents, diseases, injuries and ill health under RIDDOR**

The HSD is responsible on behalf of QMUL for the reporting to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) of significant work place accidents and incidents, injuries and work related ill health under the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). Some DSE related physical / medical conditions are reportable under RIDDOR (see <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/Accident%20Reporting/index.html>). For reportable DSE related incidents, this is done in liaison with OHS and the Line Manager concerned. Managers should therefore ensure all DSE related accidents / incidents, injuries and ill health are reported to HSD via the QMUL accident / incident reporting system without delay.

### **8.3 Musculoskeletal problems**

To avoid undue stress and fatigue all DSE users should be aware of the proper conditions for sitting and operating display screen equipment.

A range of conditions of the arm, hand and shoulder areas linked to work activities are now described as work-related upper limb disorders. These range from temporary fatigue or soreness in the limbs to chronic soft tissue disorders. Some keyboard operators can suffer occupational cramp.

More than one factor is likely to be involved in the evolution of these disorders. Prolonged poor posture is known to cause musculoskeletal problems. This may be because of poor seating or awkward positioning of the hands and wrists because of inappropriate desk height or poor work technique. Inadequate software and high workload may also contribute to musculoskeletal problems and therefore any risk reduction strategy must include attention to environment, training, job design and work planning. Appendix 1 of this document contains a checklist covering these items.

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<sup>1</sup> Access to work is a publicly funded employment support programme. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/527784/employer-guide-atw-dwvf03a.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/527784/employer-guide-atw-dwvf03a.pdf) Accessed 16.06.2016

The Occupational Health Service (OHS) at Queen Mary University of London will carry out an on-site workstation assessment (WSA) on a DSE user for medically related condition/s that impact on safe DSE use. Prior to the WSA, the user will need to be seen at the OHS where a private consultation will take place (see <http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/about-us/> for OHS contact details).

Other non-medically related DSE issues should be referred to the HSD Team for advice.

#### 8.4 Specialist Chairs and Equipment

The DSE self-assessment must be completed to identify the issues with DSE set up (including seating). This is particularly important where a DSE user or operator has a potential medical condition and it is recommended that completing a DSE checklist (See Appendix 1) or self-assessment (via the online training module) will assist with this process.

Occupational Health advice should be sought (OHS will request a copy of the DSE checklist and / or the self-assessment), as medical assessment adjustments may be needed.

QMUL have preferred office furniture supplier/s at <http://qm-web.finance.qmul.ac.uk/purchasing/suppliers/furniture-/> who can give the London University Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) and other applicable QMUL discounts.

OHS / HSD do **not** provide funding for chairs or DSE equipment. These costs must be borne by the DSE user / operator's School / Institute or Directorate.

#### 8.5 How to Obtain a Voucher for Eyesight Testing and DSE Spectacles

These are available electronically. QMUL staff and Post Graduate Research Students (PGR) who qualify as DSE Users (see 5.2 of this policy for definition) can apply for a voucher by completing the [eye care request form](#).

The full procedure and other benefits of the 'Employee Eye Care Scheme for QMUL Staff' is detailed in the topic web page and procedure document at [http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/dse\\_eye-care/](http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/a-z/dse_eye-care/).

Please note safety spectacles for laboratory users are not covered by this policy. For further information you should refer to the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy which can be found on the [PPE topic page](#).

#### 8.6 Minimum requirements for workstations

Workstations and equipment must comply with the minimum requirements outlined in the DSE regulations. The minimum requirements for workstations apply to all elements of the workstation including furniture, software and environmental factors. Full details of the minimum requirements can be found in appendices 1 and 2. Inspections should be carried out by DSE Users in conjunction with Managers/Supervisors and/or trained DSE Assessors if required. These workstations should as far as is reasonably practicable meet the minimum ergonomic requirements set out in the Regulations in order to comply with the duty of care that the University owes to its DSE Users. Further advice on inspections can be obtained from the HSD team.

#### 8.7 Daily work routines of users

Whenever possible, jobs using DSE should be designed to consist of a mixture of screen-based and non-screen-based work to prevent fatigue, eyestrain, musculoskeletal conditions such as backache and mental demands. Breaks or changes of activity must be included in working time. It is advisable to take short, frequent breaks rather than occasional longer breaks: for example a 5-10 minute break after 50-60 minutes continuous screen and/or keyboard use will be more beneficial than a 15-20 minute break every 2 hours. If possible, breaks should be taken away from the DSE workstation, to allow the user to stand up, move about and change posture. Most QMUL employees have control over their own work and will be able to organise their time to ensure that they take sufficient breaks.



## 8.8 Special Considerations under the Equality Act 2010 (Formally the Disability Discrimination Act)

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 the Occupational Health Service and include them in the DSE Assessment process for that individual.

### 8.9 Hot-desking / New Ways of Working

DSE Users should adjust equipment available at hot desks to ensure they are comfortable and sitting correctly. See Appendix 3 for a checklist regarding adjusting hot desk equipment.

### 8.10 New or Expectant mothers

It is recommended that New and Expectant Mothers should review their DSE Assessment with their Line Manager/local Safety Coordinator as this is a significant change requiring review and where required support from the HSD Team.

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.

## 9.0 DSE Training

All **DSE Users** must be provided with adequate information and training on the following areas:

- Risks from display screen equipment and workstations;
- Risk assessment and measures to reduce the risks;
- Breaks and activity changes;
- Eye and eyesight tests, and provision of DSE spectacles (where applicable);
- Initial training;
- Training when the workstation is modified, including situations where the user is hot-desking.

QMUL online DSE training is available at the following link: <http://www.hsd.qmul.ac.uk/training/online-learning/>

All **DSE operators** must be provided with adequate information and training on the following areas:

- Risks from display screen equipment and workstations;
- DSE Checklist assessment (Appendix 1 and 3) and measures to reduce the risks;
- Breaks and activity changes;
- Induction training.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

All DSE risk assessments should be kept up to date and reviewed if new information comes to light or if there has been a change in DSE operations or equipment. The assessment should also be reviewed if a reportable injury occurs or when individual employees suffer an illness, injury or the

onset of disability which may make them more vulnerable to risk. As a minimum requirement, all QMUL DSE 'on-line training and risk assessments 'should be reviewed at least every three years.

The HSD will monitor the effectiveness policy implementation at QMUL by means of inspections, auditing the study of reported incidents and by consultation with Occupational Health regarding the number of work-related occupational health referrals.

## **11.0 References**

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (amended 2002).

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1992/2792/contents/made>

Working with Display Screen Equipment

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l26.htm>

HSE - Brief guide to Working with Display Screen Equipment

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>

## Appendix 1 – Display Screen Equipment Checklist.

### CHECKLIST - Display Screen Equipment (DSE) User Workstation

<b>DSE workstation location (room, building, campus):</b>	
<b>DSE User Name:</b>	
<b>Checklist completed by (Name):</b>	
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	<u>    /    /20</u>
<b>Action needed?</b>	<u>Yes / No</u>
<b>Follow-up action completed on:</b>	<u>    /    /20</u>

This checklist can be used as an aid to risk assessment and to help comply with the Schedule to the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations.

Work through the checklist, ticking either the 'yes' or 'no' column against each risk factor:


- ◆ 'Yes' answers require no further action.
- ◆ 'No' answers will require investigation and/or remedial action by the workstation assessor. They should record their decisions in the 'Action to take' column. Assessors should check later that actions have been taken and have resolved the problem.



Remember the checklist only covers the workstation and work environment. You also need to make sure that risks from other aspects of the work are avoided, for example by giving user's health and safety training, and providing for breaks or changes of activity. Advice on these is given in the main text of the guidance.

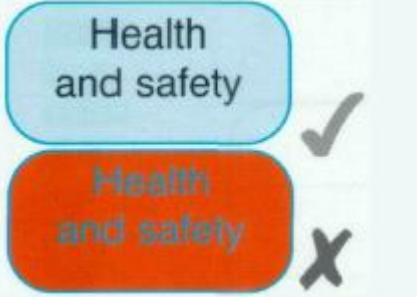

The questions and images in this document are taken from the HSE publication "Work with Display Screen Equipment" numbered L26 edition dated 2003 ISBN 0-7176-2582-6

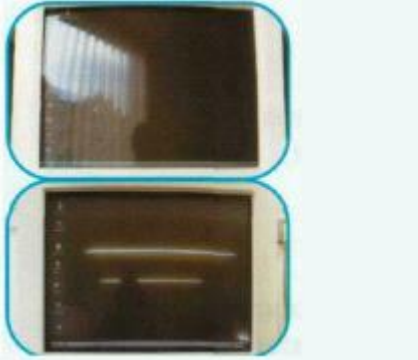

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l26.pdf> .

RISK FACTORS	Tick answer		THINGS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO TAKE
	Yes	No		
<b>Furniture</b>				
Is the chair suitable? Is the chair stable? Does the chair have a working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ seat back height and tilt adjustment?</li> <li>◆ seat height adjustment?</li> <li>◆ swivel mechanism?</li> <li>◆ castors or glides?</li> </ul>			The chair may need repairing or replacing if the user is uncomfortable, or cannot use the adjustment mechanisms.	
Is the chair adjusted correctly?			The user should be able to carry out their work sitting comfortably. Consider training the user in how to adopt suitable postures while working. The arms of chairs can stop the user getting close enough to use the equipment comfortably. Move any obstructions from under the desk.	
Is the small of the back supported by the chair's backrest?			The user should have a straight back, supported by the chair, with relaxed shoulders.	
Are feet flat on the floor, without too much pressure from the seat on the backs of the legs?			If not, a foot rest may be needed.	

RISK FACTORS	Tick answer		THINGS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO TAKE
	Yes	No		
When seated at the desk, are forearms horizontal and eyes at roughly the same height as the top of the screen?			Without adjusting the chair height excessively get the user's arms in the right position. If the work surface is too high for the user provide suitable foot rests and then re-adjust the chair height appropriately. If the work surface is too low it may need to be raised to a suitable height. This can be done by using suitable blocks under the surface. Adjust the screen height, as necessary.	
Is the work surface large enough for all the necessary equipment, papers etc? 			Create more room by moving printers, reference materials etc elsewhere. If necessary, consider providing new power and telecoms sockets, so equipment can be moved. There should be some scope for flexible rearrangement.	
Can the user comfortably reach all the equipment and papers they need to use?			Rearrange equipment, papers etc to bring frequently used things within easy reach. A document holder may be needed, positioned to minimise uncomfortable head and eye movements.	
Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?			Consider mats or blotters to reduce reflections and glare.	
<b>Keyboards</b>				
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?			This is a requirement, unless the task makes it impracticable (e.g. where there is a need to use a portable).	
Does the keyboard tilt?			Tilt need not be built in.	

RISK FACTORS	Tick answer		THINGS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO TAKE
	Yes	No		
<p>Is it possible to find a comfortable keying position?</p> 			<p>Try pushing the display screen further back to create more room for the keyboard, hands and wrists.</p> <p>Users of thick, raised keyboards may need a wrist rest.</p>	
<p>Does the user have good keyboard technique?</p>			<p>Training can be used to prevent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ hands bent up at wrist;</li> <li>◆ hitting the keys too hard;</li> <li>◆ overstretching the fingers.</li> </ul>	
<p>Are the characters on the keys easily readable?</p>			<p>Keyboards should be kept clean. If characters still can't be read, the keyboard may need modifying or replacing.</p> <p>Use a keyboard with a matt finish to reduce glare and/or reflection.</p>	
<b>Mouse, trackball etc</b>				
<p>Is the device suitable for the tasks it is used for?</p>			<p>If the user is having problems, try a different device. The mouse and trackball are general purpose devices suitable for many tasks, and available in a variety of shapes and sizes. Alternative devices such as touchscreens may be better for some tasks (but can be worse for others).</p>	
<p>Is the device positioned close to the user?</p> 			<p>Most devices are best placed as close as possible, e.g. right beside the keyboard.</p> <p>Training may be needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ prevent arm overreaching;</li> <li>◆ tell users not to leave their hand on the device when it is not being used;</li> <li>◆ encourage a relaxed arm and straight wrist.</li> </ul>	

RISK FACTORS	Tick answer		THINGS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO TAKE
	Yes	No		
Is there support for the device user's wrist and forearm?			Support can be gained from, for example, the desk surface or arm of a chair. If not, a separate supporting device may help. The user should be able to find a comfortable working position with the device.	
Does the device work smoothly at a speed that suits the user?			See if cleaning is required (e.g. of mouse ball and rollers). Check the work surface is suitable. A mouse mat may be needed.	
Can the user easily adjust software settings for speed and accuracy of pointer?			Users may need training in how to adjust device settings.	
<b>Display screens</b>				
Are the characters clear and readable? 			Make sure the screen is clean and cleaning materials are made available Check that text and background colours work well together	
Is the text size comfortable to read?			Software settings may need adjusting to change text size	
Is the image stable, i.e. free of flicker and jitter?			Try using different screen colours to reduce flicker, eg darker background and lighter text If problems still exist, get the set-up checked, eg by the equipment supplier	
Is the screen's specification suitable for its intended use?			For example intensive graphic work or work requiring fine attention to small details may require large display screens	
Are the brightness and/or contrast adjustable?			Separate adjustment controls are not essential, provided the user can read the screen easily at all times	
Does the screen swivel and tilt? 			Swivel and tilt need not be built in, you can add a swivel and tilt mechanism However, you may need to replace the screen if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ swivel/tilt is absent or unsatisfactory,</li> <li>◆ work is intensive and/or</li> <li>◆ the user has problems getting the screen to a comfortable position</li> </ul>	

RISK FACTORS	Tick answer		THINGS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO TAKE
	Yes	No		
<p>Is the screen free from glare and reflections?</p> 			<p>Use a mirror placed in front of the screen to check where reflections are coming from</p> <p>You might need to move the screen or even the desk and/or shield the screen from the source of reflections</p> <p>Screens that use dark characters on a light background are less prone to glare and reflections</p>	
<p>Are adjustable window coverings provided and in adequate condition?</p>			<p>Check that blinds work Blinds with vertical slats can be more suitable than horizontal ones</p> <p>If these measures do not work, consider anti-glare screen filters as a last resort and seek specialist help</p>	
<b>Software</b>				
<p>Is the software suitable for the task?</p>			<p>Software should help the user carry out the task, minimise stress and be user-friendly.</p> <p>Check users have had appropriate training in using the software.</p> <p>Software should respond quickly and clearly to user input, with adequate feedback, such as clear help messages.</p>	
<b>Environment</b>				
<p>Is there enough room to change position and vary movement?</p>			<p>Space is needed to move, stretch and fidget.</p> <p>Consider reorganising the office layout and check for obstructions.</p> <p>Cables should be tidy and not a trip or snag hazard</p>	
<p>Is the lighting suitable, e.g. not too bright or too dim to work comfortably?</p> 			<p>Users should be able to control light levels, e.g. by adjusting window blinds or light switches.</p> <p>Consider shading or repositioning light sources or providing local lighting, e.g. desk lamps (but make sure lights don't cause glare by reflecting off walls or other surfaces).</p>	
<p>Does the air feel comfortable?</p>			<p>DSE and other equipment may dry the air.</p> <p>Circulate fresh air if possible.</p> <p>Plants may help.</p> <p>Consider a humidifier if discomfort is severe.</p>	

RISK FACTORS	Tick answer		THINGS TO CONSIDER	ACTION TO TAKE
	Yes	No		
Are levels of heat comfortable?			Can heating be better controlled? More ventilation or air-conditioning may be required if there is a lot of electronic equipment in the room. Or, can users be moved away from the heat source?	
Are levels of noise comfortable?			Consider moving sources of noise, e.g. printers, away from the user. If not, consider soundproofing.	
<b>Final questions to users...</b>				
Ask if the checklist has covered all the problems they may have working with their DSE.				
Ask if they have experienced any discomfort or other symptoms which they attribute to working with their DSE				
Ask if the user has been advised of their entitlement to eye and eyesight testing ( <b>section 7.2</b> )				
Ask if the user takes regular breaks working away from DSE.				
Write the details of any problems here:				

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT (Recommendations To User)**

<b>Short Term (2 months from the date report given to contact person - see front sheet)</b>	Date Action undertaken:	
	By Whom:	
	Signature:	
<b>Medium Term (8 months from the date report given to contact person – see front sheet)</b>	Date Action undertaken:	
	By Whom:	
	Signature:	
<b>Long Term (1 year from the date report given to contact person – see front sheet)</b>	Date Action undertaken:	
	By Whom:	
	Signature:	

**IF YOU HAVE ANY SYMPTOMS WHICH ARE NOT ALLEVIATED WITH THESE MEASURES, REPORT THESE TO YOUR ASSESSOR/MANAGER WHO WILL ARRANGE FOR A REFERRAL TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (SELF REFERRALS CAN ALSO BE MADE)**

This is to certify that the initial assessment took place on .....(date)

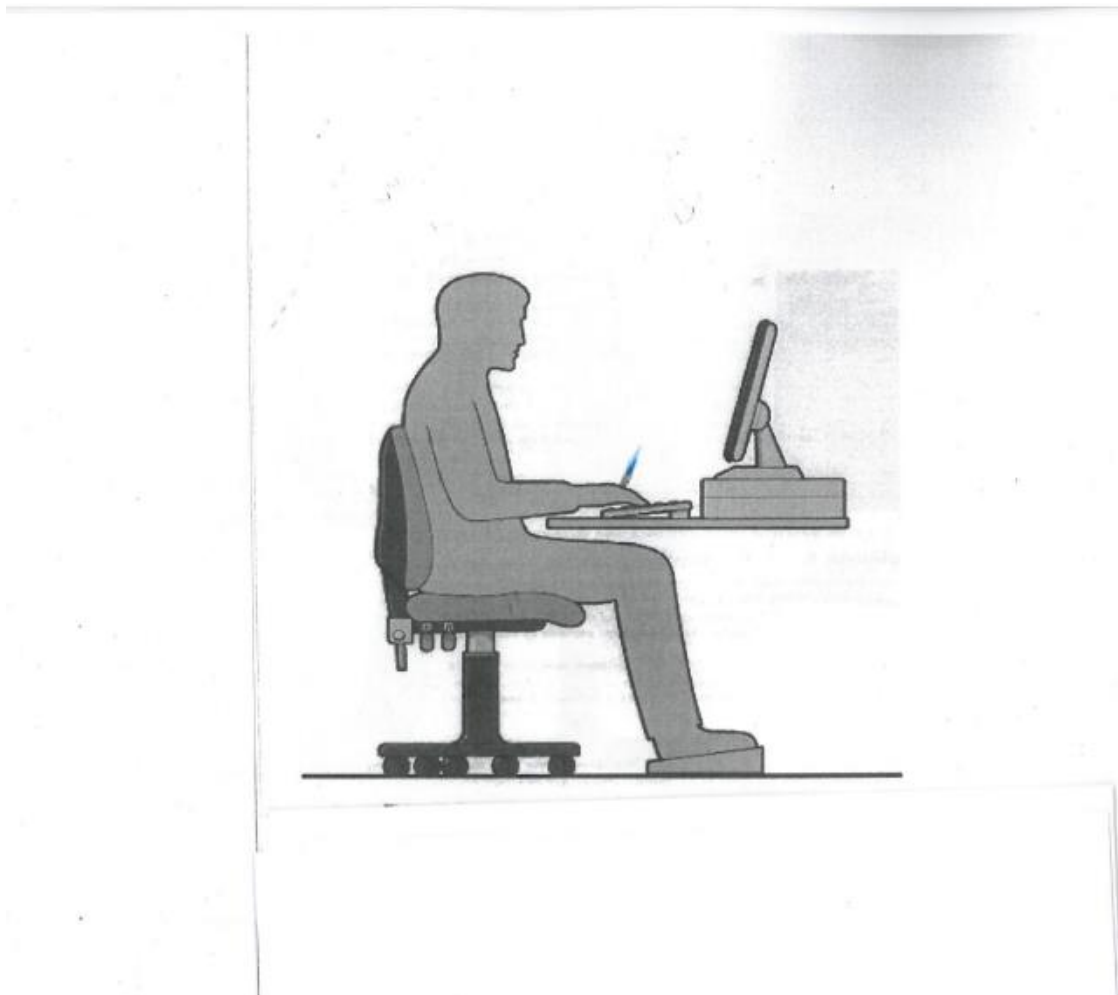
User: ..... (Signature)

Manager or Assessor: ..... (Signature)



## Appendix 2 – Guidance on Requirements – Ideal Seated Position for DSE Workstations

The image in this document are taken from the HSE publication “Work with Display Screen Equipment” numbered L26 edition dated 2003, ISBN 0-7176-2582-6.



- Seat back adjustable,
- Good lumbar support,
- Seat height adjustable,
- No excess pressure on underside of thighs and backs of knees,
- Foot support (if needed),
- Space for postural change, no obstacles under desk,
- Forearms approximately horizontal,
- Wrists not excessively bent,
- Screen height and angle to allow comfortable head position,
- Space in front of key board to support hands/wrists during pauses in keying,

### **Appendix 3 – Guidance on Requirements - New Equipment for DSE Workstations**

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) guidance document on the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (L2 – Appendix 1) state that standards will provide specifications for new equipment, they may also be used as a yardstick for assessing the suitability of existing installations. The guidance notes go further by stating that workstations, which comply with the appropriate standards cited in the guidance, would meet, and in most cases exceed the relevant requirements of the Display Screen Regulations.

The standards mentioned in the HSE's guidance document refer to International (ISO), European (CEN: Comite de European Normalisation) and British (BS) standards. Ultimately, all of the national standards within the European Community will be harmonised under European Standards. European Standards for the workstations and the related equipment have been steadily developed and have been replacing the national standards. Most of the standards concerning the furniture have harmonised under the European standards. Where there are no European Standards available manufacturers will be expected to comply with the existing national and international standards. The main standard developed is BS EN ISO 9241, which has 17 parts. These cover all aspects of visual display screen work including computer equipment, furniture, task, environment, layout, and software. Although this CEN/ISO standard is not directly linked to the directive, one of its main aims is to set minimum health, safety and comfort levels for users.

For furniture manufacturers and suppliers, the two most relevant parts of the BS EN ISO 9241 (Ergonomic requirements for office work with visual display terminals) are Part 5; 1999 (Workstation layout and postural requirements) and Part 6; 2000 (Guidance on the work environment). Part 5 provides criteria for assessing the appropriateness of seating and work surfaces. As this standard is not a product standard actual dimensional requirements and safety requirements can be found in product standards, which are summarised below. In order to ensure that desks and chairs are safe for the users they should comply with the following standards.

#### **Standards applicable to desking**

BS EN 527 Part1 Dimensions

BS 5459 Part 1 Strength and Stability

or BS 4875 Part 5 Strength and Stability and BS 6396 Cable Management

BS 3962 Part 1 Gloss Measurement

#### **Standards applicable to chairs**

BS EN 1335 Part 1 Dimensions

BS 5459 Part 2 Strength and Stability for 24-hour use for people weighing up to 150kgs

or BS EN 1335 Parts 2 & 3 Strength and stability for 8-hour use by people weighing up to 110kgs

### **Minimum requirements for furniture**

There are still a number of misunderstandings regarding the sizes and adjustability of desks and chairs to be used at DSE workstations. As a result of a clarification from the EC Directorate General and using the latest appropriate standards (BS EN ISO 9241-5, BS EN 1335-1 BS EN 527-1) these should have been eliminated. So, as far as the minimum requirements of the regulations are concerned, the minimum dimensional and general requirements for DSE desks and chairs can be summarised as follows:

#### **Minimum requirements for rectangular desks**

- Height 720 mm; (680 – 760 mm if adjustable).
- Depth 800 mm
- Length 1200 mm; (1600 mm preferred).
- The desk does not have to be a rectangular shape, it can be any shape provided that the surface area is adequate for the task and the equipment and it is not less than 0.96 square meters.
- Sufficient legroom underneath (specified in BS EN 527-1 and BS EN ISO 9241-5).
- If the desks/work surfaces are to be used for tasks where people can alternate between sitting and standing, the minimum height adjustment range should be 660 to 1200mm (preferred range is 600 to 1300mm). The height adjustment range for standing only work surfaces should be at least between 900 and 1200mm.

#### **Minimum requirements for chairs**

- 'Independent height and tilt adjustment of backrest is not a requirement'. Primary requirement is that is that user should be able to achieve a comfortable position.
- Seat should adjust in height.
- Backrest should adjust in height and tilt.
- 5 star base with castors.

However, it should be remembered that these are only minimum requirements provided in guidance.

#### **When furniture is adjustable, furniture manufacturers and purchasers should be aware of and take into account the following requirement**

Adjustment controls should not operate inadvertently / accidentally and pose additional risks. Users should be able to operate controls without exerting excessive forces

## Appendix 4 – DSE Workstation Checklist for Hot-Desking

<b>Institute / School / Directorate</b>	
<b>Workstation location and I.D. number (if applicable)</b>	
<b>User / Operative:</b>	
<b>Checklist completed by:</b>	
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	
<b>Any further action needed? Please summarise details</b>	
<b>Follow-up action completed on:</b>	
Please ensure that you follow the guidance below and make the necessary adjustments every time you start work at a DSE workstation.	

<b>Risk factor</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Things to consider</b>	<b>Action to take</b>
1. Is the chair height, seat tilt and back rest adjustable?			Adjust the chair as necessary. The following adjustments can be made: Seat height, seat tilt and back rest. Remember that your feet should be flat on the floor or a footrest, upper arms hanging vertically and forearms horizontal. Support your back with the backrest adjusted to a comfortable position.	
2. Is the top of the screen at approximately eye level?			If this means that your feet do not reach the floor then a foot rest will be necessary.	
3. Is the mouse and keyboard within reach without stretching?			Arrange the mouse and keyboard in a comfortable keying position.	

			Ensure there is no glare on the screen. If necessary close or reposition the window blind.	
4. Are you taking regular short breaks from the screen?			Remember to take regular short breaks from looking at the screen. Look away to distance, stand up and stretch etc.	
Further Comments:				

## Document Control

### Version 2

Author:	Bill Gabriel
Position:	Health and Safety Manager (HSS) and H&S Audit Lead
Approved by:	Zarah Laing
Position:	Director of Health and Safety
Signature:	
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Version 1 (QM/H&S/0087 & 88)	01/01/2005	Initial Version (Author – Dr John Robinson, Director of H&S)	-
Version 2	13/06/2016	Detailed Review and update of Policy and Guidance; definition of DSE Users / Operators; QMUL Staff eligibility; checklists improvements; standards and operational procedures updated	Bill Gabriel (H&S Manager)
Version 3	30/04/2019	Eyesight test and DSE spectacles eligibility clarification; web links update	Mark Ariyanayagam (H&S Manager)
Version 4	27/08/2020	Eye care scheme clarifications – link to new request form. Reference to PPE policy for safety spectacles.	Megan Vagg (H&S Adviser)