

# DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT POLICY

Next Gen  
Support  
Services

**Approved by:** Omar Salahuddin **Date:** 08/08/25

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION, REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) are made under the Health and Safety at Work Act and place a legal requirement on employers to assess computer workstations and control the risks to health arising out of their use.

### The regulations cover ‘Display Screen Equipment’ (DSE)

DSE equipment are devices that have a display screen and includes laptops, touch screens and other similar devices.

### Health problems associated with DSE

- Upper limb disorders including pains in the neck, arms, elbows, wrists, hands or fingers – See appendix 2
- Backache
- Fatigue and stress
- Temporary eye strain (but not eye damage) and headaches

These problems can also be experienced from poorly designed workstations or work environments.

### The display screen regulations require employers to:

- Decide who is covered by the regulations (Users and Operators)
- Train users and assessors
- Analyse workstations to assess and reduce risks
- Provide eye tests on request and special spectacles if needed
- Provide information and training.

## 1.1 DEFINITION OF A DISPLAY SCREEN USER AND WORKSTATION

### Display screen users are defined as:

those who use DSE more or less continuously on most days

or

- a) normally use DSE for continuous or near continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; and
- b) use DSE in this way more or less daily; and
- c) have to transfer information quickly to or from the DSE; and also
- d) needs to apply high levels of attention and concentration or are highly dependent on DSE  
or have little choice about using it or need special training or skills to use the DSE.

All of the above applies to part time, agency or temporary staff, volunteers and agile workers.

The decision to designate a person as a user rests with the person's line manager and, if necessary, advice should be taken from the Health and Safety Team.

**Display Screen Operators** – are other employers' employees for example temporary or agency workers and the self-employed who use equipment supplied by NEXT GEN SUPPORT SERVICES.

### **Definition of a Workstation**

The workstation, as defined, is the assembly including the screen, keyboard, other parts of the computer and its accessories (such as the mouse or other input device), the desk, chair and the immediate work environment.

## **1.2 TRAINING AND INFORMATION**

There is a legal requirement to train workstation users. All new employees should complete mandatory health and safety induction e-learning which includes 'Using a Workstation'. Existing employees that have not completed this can access this at any time and should be encouraged to do so.

Schools are responsible for training their users of DSE. Employees should be given a copy of Appendix 1 and encouraged to follow the guidance. Displaying posters relating to posture and adjusting chairs is a helpful reminder. You can find suitable posters to display or send to users by clicking the following link from Posturite:

<https://www.posturite.co.uk/help-advice/learning-resources/pdf-downloads>

Annual reminders should be delivered preferably at the start of the school year. The Health and Safety Team can provide bespoke training on-site on request.

## **1.3 ASSESSMENT OF DSE USERS**

Display screen assessments are carried out by completing the HSE self-assessment checklist: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf>

This must be carried out:

- on appointment as a user or operator
- if a person becomes a user
- following a significant change to the workstation, work or software
- if the user uses another workstation regularly that he/she considers, is not set up correctly or is causing discomfort

More than one assessment may be needed if the user is also an Agile Worker.

On completion, the user should make any adjustments possible and discuss any remaining issues with their line manager. The user's line manager will agree any action to be taken with the user to include the provision of equipment such as an alternative mouse, keyboard or screen, a footrest or adjustable chair of desk. This would also include equipment for agile workers such as lightweight laptops, laptop risers, suitable wheeled bags or rucksacks and mobile phones. Shortcomings identified by the assessment must be rectified as soon as reasonably practicable. If there is a delay in resolving a problem, which may lead to adverse effects on health, then suitable temporary measures must be taken.

If all possible actions have been implemented and the user is suffering from fatigue or pain, the line manager or user should contact the Health and Safety Team to arrange for an individual assessment to be undertaken. Contact via e-mail to: [info@newdawnschool.co.uk](mailto:info@newdawnschool.co.uk).

Please note that this would not include an assessment of a person's home unless it is their primary designated place of work. If the employee has chosen to work from home but has difficulty with their home set-up which cannot be resolved, a workstation in a NEXT GEN SUPPORT SERVICES premises should be made available.

### **Re-Assessment**

A re-assessment must be carried out:

- If the individual experiences any health problems associated with use of DSE
- When changes are made to the equipment, furniture, work environment or software.
- If the tasks change for example longer periods spent using the equipment or changes in software which may require extra training.
- If the employee becomes pregnant.

## **1.4 AGILE WORKING AND HOMEWORKING**

An agile worker could work from a NEXT GEN SUPPORT SERVICES office or hot desk, from home, in a public place such as a café, on public transport or from their car. Refer to guidelines for employees and managers on the Intranet, A – Z, Agile Working and Hotdesking,

NEXT GEN SUPPORT SERVICES employees who work from home must read the guidance and complete the self-assessment. If the employee is a designated homeworker i.e. this is their main place of work then NEXT GEN SUPPORT SERVICES will provide equipment as necessary. If the employee chooses to work from home but is not able to work comfortably within the DSE guidelines or is suffering from pain or ill health as a result of working from home, then there must be an office workstation available to use. However it is good practice to provide small items of equipment such as laptop riser, mouse and separate keyboard to alleviate problems if possible when it suits the employee for work/life balance and their job role to work from home.

**Please note that it is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that all items of equipment meet the relevant standards.**

## **1.5 EYE TESTS**

Employees designated as DSE users are entitled to payment for regular eye tests at a frequency advised by their optician. The user should organise the eye test themselves in conjunction with line managers.

Next Gen Alternative will pay up to £20 toward the cost of each eye test for DSE users whether or not they require glasses as a result.

A copy of the eye test form is given in Appendix 3.

## **1.6 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR INSTALLATION OF IT EQUIPMENT**

In the majority of cases where office type computer equipment is involved, Technology Services, the provisions ICT Team or a nominated contractor will carry out the initial installation.

Ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of an office or building lies with the owning Service Area, or Facilities in the case of centrally managed offices. This responsibility is delegated to the relevant manager. Head of Services are responsible for IT equipment and safe installation in schools.

When IT equipment is planned to be installed or modified the Manager/Head of Service responsible must refer to Appendix 4, Installation Guidance and Workstation Standards before installing IT equipment. It may be necessary at this point to modify plans or arrange for extra work such as installation of additional electrical sockets.

For advice on installations or to request IT equipment, contact the provisions ICT Team.

## **2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **2.1 MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- When arranging for new equipment or re-siting of existing equipment ensure that reference is made to Appendix 4 and plan the installation. If appropriate liaise with Technology Services, Facilities or the Schools ICT Team.
- Ensure all workstations including those used for hot desking (except those used by non-employees) comply with the minimum standards. Refer to section 1.6 above.
- Decide who is a DSE user.
- Ensure users complete training and carry out a DSE assessment.
- Act upon any recommendations arising from the user/workstation assessments. This may entail for example, the purchase of alternative equipment, re-locating furniture or the user, contacting HR or your own line manager.
- Ensure that users have sufficient variety of tasks or take regular breaks to reduce the intensity of DSE work to a reasonable level.
- Investigate any complaints of ill health by users.
- Ensure that employees have received sufficient training in the use of the software they are using.
- Encourage employees to keep their workstations correctly adjusted, clean, tidy and to abide by agile working/hotdesking guidelines.
- Provide relevant equipment including, where appropriate, a suitable wheeled bag or rucksack for agile workers.

- Ensure that users receive recompense for eye tests/spectacles as required.

## **2.2 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- If you are a designated user, complete training (this may be simply reading the guidance in Appendix 1) and carry out self-assessment using the HSE, DSE Checklist: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.pdf> and discuss any issues that you cannot resolve yourself, with your line manager.
- Report any health problems which may be caused or made worse with use of or changes with DSE to your line manager who will arrange for a further assessment. Inform your manager if you become pregnant.
- Report any IT software or hardware defects to your manager, or ICT Support as appropriate.
- Ensure you have had the necessary training on the software you use
- Take regular breaks away from the workstation
- Have your eyes tested regularly by an optician (remember to print the Eye Test form in Appendix 3 below)
- Keep your workstation clean, tidy and well laid out as recommended in training or the guidance below
- Abide by hotdesking/agile working guidelines with regards to packing up and leaving the area suitable for another user
- Learn how to adjust your chair and report any defect or problems to your line manager, or Head of Service
- If you are an agile worker, ensure you have a suitable wheeled bag or rucksack and other relevant equipment such as a mobile phone

**See Appendix 1 for guidance on the above**

## **3. 0 FURTHER INFORMATION**

Guidance and regulations can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf> which includes easy guides for managers to make sure offices comply with the regulations and for users working with VDUs.

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures, Section 6.2, Office Safety.

BS EN ISO 9241-5:1999 - Ergonomic requirements for office work with visual display terminals (VDTs). Workstation layout and postural requirements.

## **GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES**

This guide has been produced for you if you are a display screen equipment (DSE) user, see policy for definition. Other more intermittent users may also find the information helpful. It is intended to ensure that you are able to use a display screen safely and without risks to your health, see Appendix 2.

### **Responsibilities**

Ensure you are aware of your responsibilities by reading Employee Responsibilities section 2.2 above.

### **Getting Comfortable**

- Forearms should be approximately horizontal and your eyes should be the same height as the top of the screen.
- Make sure there is enough work space to accommodate all documents or other equipment. A document holder may help avoid awkward neck and eye movements.
- Arrange the desk and screen to avoid glare, or bright reflections. This is often easiest if the screen is not directly facing windows or bright lights.
- Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent intrusive light.
- Make sure there is space under the desk to move legs.
- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of seats on the backs of legs and knees. A footrest may be helpful, particularly for smaller users.

### **Chairs**

- Make yourself familiar with the operation of your particular chair. (A good chair with arms will have at least 8 adjustment features, see Appendix 4 below).
- Ensure that your chair is adjusted to suit your particular needs.
- Report to your line manager if you are unable to adjust the chair to suit your needs or the chair is defective in any way.

Chairs have a maximum user weight of between 18 and 23 stone, any user exceeding 18 stone must check with the supplier the maximum weight of the particular chair they wish to use/order.

### **Workstation Layout**

#### *Keyboards and keying in (typing)*

- A space in front of the keyboard can help you rest your hands and wrists when not keying.
- Try to keep wrists straight when keying.
- Good keyboard technique is important – you can do this by keeping a soft touch on the keys and not overstretching the fingers.

#### *Using a mouse*

- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with a straight wrist.
- Sit upright and close to the desk to reduce working with the mouse arm stretched.
- Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support the forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.

### *Reading the screen*

- Make sure individual characters on the screen are sharp, in focus and don't flicker or move. If they do, the DSE may need servicing or adjustment.
- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.
- When setting up software, choose text that is large enough to read easily on screen when sitting in a normal comfortable working position.
- Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice versa).

### **Changes in activity**

Breaking up long spells of DSE work helps prevent fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache.

- Regularly stretch and change position.
- Look into the distance from time to time, and blink often.
- Change activity before you get tired, rather than to recover.
- Short, frequent breaks are better than longer, infrequent ones.

### **Laptop computers**

These same controls will also reduce the DSE risks associated with portable computers. However, the following may also help reduce manual handling, fatigue and postural problems:

- Use a rucksack or wheeled bag if you have to carry heavy equipment and papers..
- Whenever possible, use a docking station with a separate screen, keyboard and mouse or a laptop riser with a full-sized keyboard and mouse.
- More changes in activity may be needed if the user cannot minimise the risks of prolonged use and awkward postures to suitable levels.
- Avoid using mobile devices such as tablets for long periods of time. The degree and intensity of use may vary so your line manager should assess the risks and take steps to reduce residual risks.





## **WORK RELATED UPPER LIMB DISORDERS**

There is no rigid definition of Work-Related Upper Limb Disorders (WRULDs) but the term encompasses conditions that have certain characteristics. The term is normally used to describe such conditions as:

- disorders of muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage or the spinal column;
- conditions that are not caused by a single, instantaneous or acute incident but are the result of longer term or chronic exposure to a causal event;
- disorders which can range in severity from mild or occasional discomfort to severe, continuous and potentially disabling conditions;
- conditions which may display several distinct features such as carpal tunnel syndrome which manifests as discomfort throughout the hand, arm and shoulder;
- conditions that are defined by a specific body location such as lower back pain.

Common examples of WRULDs associated with the use of DSE including laptops and other portable devices include the following specific conditions:

### **De Quervain Syndrome**

This is a form of repetitive strain injury (RSI) caused by the frequent use of the thumbs when using smartphones, or other mobile devices. The condition is associated with the tendons connected to the thumb through the wrist. Symptoms include aching and throbbing pain in the thumb and wrist. In severe cases, it can lead to temporary disability of the affected hand, particularly when gripping objects.

### **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

This can result from repeated hand or finger movements when the wrist is bent such as using a touch screen device angled up on a flat surface such as a desk. The tendons that transmit motion from the fingers through the wrist to the arms pass through the carpal ligament or 'tunnel', along with the median nerve. If the wrist is flexed while repeated hand or finger movements are made, friction at the carpal tunnel will lead to inflammation and pain.

### **Tenosynovitis**

This is inflammation of the fluid filled sheath (synovium) which surrounds the tendons and can result from friction between the tendon and the sheath. This can be caused by repetitive motion when the joint is flexed. In the hand, this can cause the finger to stick in a flexed position; this is known as stenosing tenosynovitis or "trigger finger".

### **Tendonitis**

This is inflammation of the tendon itself caused by overuse or injury. It can affect tendons in the shoulder, elbow, wrist, finger, knee or heel and causes severe pain in the affected areas. In the case of those tendons that are enclosed in a synovium, both tendonitis and

tenosynovitis can occur at the same time. Tendonitis is not confined to work-related causes but can result from other activities such as sport.

### **Epicondylitis**

This condition, more commonly known as 'tennis elbow', 'golfers elbow' and more recently 'iPad elbow', is caused by over use of the muscles in the lower arm which are attached to the elbow. These muscles, the wrist extensors, allow the hand to be pulled backward. Symptoms include the outer part of the elbow being painful and tender to the touch and lifting movements being painful.

### **Lower back pain**

This is experienced as pain between the bottom of the rib cage and the top of the legs. Lower back pain results from damage to the vertebrae, nerves, muscles, ligaments and discs in the L1 – L5 lumbar region of the spine. The lower back supports the whole weight of the upper body and any additional load which may be carried.

The lower back is under constant pressure but additional stress will be created through actions such as bending, twisting or lifting. Activities which can result in lower back pain include:

- bending awkwardly
- manual handling of loads
- poor posture when seated
- over stretching
- poor driving posture
- driving with insufficient breaks

## EYESIGHT TEST FORM FOR DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) USERS

### Statement by the line manager

The person named below \* is a "DSE user" as defined by the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (amended 2002).

Your Name	Signature
Your Job Title	Date

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### To the Optician

#### Eyesight Test

Please carry out an eyesight test on ..... This person is defined as a user under the above regulations. Will you then complete the section below stating whether or not spectacles are required specifically for work with display screen equipment? Also type of lens prescribed.

It would also be helpful if you would indicate the required frequency of repeat testing. This is in accordance with the British College of Optometrists statement of good practice on work with Display Screen Equipment.

As a suitably qualified person, I certify that .....

Requires/Does not require spectacles to correct vision defects at the viewing distances used specifically for her/his display screen work. If required, these spectacles are not for general use.

Please specify lens type prescribed: Single Vision / Varifocal / Bifocal

The necessary frequency of repeat testing is .....

Company Name	Name of Examining Optician
Date	Signature

### To the employee

Next Gen Alternative Provision undertakes to pay £20 towards the cost of your eyesight test.

**Claims should be made through normal expenses claims procedure. A receipt will be required before any payment can be made.**

## **INSTALLATION GUIDANCE AND WORKSTATION STANDARDS**

### **Introduction**

Overall responsibility for health and safety of provision. When computer, network or telephone equipment is installed or relocated, there are a number of electrical and physical health and safety issues, which must be considered.

### **Health and Safety Checklist**

The following list gives a number of possible reasons for declaring an installation unsafe on health and safety grounds. This list is not exhaustive. Staff must be prepared to use their judgement in determining the safety of an installation.

#### **Low Risk**

- Excessive light reflections on computer screens indicate incorrect positioning or inappropriate lighting.
- Insufficient space for the equipment to be laid out properly.
- Uneven, unstable, unsecure or sloping surface.
- Excessive cable lengths (may not be unsafe but may be cause for other concerns such as breach of network specification).

#### **Medium or High Risk**

- Equipment located in a dangerous position (e.g. behind doors).
- Insufficient electrical points (wall sockets may be extended by the use of extension leads with multiple sockets, but extension leads must not be plugged into extension leads. Multi-way mains adapters which plug directly into wall sockets are not permitted).
- Equipment sharing electrical sockets with auto-switching equipment such as fridges and kettles.
- Cables of any type crossing gangways (unless covered by cable protectors).
- Cables that project from the back of equipment into a gangway (unless cables are kept under control by cable ties or other means).
- Ventilation grills on equipment blocked or obstructed.
- The ventilation grills of laser printers directly adjacent to someone's seat.
- Equipment stood on carpets as this can introduce static electrical charge.
- Equipment positioned adjacent to water sources (sinks, taps, boiling kettles) or heat sources (radiators).
- Printers or photocopiers in close proximity to workstations.

#### **Minimum Standards for Workstation Layout (as required by DSE Regulations)**

- Adequate lighting
- Adequate contrast, no glare or distracting reflections
- Distracting noise minimised
- Legroom and clearances to allow postural changes
- Window covering, if needed to minimize glare

- Software: Appropriate to task, adapted to user, provides feedback on system status, no undisclosed monitoring
- Screen: Stable image, adjustable, readable, glare/reflection free
- Keyboard: Useable, adjustable, detachable and legible
- Work surface: With space for flexible arrangement of equipment and documents; glare free
- Chair: Stable and adjustable
- Footrest available if the user needs one

### Seating and Posture Considerations

- Seat back adjustable
- Good lumbar support
- Seat height and depth adjustable
- No excess pressure on underside of thighs and backs of knees
- Foot support available if needed
- Arm rests should not prevent the user getting close enough to the desk
- Space for postural change, no obstacles under desk
- Screen distance, height and angle should allow comfortable head position
- Space in front of keyboard to support hands/wrists during pauses in keying

Although chairs are highly adjustable these days, one size doesn't fit all. If the user is particularly short, tall or over approximately 18 - 23 stone they will need a chair to suit their shape and stature.

### Definition of Chair Terms

- **Back rake** - forward and rearward movement of the backrest.
- **Back ratchet** – height adjustment mechanism of the backrest.
- **Castors** - rotating mechanisms using twin wheels to enable chairs to be easily moved across carpeted floors.
- **Five star base** – the 5 pronged base unit with castors or glides that ensures the stability of the chair.
- **Foam filling** – must fire retardant and conform to BS 7177:1996. Chairs containing memory foam are available to reduce pressure while sitting.
- **Free float-permanent contact** – a spring-loaded back pad support mechanism, which allows the back to move with the user. For good support, it should be tension-adjustable and lockable.
- **Gas height adjustment** – allows chair to be height adjustable
- **Glide** – a smooth foot fitted to the base of the chair to enable it to slide safely across hard floors.
- **Pump-up support** – enables adjustment of the backrest lumbar support
- **Seat slider** – mechanism that allows the seat to move forward to give a larger seat area.
- **Seat tilt** – a mechanism allowing the seat angle to be tilted back to allow users to sit in a reclined position or (in some cases) forward. It may be lockable in one or more positions.

