

SAFE WORKING PROCEDURE

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY | VERSION 10.07 | NOVEMBER 2023

STATEMENT:

In order to comply with legislation and fulfil statutory responsibility, the Council must make sure that:

- Workstations meet specified minimum requirements set out in the legislation.
- A risk assessment is carried out on all 'users', providing them with information, instruction and training on the hazards and controls associated with working with display screens.
- 'Users' are provided free eye and eyesight tests on request and corrective glasses for DSE use where required or a contribution towards a pair in line with this procedure.

SCOPE:

This Safe Working Procedure (SWP) applies to:

- All managers including head teachers.
- All employees of Southampton City Council.
- All temporary workers.

Version Control

This Safe Working Procedure is issued and managed by Corporate Health and Safety Service.

| Version Number | Date | Amendments |
|------------------|-----------|--|
| Version 1.00 | Jan 1998 | |
| Version 2.00 | Unknown | |
| Version 3.00 | Unknown | |
| Version 4.00 | Unknown | |
| Version 5.00 | Unknown | |
| Version 6.00 | Unknown | |
| Version 7.00 | Dec 2007 | |
| Version 8.00 | June 2010 | |
| Version 9.00 | Jan 2013 | Review |
| Version 10.00 | July 2014 | Review (New e-learning system) |
| Version 10.01 | Jan 2015 | Home and mobile working |
| Version 10.02 | Aug 2015 | New template |
| Version 10.03 | Aug 2016 | Minor amendments |
| Version 10.04 | Aug 2017 | Additional manager responsibility added (1.16) Additional information around mobile devices (section 2.7). Reference to access to work added (3.4.3). Amendments to process flow to include access to work and equipment procurement (appendix 1). |
| Version 10.05 | Dec 2019 | Clarification of manager's responsibility regarding requirement to review DSE Risk Assessments with staff member and DSE Assessor as appropriate. Include information relating to SWoW as appropriate. |
| Version 10.06 | Dec 2021 | Links Updates on new DES and working from home guidelines |
| Version 10.07 | Nov 2023 | Periodic Review |
| Review Conducted | | Next Review Date |
| | Jun 2010 | Jun 2011 |
| | Jan 2013 | Jan 2014 |
| | July 2015 | Jul 2015 |
| | Jan 2015 | Jan 2016 |
| | Aug 2015 | Aug 2016 |
| | Aug 2016 | Aug 2018 |
| | Aug 2017 | Aug 2019 |
| | Dec 2019 | Dec 2021 |
| | Dec 2021 | Dec 2023 |
| | Nov 2023 | Nov 2025 |

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Forms

- Display Screen Equipment Risk Assessment

Find the forms in Forms Library ([SCC intranet](#)) and ([H&S for Schools](#))

1. Responsibilities

Service Managers/Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this SWP and must:

- 1.1. Ensure workstations meet specified minimum requirements as set out in the schedule of requirements in the DSE legislation.
- 1.2. Ensure a DSE Risk Assessment is carried out for all 'users' providing them with information, instruction and training on the hazards and controls associated with working with display screens.
- 1.3. Ensure all 'users' who have identified a detrimental health effect associated with working with a display screens receive appropriate advice.
- 1.4. Ensure 'users' are provided free eyesight tests [on request](#) in-line with Corporate Policy

Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the SWP and must:

- 1.5. Identify workers who are classed as 'DSE users'.
- 1.6. Identify and/or nominate staff to become DSE assessors for their area of responsibility as required.
- 1.7. Organise for nominees to attend DSE Risk Assessor training and refresh periodically to ensure their competence.
- 1.8. Ensure "DSE users" complete on-line DSE e-learning module (or receive suitable alternative training or information as appropriate).
- 1.9. Organise for DSE users to self-complete a DSE Risk Assessment and review completed form with them towards resolving any issues raised.
- 1.10. If necessary, request nominated DSE assessor to carry out a further DSE Risk Assessment, taking into account the workstation, equipment, work activities and environment. Discuss outcome with DSE Assessor and employee towards resolving any issues identified.
- 1.11. Arrange for defective equipment i.e. chairs, screens etc. to be removed and organise for replacement/repair Provide all 'users' with information, instruction and training on the hazards and controls associated with working with display screens (See DSE Microsite – [SCC intranet](#) and [H&S for Schools](#)).
- 1.12. Arrange for all *new employees* to self-complete a DSE Risk Assessment and follow same process as for existing employees.
- 1.13. Sign off the eye test form to authorise the reimbursement of cost (every 2yrs – unless advised otherwise by opticians).
- 1.14. Where a DSE related health concern has been identified, organise for the 'user' to receive appropriate advice e.g. from a DSE assessor and/or arrange for an Occupational Health referral.
- 1.15. Structure work activities to encourage 'users' to take regular breaks from DSE use during the day or changes of activity so as to reduce the risk of fatigue and musculoskeletal disorders.
- 1.16. Where appropriate, if additional specialist equipment is required consult with CHSS (or HR in regard to Access to Work) to ensure suitability.
- 1.17. Retain records of DSE Risk Assessments for minimum 3 years in-line with GDPR.

Employees who have been identified as a 'DSE user' must:

- 1.18. Undertake on-line 'e-learning' or suitable alternative training as identified by manager.
- 1.19. Complete a DSE Risk Assessment (on joining and then annually thereafter or sooner in the event of issues arising or changes occurring).
- 1.20. Discuss completed DSE Risk Assessment with manager towards resolving any issues identified.
Note, all workstations should comply with DSE Regulations, therefore only one DSE Risk Assessment should need to be completed by users, unless workstations they use vary drastically, in which case more than one DSE Risk Assessment may be necessary.
- 1.21. Where recommended by manager, undertake further DSE Risk Assessment with nominated DSE assessor.
- 1.22. Adjust workstation in-line with recommendations provided via training or other information provided.
- 1.23. Organise work activities to incorporate regular breaks away from DSE workstation.
- 1.24. Report any DSE related health concerns to the line manager for further assessment advice.
- 1.25. Use all DSE equipment as trained and instructed and report any defective equipment to the line manager.

- 1.26. Complete the HR eye test form and give to the line manager to sign before booking an appointment to visit optician and follow the procedure identified on the form.

DSE Assessors must:

- 1.27. Attend DSE Assessor training.
- 1.28. Carry out one-to-one DSE Risk Assessment for users as requested by manager and discuss outcomes with DSE user and manager as appropriate towards resolving any issues identified.
- 1.29. Know your level of competence and in particular your limitations; seek advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Service and/or recommend Occupational Health referrals for employees with DSE related health issues through their manager.

Corporate Health and Safety Service must:

- 1.30. Provide training for DSE Assessors.
- 1.31. Provide assistance/advice on this SWP where requested to do so

2. Procedures

The Health and Safety Executive have provided free downloadable guidance to the regulations L26 – [Work with display screen equipment](#). They have also produced a short guide INDG 36 – [Working with VDUs](#) which gives a guide on the Regulations. Managers should use these guides and others detailed below to help inform the workstation minimum standards, the risk assessment process and compliance with legislation.

2.1. Minimum Workstation Standards

- 2.1.1. The work surface of the desk shall be sufficiently large to allow the user a safe and flexible arrangement for display screen, keyboard, telephone, documents and other work items.
- 2.1.2. Further information on the minimum workstation standards can be found on the [DSE Microsite](#).
- 2.1.3. Managers who are redesigning the workplace must comply with SWP Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare, and maintain minimum workstation standards (all Civic Building accommodation moves must be approved by the Accommodation Projects Manager).
- 2.1.4. Designated [Smart Ways of Working \(SwoW\)](#) areas should fully conform to minimum workstation standards.

2.2. Who is a DSE User?

DSE users need to be identified, these are persons whom:

- 2.2.1. Normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; and
- 2.2.2. Use DSE in this way more or less daily; and
- 2.2.3. Have to transfer information quickly to or from the DSE; and
- 2.2.4. Also need to apply high levels of attention concentration; or
- 2.2.5. Are highly dependent on DSE; or
- 2.2.6. Have little choice about using it; or
- 2.2.7. Need special training or skills to use DSE.

Where external agency workers/self-employed persons are employed by the Council on Council business using Council equipment they will be deemed as users, and applicable for a DSE assessment. The Council are not responsible for providing external agency/self-employed staff with eyesight tests.

2.3. Training

- 2.3.1. Every DSE user must receive information, instruction and training on minimising the risks associated with working with display screens. Training can be provided through the e-learning platform, through DSE Assessors and/or relevant guidance, including HSE guidance INDG36 - '[Working with VDUs](#)'. Information should be provided within the first month of employment, recorded and reviewed periodically as per the local agreement and risk assessment.
- 2.3.2. DSE Assessors must attend DSE Assessor training. This is available through Learning and Development.
- 2.3.3. Further information, instruction, training and health issues related to working on DSE can be found on the [DSE Microsite](#).

2.4. DSE Risk Assessments

- 2.4.1. The management process for DSE Risk Assessments is identified in a flow chart (see [Appendix 1](#)).
- 2.4.2. A [DSE Risk Assessment template](#) is available on the corporate health and safety website – forms library.
- 2.4.3. Additional guidance can be found in the HSE Approved Codes of Practice L26 – [Work with Display Screen equipment](#).
- 2.4.4. The results of the DSE Risk Assessment should be recorded together with any remedial action recommended. The records should be held in-line with GDPR and readily available for inspection by appropriate persons/bodies.
- 2.4.5. DSE Risk Assessments should be reviewed:
 - 2.4.5.1. When there have been any significant changes.
 - 2.4.5.2. If the user is permanently relocated.
 - 2.4.5.3. If the user requests it;
 - 2.4.5.4. Periodically, as identified within the Service 'Office Risk Assessment'.

2.5. E-Learning Platform

The Council has procured an e-learning platform currently available on the My Learning tab of the [Learning and Development Website](#). The platform provides an e-learning package for users to follow, it explains to them the hazards associated with DSE and how to manage them, by showing them how to set up their own workstations thus enabling them to make adjustments as they progress through the package. Where e-learning is not available or appropriate, suitable alternative training/information may be provided instead by managers.

2.6. Eyes and Eyesight Checks

- 2.6.1. The regulations allow users the right to claim free eye and eyesight tests from their employer, where corrective appliances (glasses) are required for DSE use only, the employer has to provide free appliances (glasses) or a contribution towards a pair of their choice.
- 2.6.2. Users have to request a test from their line manager first before booking an appointment and ensure the HR eye and eyesight request form is completed.

2.7. Hot Desking and Home/Mobile Working

Please refer to the DSE microsite ([SCC Intranet](#) and [H&S for Schools](#)) on the H&S pages of the intranet for:

- Hot Desking Advice
- Hot Desk Worker Checklist
- Mobile working
- Homeworker Assessment Checklist

- 2.7.1 Mobile working: Portable DSE, including laptops, smartphones, notebook/tablet computers and devices are subject to DSE regulations when in prolonged use. They provide great flexibility but portable DSE carries the same risks as full sized equipment and can have added risk due to the lack of screen/keyboard separation and smaller keys. This can give rise to poor working postures and lead to repetitive strain particularly in the wrist, fingers, neck and shoulders.
- 2.7.2 Laptops: laptops should only be used for periods of up to 2 hours before peripherals are required - although it is recommended that peripherals are used whenever practical. Peripherals include, but are not limited to: separate mouse, keyboard, and laptop riser or separate screen. Where laptop users are identified, managers should supply staff with a mobility bundle to this end if appropriate.
- 2.7.3 Smartphones: Smartphones and similar devices must only ever be used for infrequent, short durations of low intensity work, such as checking an email or minor data entry. Prolonged use should be avoided.
- 2.7.4 Notebooks/Tablets: Notebooks/Tablets should only be used for short durations and low intensity work such as viewing documentation or presentations, and brief data entry tasks. Where more prolonged use or intensity is required, peripherals should be used (as for laptops).
- 2.7.5 Where the above equipment is used all managers must ensure its use is subject to and included in the DSE Risk Assessment.

3. Safe Working Procedures Relevant to This Document

- 3.1. Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
- 3.2. Manual Handling
- 3.3. Driving Vehicles While Working
- 3.4. Other relevant forms
 - 3.4.1 Eye Test Form (HR)
 - 3.4.2 Occupational Health Referral (Occupational Health)
 - 3.4.3 Access to work (HR)

Note: Other safe working procedures may apply and the assessor should consult the SWPs, which are available on the Council's [Health and Safety Intranet](#). For schools, please refer to [Health and Safety for Schools](#).

4. Main Legislation Relevant to This Document

- 4.1. [Health and Safety at Work etc Act](#)
- 4.2. [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations](#)
- 4.3. [Health and Safety \(Display Screen Equipment\) Regulations](#)

5. Contact Addresses and Guidance Links

- 5.1. Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
 - 5.1.1. L26 – [Work with display screen equipment](#)
 - 5.1.2. INDG36 – [Working with VDUs](#)
- 5.2. Corporate Health and Safety Service
[Health and Safety Intranet](#)
[Health and Safety for Schools](#)
 - 5.3.1. [DSE Microsite](#) (SCC intranet)
 - 5.3.2. [DSE Microsite](#) (for schools)

Appendix 1 - Management Process for DSE Risk Assessments

