Organisational Arrangements for the Management of the Risk Arising from the use of Display Screen Equipment

Health and Safety Service
**Introduction**
These Organisational Arrangements form part of the College’s Health and Safety Policy. They outline the College’s approach to complying with the requirements of The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002. The aim of these arrangements is to reduce the risk of harmful effects due to the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) which includes the use of computer workstations. Definitions relevant to this document are in Appendix A.

The regulations are directed at the protection of employees who use DSE for significant periods in their normal work. Several studies have shown that there is virtually no harmful effect generated from the use of DSE itself rather the working environment and workstation layout can have significant effect on the health and comfort of an employee if they are inappropriate. The main requirement of the regulation includes; assessment and reduction of risks, minimum requirement for workstations (including work equipment, work environment and user/computer interface), eye and eye sight tests with corrective appliances, breaks away from the workstation and the provision of information and training.

**Management**
Overall management of health and safety is described in the Organisational Arrangements for the Management of Health and Safety.

**Line Managers**
Line managers have the primary responsibility to ensure;

- The day to day compliance with these Organisational Arrangements and ensuring all members of their staff have completed individual workstation assessments, received information, instruction, and training appropriate to their job responsibilities on working with DSE,
- that every user carries out a self-assessment of their individual workstation at least every two years and in the event of any significant change to the workstation or software,
- that all ‘follow on/up’ risk assessments and reviews are carried out where necessary,
- where staff report health issues associated with DSE usage, that the individual staff member is referred to the Occupational Health Service or the Health and Safety Service within 5 working days. Where the subsequent assessment recommends changes to the working pattern, equipment required, etc. ensure that these recommendations are implemented as soon as possible,
- when a new additional workstation is to be installed, a risk assessment is carried out to ensure compliance with the basic workstation requirements (See Appendix B) and does not create problems for other users or contravene statutory requirements.
- Where a user makes use of a workstation at home or while teleworking (ie using a workstation away from the College’s premises) a suitable and sufficient assessment of that workstation is also undertaken or sufficient training provided for them to undertake a self-assessment.
• Where someone, not in the employ of the College, such as a temporary worker or consultant is undertaking work on behalf of the College, is provided with a College workstation, they shall be deemed to be an “operator” and be provided with a workstation assessment and suitable adjustments.

Executive Deans must ensure that;
• a suitable number of staff are nominated and trained to act as Departmental DSE Assessors,
• That sufficient resources are made available to ensure that specialist adaptation equipment is made available for staff requiring it
• Where a DSE user is experiencing a vision problem or requests a vision test in accordance with this policy, they are entitled to receive (at the College’s expense) such vision tests, and where the vision test indicates, basic corrective aids which are needed for DSE work.
• Where an approved optician makes recommendations specific to an individual, those recommendations are implemented.

Departmental DSE Assessors
Departmental DSE Assessors (DDSA) shall review all Individual workstations assessments completed by users and assist those users as necessary in correctly setting up their workstations. Additional responsibilities include:

• Reviewing assessments for those staff returning to work after long periods of leave or sickness absence, as soon after their actual return to work as possible.
• Ensuring new staff starters in their department undertake training and a workstation self-assessment within their first week in the department.
• Review individual self-assessments to reduce identified risks to the lowest reasonably practicable level, where possible; including the replacement or upgrading of non-compliant equipment. In addition: to escalate significant risks to line managers for further action; funding; remediation.
• Ensure that complex issues identified in the initial self-assessment are escalated to the Occupational Health and/or Health and Safety Service.
• Maintain up to date records of all the risk assessments they undertake and any relevant action plans and reviews.
• Ensure that any member of their staff that is a DSE user is aware they must notify their line manager of any problems arising from, or affecting their use of DSE equipment.
• That any risk identified that requires replacement or upgrading of furniture, components, modification of room design or layout that employees and their representatives are consulted and the self-assessment is reviewed.

Employees
Employees identified as users, that is they use DSE on average for more than 1 hour per day, shall:
• undertake a workstation self-assessment at least every two years and in the event of any significant change to the workstation, location, or equipment.
• ensure their workstation and surrounding area is kept clean, tidy, and free from tripping and other hazards.
• ensure their workstation is correctly adjusted to meet their individual needs and take short frequent breaks away from DSE work activity
• Bring to the attention of their Line Manager any health and safety concerns related to their workstation,
• Undertake all relevant training courses provided by the College in relation to DSE and the workplace environment

Work with portable DSE
Where tablet devices mobile phones and laptop computers are used to compose, edit or view text for prolonged periods. They shall be considered subject to these Arrangements. Guidance on their safe use shall be provided on the College website.

Assessment
Individual users carry out a DSE self-assessment. The self-assessment is then reviewed by the DDSA in conjunction with respective users: if there are significant issues highlighted in the self-assessment the DDSA shall complete the observations/actions for the attention of the line manager. Following completion of this, any layout or set up adjustments deemed necessary to improve the user’s working conditions shall be implemented. If after completing the actions identified there are issues relating to user’s safety remaining, the DDSA shall escalate the respective assessment to the Health and Safety Adviser.

Risk assessments must be carried out and/or reviewed, when any of the following occur (except where the item is an exact and identical replacement):

• A major change to, or replacement of software used.
• A change to, or replacement of the hardware (screen, keyboard, etc.)
• A change in, or replacement of workstation furniture.
• An increase in the amount of time spent in using the equipment.
• A change in the task.
• If the workstation is moved to another location or within the same office space.
• If the environment is changed, i.e., building modification or alteration.
• If a person or user highlights a problem, or an episode of ill health occurs
• If none of these applies, then periodically every 12 months

Information and Training
User of DSE are required to receive information and training on the measures taken by the College to protect them from, or to reduce the risks associated with the use of DSE. The College shall provide:

• Training courses aimed at all users of DSE.
• Specific DSE Assessors courses for managers/supervisors with responsibility for carrying out DSE Risk assessments
• Information shall be made available on the College Intranet.
• Specific training for portable DSE users.

**Eye and Eyesight Tests**
The College shall make provision for users to receive eye and eyesight tests on request. This shall be in the form of a voucher scheme.

**Record keeping**
Records of all risk assessments, remedial actions and reviews shall be kept securely for seven years from the date of the assessment.

**References**
The Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 The Stationery Office 1974


The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
Appendix A – Definitions

GLOSSARY

- **DSE Display Screen Equipment (DSE)** - Any alpha numeric or graphic display screen.


- **Workstation** - Any assembly comprising of a display screen and any optional accessories including disk drives, modem, printer, document holder, work-chair, work-desk, work-surface, or other item peripheral to the display screen equipment and the immediate work environment around the display screen equipment.

- **User** - An operator who is an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work and depends on the equipment to do a job. It also refers to an operator who is not an employee but uses the College’s DSE to complete assigned task. In addition, the equipment is used by that person for continuous spells of one hour per day or more 10% of the user’s working week.

- **Hardware** - All physical equipment comprising the workstation including screen, keyboard, mouse, CPU, desk, chair and associated and peripheral equipment.

- **Software** - The programs and other operating information used by a computer to facilitate operation of the system and the inputting and processing of data in any form.

- **Laptop Users** - This term applies to anyone that uses a laptop computer, either as a regular feature of their work activity, or if they are ad-hoc users as defined above.

- **DDSA** - Departmental DSE Assessor

- **Hand-held Electronic Communication Devices** - This term applies to mobile telephones, smart phones, tablets, and portable digital assistants. The definition applies to all electrical hand-held communications devices that are used as a regular or significant element of an individual’s daily workload. The definition does not incorporate hand-held gaming machines as these are not considered items of work equipment in this policy.
Appendix B

Minimum Requirements for Workstations – Schedule to the Regulations

Workstation Equipment

1) Display Screens must be/have:
   - Well defined, clear legible characters that are stable, flicker free image with adjustable brightness/contrast control and be free of glare/reflections.
   - Must allow adjustment of resolution, colour contrast, brightness to suit the individual user.
   - It must have easy swivel/tilt facilities.

2) Keyboards must:
   - Be separate from screen, have a tilt facility, have clearly distinguishable characters marked on the keys and have a matt non-reflective surface.
   - Be positioned on the desk to allow space in front of the keyboard to support arms/hands/wrists

3) Work Desks (surfaces) must have:
   - Large non-reflective surfaces, adequate space for a comfortable and uncluttered position, including space for ancillary equipment such as phone, scanners, printer, etc.; users must have a document holder if required.

4) Work Chairs must:
   - Be stable with a five-point base that allows users easy freedom of movement, be adjustable for height, have a seat back adjustable for height and tilt; a footrest must be available if necessary.

5) Mice, trackballs, or other pointing devices:
   - Most desktop computers are supplied with a computer mouse. In most situations, the mouse will be an appropriate pointing device to use. However, there will be cases where an alternative device is more suitable or is preferred by the user. The mouse depends on having a suitable surface with enough space on which to use it. So, for example where space is very limited or where an individual has limited mobility in their arm, an alternative such as the trackball or touchpad may be more suitable.
   - In choosing a pointing device there are several factors to consider: The environment in which it will be used; Individual characteristics of the user and Task characteristics.
Workstation Environment

Space ~ This should allow for adequate clearances for thighs, knees, lower legs and feet under the work surface and between furniture for the user to change position and have easy access to files, documents and other office equipment without risk of injury. Adequate space must also be provided to store personal belongings in a safe manner.

Lighting ~ appropriate lighting should be provided for all tasks at the workstation e.g. reading from the screen, keyboard work, reading printed text.

Glare and Reflections ~ Workstations must be designed and positioned so that sources of light such as windows and other openings, transparent and translucent walls and brightly coloured fixtures or walls cause no glare or disturbing reflections on the screen.

Heat and Humidity ~ must be suitable so as to maintain comfort, as electronic equipment can be a source of dry heat, which can modify the thermal environment causing discomfort and sore eyes.

Noise ~ from printers and equipment should be kept low so as not to impair concentration, prevent normal conversation, or decrease efficiency.

User/Operator Computer Interface

• Inappropriate task design can be a source of stress at work. Stress prejudices employee motivation, effectiveness and efficiency and, in some instances, can significantly affect an employee’s health. In DSE work, good design of the task can be as important as the choice of equipment, furniture and working environment.
• Activities should be planned so that natural pauses occur as a consequence of the inherent organization of the work and variety is built into jobs to prevent repetition; ensure a mix of screen based and non-screen based work to prevent fatigue and vary visual and mental demands.
• Should the job not be able to be organized in such a way as to prevent intensive use of DSE then activity breaks should be introduced prior to the onset of fatigue, not to recuperate. They should be included in working time, not result in longer hours and should be taken away from the screen: doing
other work related tasks, i.e., filing, or telephoning and not taken as “coffee breaks”.

- Activity breaks should consist of a minimum of 5 minutes to a maximum of 10 minutes for each hour spent working at the screen. Activity breaks cannot be taken cumulatively (i.e. work for four hours then take a 20-minute break).
- In addition to work planning and task design the principles of software ergonomics are important to the health of DSE users; badly designed or inappropriate software will impede the efficient completion of work.

### Workstation Design

Managers responsible for implementing the risk assessment action plans and/or arranging the purchase of furniture used with DSE must be fully aware of the desirable design characteristics of such items. There are two important points to be noted:

- Anything designed specifically to fit 'the average person' will be unsuitable for the majority. Design should, therefore, be targeted to as great a percentage of users as is practicable by incorporating adjustability.
- Some workers may have particular physical constraints or disabilities, which prevent them from using normal adjustable furniture. Special provision may be needed to accommodate them.

### Work with Portable DSE and other Electronic Communications Media

Work with laptops, notepad computers, PDA and Smart phones is on the increase and when subjected to prolonged use is subject to the DSE Regulations.

- Some of the risks that are associated with portable DSE are different to those of a desktop computer; these can be attributable to the size, design and function of the hardware, for example: keyboards are smaller; there is normally a lack of keyboard/screen separation making it more difficult to operate the keys or to achieve a comfortable working posture.
- Portable DSE is also used in a wider range of environments many of which are poorly suited to DSE work; it is therefore important that users of portable DSE are given instruction and training in how to best utilize such equipment and workplaces to avoid safety or health issues developing.

### Portable DSE and Risk Assessments

- It would not be practicable to undertake independent assessments of each temporary work location (i.e. rail travel, hotel room, etc.) However, users must be aware of how to establish the safest possible work location and be aware of controls that they may implement.
- Therefore, the instruction and training given to users of portable DSE must be sufficient to enable them to make their own risk assessments and ensure that measures are taken to control risks whenever they set up their equipment.
• When working in a fixed or regular location the use of docking stations, laptop stands and separate keyboards and mice should be encouraged as these will assist in avoiding many of the ergonomic risks with portable DSE.

• A more vigorous and reinforced attitude to taking regular breaks and/or changes of activity is necessary for portable users not working at docking stations.