



Health and Safety Policy and Guidance Display Screen Equipment

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DSE Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist

1. Introduction

Under the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, employers are required to provide a healthy and safe environment which includes minimising the risks associated with the use of display screen equipment (DSE).

The use of DSE is not generally a high risk activity, but failure to meet the minimum requirements set out in the regulations can lead to musculoskeletal problems, eye strain, fatigue or mental stress. These problems can be overcome by good ergonomic design of equipment and furniture, a good working environment and careful planning of the tasks performed.

2. Policy Statement

The Council acknowledges its responsibility for managing DSE in the workplace and has put in place measures as set out in this policy to protect the health and safety of DSE users.

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that:

- Suitable provision is made in terms of DSE work equipment.
- DSE workstations are assessed via the DSE self-assessment process.
- Appropriate information and training is provided to DSE users, primarily through e-learning training and guidance.
- DSE users have access to a free eye examination and corrective glasses, where these are required solely and specifically for DSE work.
- DSE users with specific health issues related to DSE work have access to advice and support from the Health and Safety Team and Occupational Health Service.

3. Application

If you use DSE for a significant part of your normal work then you should follow this guidance.

4. Definitions

User: is defined as someone who habitually uses DSE as part of their job for substantial periods of their working day – someone who cannot do their job without the use of DSE.

Workstation: includes the screen, keyboard (including portable DSE i.e. laptops, in prolonged use), and other parts of the computer and its accessories (such as the mouse or other input device), the desk, chair and the immediate working environment.

Hot desk: refers to an arrangement at work whereby employees do not have a specific fixed desk (workstation) allocated to them. A 'hot desk' is provided and used by many members of staff.

5. Managers are responsible for ensuring:

- Employees who are 'users' of DSE, complete the DSE e-learning course.
- Employees complete the **Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Self-assessment** and any issues documented on the checklist are addressed.
- Generic DSE assessments are facilitated where 'hot desking' is carried out.
- Employees are informed of the policy regarding the provision of eye sight tests for designated DSE users.
- Employees are advised on contacts regarding any issues/safety concerns around using their DSE and associated workstation/ working environment.
- DSE assessments relating to their employees are held on file, maintained up to date (reviewed as necessary) and readily available.

6. Employees are responsible for ensuring:

- Compliance with this policy and the local arrangements when using DSE.
- Completion of the **DSE e-learning course**.
- Completion of the **DSE Self-assessment** in accordance with this policy and bringing any issues identified and documented on the workstation checklist to the attention of their manager, to be appropriately addressed within a reasonable timescale.
- Their Manager is advised as soon as possible of any known safety or health issues, including any disability or medical condition, associated with their use of .
- Their availability and attendance at any specialist assessment and/or Occupational Health appointment made for them.

7. Health effects

DSE workstations or equipment can be associated with neck, shoulder, back or arm pain, as well as with fatigue, stress and eyestrain. Most of these conditions do not indicate any serious ill health, but it makes sense to avoid them as far as possible

8. Completing the DSE Workstation Self-Assessment (fixed, hot desks, laptops)

If DSE is in lengthy or repeated use in the same location e.g. **fixed desks**, it would be appropriate for the user's risk assessment to be recorded on the **DSE Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist** – the form is included at the back of this guidance.

Assessment for users of laptops and hot desks working from multiple locations can be a challenge, as it is clearly not practicable to complete a full DSE self-assessment to analyse each location where work may take place.

If **hot desks and laptops** are to be used at a variety of locations for short periods of time, the user should complete the DSE Self-Assessment as a generic assessment and be given sufficient training and information to enable them to undertake their own dynamic risk assessments. The user should take measures to control risks wherever they set up their hot desk or laptop (for example, setting up the seating and work surface to prevent awkward/poor posture). This **dynamic assessment is not written down**. The training and information is provided in the DSE Self-Assessment and Guidance form and in the 'DSE e-learning package'.

9. Workstation Guidance

Follow this simple advice when using DSE:

Laptops



Laptops are not designed for intensive or prolonged use and should not be provided for such without assessing the risks (laptops are subject to the DSE Regulations if they are in prolonged use). Additional equipment or accessories may be required to make them safe to use e.g. separate mouse, keyboard, screen riser etc.

You should also consider manual handling issues and possible risk of theft.

Keyboard

The keyboard should be about 4 inches away from the edge of the desk. This should give you enough room to rest your hands and forearms when you're not typing. When using your keyboard, try not to bend your hands either up or down. Your hands, wrists and forearms should be roughly horizontal and your upper arms at 90° at the elbow. Move the keyboard to find a comfortable position that suits you.



Mouse

If you use a mouse place it within easy reach, so you can use it with your wrist straight. Do not work with your mouse arm stretched forwards or sideways. Support your forearm on the desk. Do not grip the mouse tightly, rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and don't press them hard.

Screen

Ideally the top of the screen should be level with your eyes. Adjust the height and angle of the screen for comfort and avoidance of glare. If there is no screen use a portable laptop riser



Chair

To avoid poor posture users must adjust their chairs properly. This is vital when a number of users, with different needs and preferences, share a workstation.

Your spine is naturally curved and should be well supported by your chair. Check that the backrest is properly adjusted to give the support you need. Leaving a gap between the lower part of the backrest and the seat will help make sure you are sitting correctly.

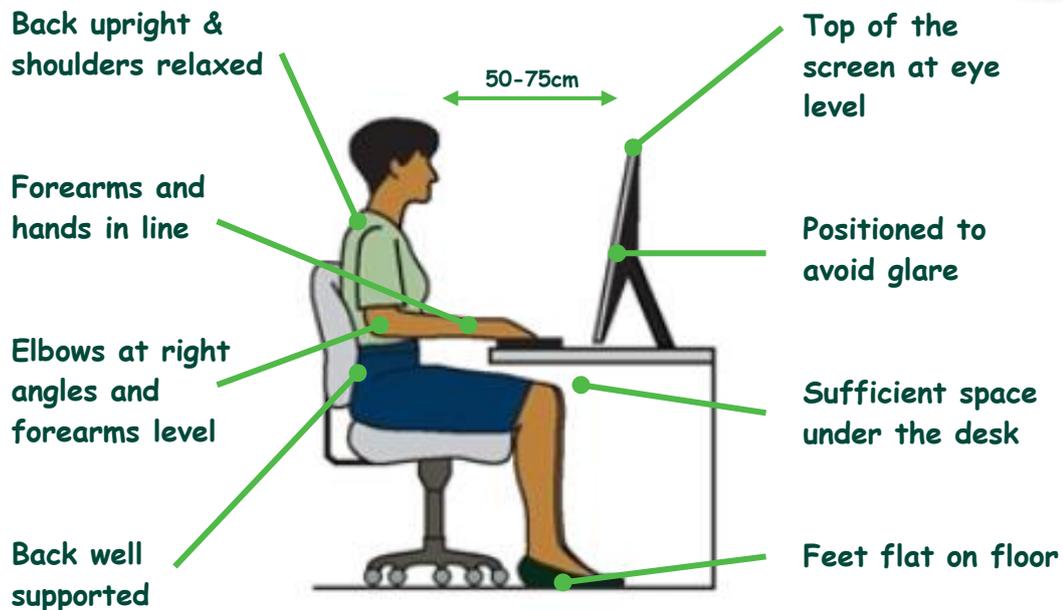
Set the height of your chair. If your arms are horizontal when you use the keyboard, then the seat height is about right. Make sure you can place your feet flat on the floor.

Desk

Arrange the keyboard, mouse and phone to suit you, so that arms, shoulders and wrists are under as little strain and stretch as possible. Don't crowd your knee space with personal belongings and leave room to move about. Remember there is a clear desk policy!

How to set up your workstation correctly

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



10. Accessories and bags

If having completed a DSE Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist you require accessories such as a wrist-rest, footstool, ergonomic keyboard or laptop screen riser then you should discuss these requirements with your manager. In some offices a limited supply might be available for you to borrow.

Mobile and flexible workers need to consider the risk of manual handling. Generally for people carrying a laptop the standard issue case will be sufficient.

However, if employees are required to carry additional items e.g. case files, paper work and health risks are identified in terms of them carrying these items using the standard bag then the manager may agree to purchase a backpack/wheeled pilot bag/trolley. The cost would need to be met by the employing cost centre.

11. Purchasing equipment

All new equipment and accessories must be purchased in line with the Council's buying goods procedures. Seek advice from your local buyer when ordering any equipment.

Steps should be taken to recycle surplus Council furniture wherever possible and managers, should as a first step, email FMpropertyservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk

To see the range of ICT equipment available including how to order visit the Catalogue pages on InSite: [ICT Catalogue](#)

12. Eye care vouchers

If you are identified as 'DSE user' you can have the cost of a sight test (and in some cases the cost of a special pair of basic spectacles for DSE work) met by the council. For Directorates this is managed by issuing an eye care voucher to the employee. Schools are required to fund contributions for eye tests and glasses from delegated budgets. It is up to the school how this is organised e.g. claimed via staff expenses with the necessary evidence. The amounts of employer contributions the Council (school) pay are £19 for eye test and £55 for spectacles.

Please note – eye test contributions can only be granted to employees who are identified as a 'user' of DSE (display screen equipment) during their DSE/VDU Risk Assessment.

If an employee requires spectacles for every day general use then the employee will not qualify for a contribution. Spectacle contribution should only be granted where the prescription form issued by the optician identifies that spectacles are required solely for VDU use.

To qualify for an eye care voucher, your manager must complete the Eye Care Voucher Request form and submit it before you visit the Optician. Vouchers will not normally be issued retrospectively.

For further information on eye care vouchers email: eyecarevoucher@oxfordshire.gov.uk

13. Disabilities and medical conditions

If following completion of the DSE self-assessment problems persist or the employee has a known medical condition that affects the use of DSE then the manager should contact the Health and Safety Team to obtain further advice. This may result in a further specialist assessment being carried out or a referral to Occupational Health.

Email: healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk

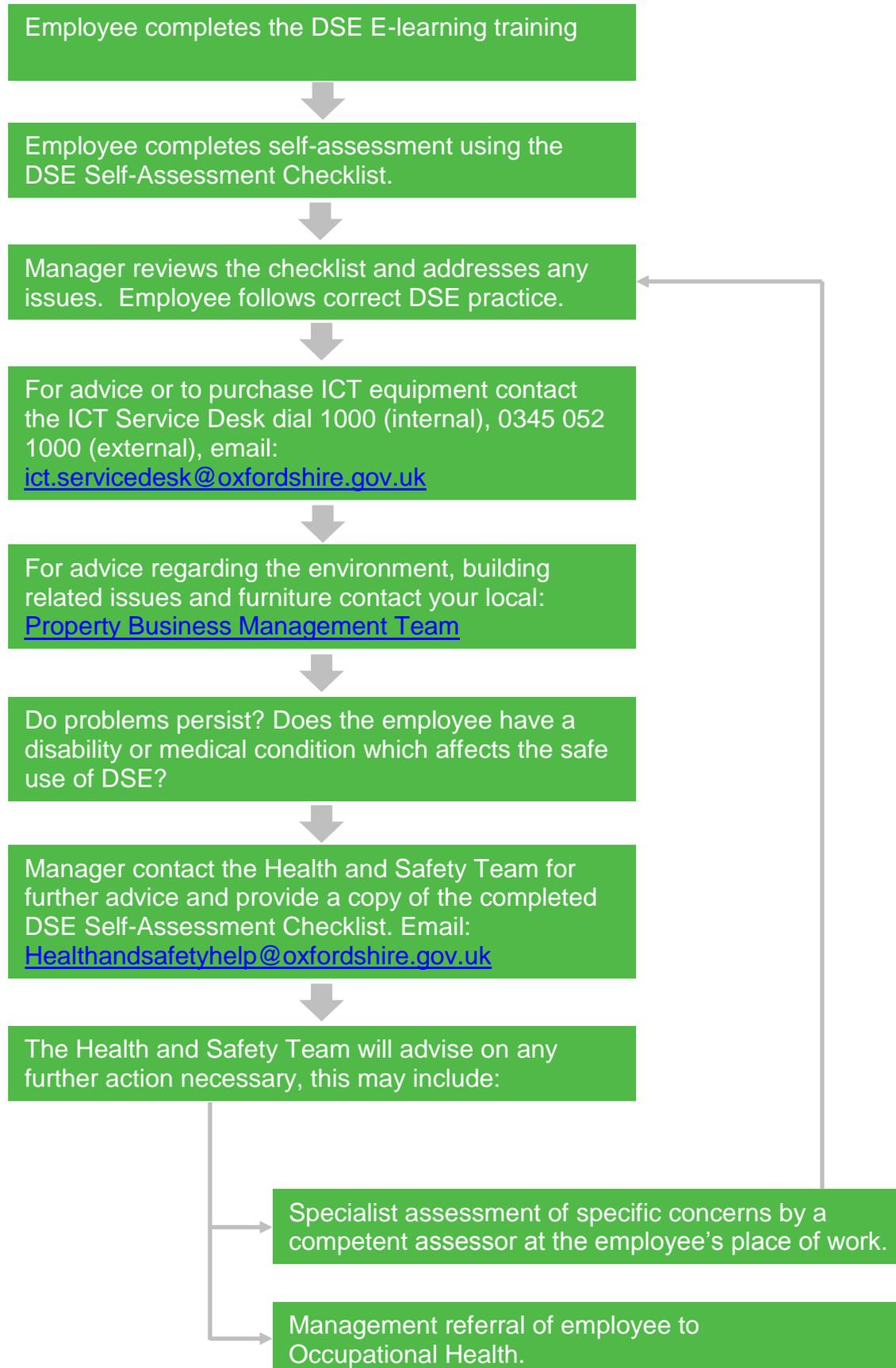
14. E-learning

DSE users should complete the **DSE and Workstation Health and Safety (eLearning course)** OXHS2004, visit: [DSE and Workstation Health and Safety \(eLearning course\)](#)

For further information on using Display Screen Equipment visit:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/MSd/dse/index.htm>

If you have any further questions please contact the Health and Safety Team on: 03300 240849 or email healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk

16. Process for using DSE



Workstation Self-Assessment Checklist

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--|
| Name | | Service | |
| Main work location | | Date | |

Notes for Completion:

If **agile working** the user should **complete the DSE Self-Assessment** as a 'generic' assessment and then dynamically risk assess future workstation setups. This form must be completed in the first instance by the employee, giving relevant information, **and then forwarded to their Manager**.

The Manager should read through and discuss the information with the employee, including any problems that have been identified, and decide what action to take.

- The DSE risk assessment must be reviewed at least annually and when any significant changes occur that may affect the risk assessment.
- The Manager must review any changes of the risk assessment and maintain a record to show each review.
- Ensure there is evidence that where required corrective action has been taken.

| Display Screen | Yes | No |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Can you easily adjust the brightness and contrast of the characters on screen? | | |
| Can the screen be raised, tilted and swivelled? | | |
| Is the screen image stable, free of flicker and other persistent instabilities and of unacceptable glare and reflections? | | |
| Is the screen adjustable to a height that is comfortable for you? | | |
| Keyboard | | |
| Can you adjust the keyboard to a comfortable angle? | | |
| Is the keyboard clean and can you easily see the symbols on the keys? | | |
| Is there enough space to rest your hands in front of the keyboard? | | |
| Mouse | | |
| Is there a separate device suitable for the tasks you will use it for? | | |
| Is there adequate space on the desk for the device to be close to you with sufficient support for wrist and forearm? | | |
| Does the device work smoothly with adjustable settings for speed and accuracy? | | |
| Chair | | |
| Can you adjust the height and angle of the seat? | | |
| Can you adjust the height and angle of the backrest? | | |
| Is the chair comfortable? | | |
| Is the chair in a good state of repair with properly working castors or glides? | | |
| Desk | | |
| Is the desk surface large enough to allow you to place all your equipment where you want it? | | |
| Is the height of the desk suitable? | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Footrest | | |
| If you cannot place your feet flat on the floor whilst keying, has a footrest been supplied? | | |
| Document Holder | | |
| If it would be of benefit to use a document holder, has one been supplied? | | |
| If you have a document holder, is it adjustable to suit your needs? | | |
| Training/Information | | |
| Have you been informed about the risks associated with DSE and how to reduce the risks? | | |
| Do you take regular breaks working away from the DSE? | | |
| Have you been informed about the arrangements for the provision of eye and eyesight tests? | | |
| Do you know the procedures to follow if you have a problem relating to DSE? | | |
| Have you been informed in the correct adjustment and positioning of workstation equipment? | | |
| Have you been informed about the importance of good posture? | | |
| Do you know how to adjust screen brightness and contrast? | | |
| Do you know how to recognise visual or postural fatigue and the action to take? | | |
| Environment | | |
| Is lighting suitable, e.g. not too bright nor too dim to work comfortably? | | |
| Does the air feel comfortable? | | |
| Are levels of heat comfortable? | | |
| Are levels of noise comfortable? | | |
| Additional considerations for laptops | | |
| When using a laptop for short periods in different locations do you informally assess the risks each time and adjust your set up accordingly? | | |
| Are you aware of the possible risks of theft when carrying your laptop? | | |
| Manual Handling | | |
| To reduce the risks from manual handling do you: Only carry equipment or papers if they are needed. Store documents electronically where possible? Use a bag / backpack / wheeled trolley / pilot case? | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------|--|--------------|--|
| Authorised by Line Manager (Name): | | Job Title: | | Date: | |
| Reviewed by: | | Job Title: | | Date: | |

If you would like more information about this Checklist, or if you have any specific concerns about your health and safety, please contact your Line Manager or healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Further guidance can also be found in the [Agile Working](#) pages on the intranet. Display Screen Equipment (DSE) E-learning (OXHS2004) is available via the [learning zone](#).