

Health and Safety Services

Guidance on the use of Display Screen Equipment

Introduction

1. The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 place a responsibility on The University of Manchester to analyse workstations, to assess the health and safety risks to those users. The University implements the regulations by ensuring that:
 - All D.S.E. "users" (see definition below) are identified and their workstations are assessed.
 - Completed self assessment forms are reviewed by a trained workstation assessor
 - All "users" are given adequate information, instruction and training on how to safely and correctly set up their workstation
 - All "users" are informed of the hazards to which they may be exposed if the equipment is not used correctly
 - Eye and eyesight tests are available for those employees classed as Display Screen Equipment "users".
2. This guidance aims to ensure compliance with the regulations and to encourage safe working practice within the University.

Responsibilities

3. **Heads of Schools / Directorates** will need to appoint an appropriate number of display screen assessors (DSAs) for their area. Detailed arrangements will vary from school to school and general advice can be obtained from your University Safety Co-ordinator (USC). Most schools will wish to use the University's on-line self-assessment method as the starting point in carrying out the assessments, with their DSAs collating these, keeping them up-to-date and acting upon any concerns. Please contact your USC if you wish to set up an online self-assessment.
4. Some schools may choose to appoint several assessors, others may wish to appoint someone who has the resources to co-ordinate assessments for the whole school. In some cases, the school safety advisor may be able to carry out the role; in others, an administrative officer may be more appropriate.
5. The self-assessment procedure is designed to be used without special training, but the assessors appointed to receive and analyse the results should attend STDU course Ref HS17.
6. **Heads of Schools / Directorates** will also need to:

- Identify each user of display screen equipment within their area of responsibility using the prescribed definition and H.S.E. guidance;
 - Ensure that an assessment of each user's workstation, taking into account the display screen equipment, the furniture, the workload, the working environment and the user;
 - Take all necessary measures to reduce or control any risks found as a result of the assessment;
 - Where practicable, take steps to incorporate changes of task within the working day, in order to prevent intensive extended periods of on-screen activity;
 - Review software to ensure suitability for the task
 - Arrange for the provision of eye and eyesight test for display screen equipment users prior to employment and at regular intervals thereafter, and when a visual problem is experienced;
 - Arrange for assistance in obtaining any special corrective spectacles where prescribed by an optician for use specifically with display screen equipment;
 - Ensure existing members of staff, and all other persons applying for work with display screen equipment, are aware of the health risks associated with such work and how these can be avoided.
7. Where a member of staff raises a matter related to health and safety in the use of display screen equipment, **the line manager** must:
- Take all necessary steps to investigate the circumstances and review the assessment
 - Take corrective measures where appropriate;
 - Advise the member of staff of the actions taken to resolve the matter.
8. Where a problem arises in the use of display screen equipment, the **member of staff** must adopt the following procedures:
- Inform their supervisor / line manager
 - In the case of an adverse health condition, advise The University of Manchester Health and Safety Services and his or her own general practitioner.

Guidance

9. Workstation assessment forms are available from the Health & Safety Services website on The University of Manchester staff intranet. If a School wishes to do assessments via an online version, contact your University Safety Co-ordinator.

Training Requirements

10. New users of display screen equipment and those setting up new workstations or equipment must be given information and instruction on how to set their workstation up safely, and in a manner that will not adversely affect their health.

11. Display Screen Equipment Assessors must attend the Display Screen Assessors course at The University of Manchester Staff Training and Development Unit.

Occupational Health Screening For Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Users

12. The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 2002 include the requirement for the employer to provide: -

- Appropriate eye and eyesight tests to DSE "users" on request. A "user" is a member of staff who 'habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his or her normal day.
- Special corrective appliances where the test(s) indicate they are necessary.

13. In practice all employees using a DSE on a regular basis are encouraged to attend the University Occupational Health Service for a visual screening test in the following circumstances.

- When first using a DSE on a regular basis
- If they begin to experience discomfort or other visual problems when using DSE.
- At further intervals if advised appropriate to do so.

Procedure

14. The Occupational Health Nurse will first undertake a visual screening which includes a test of visual acuity appropriate for DSE use. If the screening indicates that the employee may have a problem at a distance relevant to DSE use (55cm to 65cm) the employee will be referred to an Optometrist for a further assessment, and, if required, for the provision of special spectacles specifically for DSE use.

15. The Occupational Health Service will issue the employee with a letter for the Optometrist stating that a professional eye test is required and that the University will be responsible for the cost of any spectacles, if required specifically for DSE use. (Currently up to £50.) The employees' manager will be informed of this referral by the Occupational Health Service. The employee may attend an Optometrist of their choice.

16. Please note: -

- The cost for the provision of spectacles specifically for DSE distance appears to vary significantly between Optometrists but we have been quoted approximately £50:00 by University Vision. (Situated within the Students Union Building)
- At the present time the regulations state that bifocal and varifocal spectacles are not normally recommended for DSE work.

17. For any further information please contact The Occupational Health Services

Definitions

User – the display screen equipment regulations refer to the term “user – this describes members of staff who “habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his of her normal work”. At the University of Manchester, this is taken to mean those people who use DSE for an hour or more on most working days, and will include large numbers of administrative, academic, technical and support staff.

Display Screen Equipment Assessor – the member(s) of staff appointed by the Head of School who have received the necessary information, instruction and training to allow them to competently assess display screen equipment / workstations.

Useful Publications

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 and HSE Guidance

The University of Manchester Display Screen Equipment Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

The University of Manchester Display Screen Equipment Assessors Checklist

The University of Manchester Guide to Setting Up Your Workstation

Working with VDUs, HSE, available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>

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