

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) POLICY

Date policy adopted: 01/04/11

Date of last review: 01/06/21

1. Purpose and Scope

This document describes the methods that the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC) uses to promote the safe use of display screen equipment so that the requirements of the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended) are met.

The DSE Regulations place a duty on employers to carry out a suitable and sufficient analysis of display screen equipment workstations to assess any risks to the health of the persons operating them. The employer must take steps to reduce the risks identified by the assessment to the lowest level, so far as reasonably practicable.

ESC works to ensure the safety and welfare of employees by identifying all forms of DSE that they use (PCs and extended use of laptops) and ensuring that DSE assessments are carried out by appropriately trained personnel.

This policy applies to all employees who use DSE while carrying out work for ESC regardless of working pattern or nature of employment contract. It also applies to anyone working within the premises of and / or for the Commissioner where they would be using ESC equipment and privy to ESC records and files (e.g. employed by an agency). The word employee(s) in the context of this policy should be taken to mean all such individuals, unless specifically referred to as being directly employed by ESC.

DSE assessments are undertaken for all:

- DSE workstations (including desktop and extended use portables, such as laptops) which are used regularly as part of a normal work routine
- remote activities.

DSE assessments are maintained for all existing workstations and additional assessments are conducted when new display screen equipment is installed, or when a major change is made to equipment, furniture, lighting, workload, work location or software.

2. Implementation, monitoring and review of the policy

Overall responsibility for policy implementation, monitoring and review lies with ESC. Everyone covered by the scope of the policy is obliged to adhere to, and facilitate implementation of the policy. Appropriate action will be taken to inform all new and existing employees and others covered by the scope of the existence of the policy and their role in adhering to it. The policy will be reviewed at such times as legislation or a change to the ESC policy position requires it. The policy will be made available to the general public.

3. Senior Management Team Commitment

The Senior Management Team are committed to:

- training and assigning assessors to conduct the assessments
- ensuring that assessors have sufficient time to carry out assessments
- providing assessors with access to facilities and personnel
- ensuring that assessments are undertaken for all workstation users, including new arrivals
- ensuring line managers are aware of their duties under the procedure.

4. The assessment process

DSE assessments must be undertaken only by competent personnel (DSE assessors) who have completed an assessor's training course. Training courses will be supplied and certificated by a competent training provider.

All employees who make significant day-to-day use of a workstation must undertake a DSE assessment. If the user's line manager directs the pace and timing of their work, and has a lot of control over their DSE work patterns, they should also participate in the assessment.

Step 1 (User):

The DSE user completes a DSE self-assessment form and returns it to their DSE assessor.

Step 2 (DSE Assessor):

The DSE assessor reviews the form and visits the user, if required, when recommendations and advice may be given.

DSE assessors must use the DSE self-assessment form to record findings and recommendations arising from assessments. Where recommendations have a significant impact on working patterns, these should be agreed with line managers. The user should advise the DSE assessor and their line manager if they disagree with any recommendations. Completed forms should be saved to the individual employee's folder on the shared drive. Any risks identified are recorded on the risk register.

Step 3 (DSE Assessor):

The DSE assessor informs the user's line manager that the assessment is complete and what findings or recommendations, if any, were made to the user.

Step 4: (Line manager & user)

It is the responsibility of the user's line manager to ensure that the agreed recommendations are implemented.

If the DSE assessor suggests a referral to an Occupational Health & Safety Advisory Service or a health nurse/specialist, the line manager must discuss this with the Corporate Services Team and monitor the process to completion. After an appointment, the occupational health nurse or specialist will issue a report of their findings. This will be copied to the employee and the Head of Corporate Services.

The line manager must ensure they are aware of the recommendations made in the report.

The line manager must monitor the implementation of any recommendations made by a professional advisor. These may include provision of services such as physiotherapy, or the provision of alternative furniture or equipment, which will be the responsibility of the Head of Corporate Services. All recommendations must be implemented as quickly as possible. It is the user's responsibility to ensure they comply with all instructions relating to their workstation and work practices.

Exceptional assessments

If at any time a DSE user states that they are suffering from neck, back or limb pain which they attribute to the use of DSE or believe is being exacerbated by the use of DSE, they must be referred by their line manager to a physician or nurse, although they cannot be compelled to undergo any physical examination.

To arrange this referral, steps 1 to 3 of the usual process for DSE assessments should be followed and then contact made with the Head of Corporate Services to arrange an appointment with a practitioner.

Where a DSE user has a pre-existing health condition or injury which may require a major adjustment to their workstation or duties, they should advise their line manager as soon as possible. The line manager should normally arrange for referral to a physician or nurse via the Head of Corporate Services.

The line manager must monitor the process to completion, as in step 4 of the assessment process outlined above.

Control measures

When a user completes a DSE self-assessment form they should follow the guidance on the form that recommends best practice.

The DSE assessor must ensure that users of display screen equipment and their line managers are aware of the findings of an assessment where these require further action.

The DSE assessor will update the DSE self-assessment form when additional control measures are agreed. Any risks and mitigating actions suggested will be added to the risk register by the DSE assessor. Implementation of recommendations should be tracked on the register.

The line manager, in co-operation with the DSE assessor, must ensure the implementation of the risk control measures, such as the correct adjustments of the workstation, within agreed time scales, monitor their adequacy and ensure that assessments are reviewed when circumstances change. Where new equipment such as monitor risers, chairs or desks are required, the Head of Corporate Services must obtain and supply the items as quickly as possible.

NOTE: Controls must be considered when workstation layouts are being planned or revised in order to ensure appropriate health and safety standards are achieved from the outset.

Reviewing assessments

Line managers must ensure that all DSE assessments are reviewed at least annually to ensure that the control measures remain effective.

Assessments must also be reviewed when:

- any changes are made to activities or new ones are introduced
- accident, near miss or other statistics indicate that there is a problem
- any new workstations are introduced
- any new workstation users arrive
- an employee transfers to working at a different location, including a remote location.

Training

All DSE assessors will be provided with suitable and sufficient training on the assessment of DSE workstations. Regular training courses are offered to DSE users by the Scottish Parliament. The Head of Corporate Services can arrange for these by liaison with Scottish Parliament's officeholder services.

5. Expectations

Instructions for DSE users

The following instructions are provided to employees on the safe use of display screen equipment.

Display screen (Monitor)

If the characters on the screen are not well defined and clearly formed from an appropriate working position make sure the screen is clean. Checking that the text and background colours work well together can also help this.

Software settings can be adjusted to make the screen characters an adequate size and also adjust the spacing between the characters and the lines.

If the screen image is unstable (i.e. flickering, jittering or drifting) try different screen colours to reduce flicker for example darker background and lighter text. Flickering or instability may indicate a monitor defect which should be referred to the Head of Corporate Services.

The display screen should contain easily adjustable controls for brightness and contrast. Separate adjustments are not essential as long as the user can read the screen at all times.

The screen should swivel and tilt easily and be set at a comfortable height.

The screen should be free of reflections and glare. Screens that use dark characters on a light background are less prone to glare.

Keyboard

The tilt of the keyboard should be adjustable although the tilt need not be built in.

It is a requirement that there should be sufficient space in front of the keyboard to provide support to the hands and wrists.

The keyboard characters must be clear from an appropriate work position. Keeping keyboards clean can help.

Work desk/surface

There should be sufficient space to allow flexible and comfortable arrangement of all work equipment. This can be done by creating as much room on the desktop as possible by removing items not required on a regular basis. Adequate space must be made to adopt correct and comfortable posture.

A fully adjustable document holder can be provided, which can save the user space on their workstation

Is there sufficient room for comfortable mouse work? - Most devices are best placed as close as possible e.g. right beside the keyboard

Chair

The chair should allow the user to sit comfortably. Chair arms can stop the user getting close enough to the equipment to use it comfortably. Users should consider techniques on how to adopt a suitable posture. Any obstructions should be moved from under the workstation.

The seat height and tilt should adjust easily, and the backrest must be appropriate and adjustable.

Footrests are available if the user's feet cannot be placed flat on the floor.

Work environment

Adequate lighting must be provided for all tasks. Shading, repositioning light source or providing local lighting can be considered to achieve this.

Adjustable covering can be provided to mitigate glare from natural light where this is a problem.

If users experience difficulty hearing or being heard without raising their voice or there are problems with background noise consider moving the source of noise or soundproofing.

Ideally, the temperature should be kept between 19°C and 23°C although this is not a legal requirement and it may not realistically be achieved in hot and cold weather.

Humidity levels should ideally be kept between 40% and 70%.

The operator (the User)

All users of DSE should be given instructions in the use of their workstation. DSE user training is made available to employees on a regular basis. Please contact the Head of Corporate Services for information on training provided by the Scottish Parliament.

If any health and safety problems arise the correct procedure to follow is to consult with a local DSE assessor or line manager. Adequate opportunities for regular breaks or changes in activity should be given.

A change in activity can be classed as a break as long as the user has a small rest from PC work. Short, more frequent breaks are likely to be more beneficial than longer, less frequent breaks.

If an employee is suffering from any back, neck or limb pain which is thought may have been caused or made worse by DSE work, they must contact their line manager.

Extensive research has found no evidence that DSE work can cause disease or permanent damage to the eyes, but it may make users with pre-existing defects more aware of them. This may give rise to visual fatigue and headaches. Uncorrected visual problems may therefore make DSE work more tiring and stressful than it needs to be. It is recommended, where a user is experiencing visual difficulties, that they have an eye and eyesight test. In Scotland, free eye and eyesight tests are available to UK residents every two years or annually under certain circumstances. ESC may contribute to or fund corrective appliances if special ones are required and normal ones cannot be used. Please contact the Head of Corporate Services for more details.

Equality Impact Assessment

Does this policy comply with the general Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 Equality Act 2010)?

This policy applies to all employees, contractors and all who interact with the work of ESC. Its impact was considered when drafting and it will be particularly helpful for determining any reasonable adjustments which may be required for disabled employees. We consulted with all employees prior to publication to identify and address any issues

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Have we considered any effect the policy may have on the collecting, processing and storing of personal data?

The records generated by this policy will contain personal data and may contain sensitive and special category personal data. Suitable retention and destruction policies are in place to manage this material.

Information Security Impact Assessment

Have we considered the impact any policy may have on our cyber-resilience?

This policy should have no impact on our cyber-resilience.

Records Management Impact

Have we considered the impact any policy may have on our ability to manage our records?

This policy should have no impact on our ability to manage our records.

Version	Description	Date	Author
1.0	First draft	01/06/21	Public Appointments Officer
1.1	Update to phone number	16/05/2023	Corporate Services Officer