

Aberystwyth University Safety Management. Standard Practice Instruction	Display Screen Equipment: Assessment of Workstations and Work Activities of Users.	Ref: S 003 Issue: 3 Page: 1 of 4 Date Issued: 1 st March, 2013
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1.0 Purpose

To provide guidance on the AU requirements for the assessment of display screen equipment workstations and the work activities of users in order to minimise work-related risks to health.

2.0 Scope

All 'Users' of display screen equipment who utilise such equipment in the course of their work at AU.

2.1 'User' = a member of AU staff or AU postgraduate research student who is required to use display screen equipment in an intensive fashion as part of their normal work (typically for more than an hour a day).

2.2 'Display Screen Equipment' (DSE) = equipment that incorporates a visual display unit that shows text and/or images which have to be observed as part of a work activity and manual controls that need to be operated frequently as part of that work activity.

Examples of DSE in widespread use at AU include computer workstations, video editing equipment and microfilm / fiche readers. (Items of specialist research equipment - such as electron microscopes - are not included in the scope, though the ergonomic principles can be applied by those responsible for the training of users of such equipment.)

Note: any member of AU who possesses a relevant disability and needs to utilise DSE, irrespective of the above criteria, will require appropriate assessment and training. In such cases Human Resources may be consulted to assist in identifying 'reasonable adjustments'.

3.0 Responsibility

3.1 Heads of Departments and Academic Institutes:

- to nominate members of their departments to be trained as DSE assessors, or source trained assessors from elsewhere;
- to ensure that assessments of DSE Users are carried out;
- to provide funds for any necessary workstation equipment identified during assessments; also for eye tests and the standard AU contribution to the cost of 'DSE spectacles' if prescribed.

3.2 Departmental Safety Officers:

- to assist their HoD by coordinating the DSE assessment process within their own departments;
- to establish and maintain records of departmental DSE assessments;
- to inform departmental staff of the DSE assessment process (e.g. by placing a notice on the local safety notice board, example template given below).

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3.3 Managers / Supervisors

- to ensure that new appointees receive appropriate training in the use of DSE where it is required as part of their work activities;
- to pay due regard to outcomes of the DSE assessment and make any management changes as necessary;
- to ensure that a review of assessments are undertaken annually or if (for example) major changes are made to the equipment or nature of work tasks, or if workstations are relocated.

3.4 Users of DSE

- to pay due regard to the outcomes of the DSE assessment and take responsibility for following the advice resulting from the assessment and the guidance in the AU HS&E handbook;
- to request that a review of their assessment is undertaken if (for example) major changes are made to the equipment or nature of work tasks, if workstations are relocated, or if a medical condition arises that may be caused by use of DSE or may be exacerbated by the use of DSE;

3.5 AU Health, Safety and Environment Office

- to provide training for departmental DSE Assessors.

4.0 Practice (to be followed by Departmental Safety Officers except where otherwise noted)

4.1 Establish and maintain a register of all departmental DSE Users, as defined in 2.1

4.2 At the commencement of the programme of assessment, prioritise the list of Users in terms of:

- their intensity of DSE work;
- the time spent using DSE during work hours;
- any lack of freedom to choose their work pattern or content of work;

4.3 Task trained DSE Assessor/s to undertake the assessments, working in priority order and a reasonable overall time-span.

4.4 Assessors to use 'VDU workstation checklists' (supplied by AU Safety and Environment Office) which should be completed with the User during the assessment (which also acts as a training session).

4.5 The actions needed to address any recommendations can be immediate (e.g. adjustment of a chair) or they may need to involve the DSO, Manager/Supervisor and HoD (where changes to work patterns, equipment, software and/or facilities are needed).

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- 4.6 The prime objective of the assessment is to try and prevent development of medical problems in the future. However, if the assessment uncovers an existing problem or if a relevant medical condition arises, which may be related to the use of DSE, further assessment by occupational health specialists may be needed; in such cases the issue should be noted on the assessment checklist and the AU Occupational Health Physician should be consulted by the User (via HR).
- 4.7 Post Graduate Research Students may be able to claim for the costs of eye tests on the basis of low income. In the first instance form HC1W (available from GP or Student Wellness Centre) should be completed and sent to the address on the form. If support is refused take the letter to your department who will then arrange for payment as per the normal staff procedure.
- 4.8 The completed checklists are to be stored within the department while the Users remain members of AU, and for a further five years after they have left.

5.0 References

HSE (2003). The law on VDUs. An easy guide. C75 02/03

HSE (2003). VDU Workstation Checklist. C100 02/03

HSE (2003). Work with display screen equipment: Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002. L26

AU HS&E Website: Handbook. <http://www.aber.ac.uk/safety-environment/handbook/index.shtml>

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Display Screen Equipment

– What we have done to comply with the Regulations.

Users of DSE in each Department will be identified and a risk assessment conducted by a trained assessor. Recommendations for any adjustments will be given, and it is expected that Users will follow such advice.

The Departmental Safety Officer will coordinate the assessment process.

If any extra equipment is identified during the assessment that is required to reduce the risk of DSE-related health problems for an individual, this will be provided by the Department.

Users of DSE can request an eye test (contact Departmental Administrator, Safety Officer or Head of Department) and if a specific prescription is needed, a proportion of the cost will be met by the Department (contact Human Resources for details of current financial arrangements).

New Users of DSE will be trained in use of the equipment and software as necessary. Your Manager / Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that such training is undertaken.

Information on health and safety aspects of DSE use is provided on the AU HS&E website. All Users should read this information, and abide by the recommendations where relevant.

Follow the links from:

http://www.aber.ac.uk/safety-environment/handbook/proc_and_pracs/index.shtml

Definitions:

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