Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Policy

FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:	**Every Two Years**
COMMITTEE:	**Audit & Risk Committee**
RATIFICATION DATE:	**7 December 2023**
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	**Autumn 2025** **unless there is a material change**

Signed……
Chair of Audit & Risk Committee

Date ……

Signed ……
CEO

Date ……

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Introduction

Under the Health and 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 may cause some workers to experience fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache from overuse or improper use of DSE.

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- HSE – Working with Display Screen Equipment – DSE Regulations 1992 (ACOP L26) ISBN 0717625826
- HSE Free Leaflet INDG36(rev4) (Working with DSEs): http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf

All staff should read, understand and, where appropriate, act on this information.

Scope

This procedure applies to all schools within TrustEd Schools Alliance. It applies to all workers who regularly use DSE as a significant part of their normal work (daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more).

Policy Statement

TrustEd Schools Alliance intends to always provide a safe and healthy working environment and safe practices. It is committed to reducing the risk of accident or injury to all employees and other persons who may be affected by its activities. The Trustees will take all reasonable and practicable steps to comply with all relevant legislation and best practice regarding the use of display screen equipment and will carry out risk assessments and provide adequate training and supervision where required.

Definitions

Display screen equipment (DSE) means all equipment used at work in connection with a computer. That includes the display screen, keyboard, hard drive, mouse, printer, and workstation. A workstation comprises the desk, chair, and other related items such as a footrest and document holder.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) means any alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved; it includes both conventional display screens (monitors used for desk top PC's) and those used in associated technologies such as laptops, tablets, touchscreens, and smart phones.

User means an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work. It is up to individual line managers to determine which employees fall within the definition of a User; it will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as a User if they:

- normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; and
- use DSE in this way more or less daily; and
- have to transfer information quickly to or from the DSE.

- and also need to apply high levels of attention and concentration; or are highly dependent on DSE or have little choice about using it; or need special training or skills to use the DSE.

Part time and temporary workers will be assessed using the same criteria, for example, if an employee works two days a week but spends most of their time on DSE work they should definitely be classed as a DSE User.

Where a User is supplied by an agency/employment business, TrustEd Schools Alliance has responsibility to:

- Assess risks to agency workers using workstations
- Ensure all workstations comply with minimum requirements
- Ensure activities are planned so that agency workers can have breaks from DSE work
- Provide training to agency workers when their workstation is being modified
- Provide information to agency workers about breaks, training, risks, risk management and risk reduction measures.

Eye tests, and corrective glasses, health and safety training, and provision of information about these things is the responsibility of the employment business or agency.

A **Workstation** exists wherever there is display screen equipment (including portable DSE such as tablets or smart phones in prolonged use). For all DSE the workstation, as defined, is the assembly including the screen, keyboard, other parts of the computer and its accessories (such as the mouse or other input device), the desk, chair, and the immediate work environment. Anything else in the immediate work environment is also part of the workstation.

Home worker - If an employee is contracted to work from home, or they have an agreement to regularly work from home, the DSE Requirements still apply, whether or not the workstation is provided in whole or in part by the Trust/school.

Temporary Home worker - there is no increased risk from DSE work for those working at home temporarily. So, there is no requirement to carry out a home workstation assessment. During any period of temporary home working, there is a need to regularly discuss these arrangements. If such work is adversely affecting the health, safety, and welfare of their employees, they should take appropriate steps. However, employers should provide workers with advice on completing their own basic assessment at home. This HSE practical workstation checklist may help them.

Work break - these breaks enable the employee to have a change in their work activity to break away from static postures that are adopted for prolonged DSE work. Breaking up long spells of DSE work helps prevent fatigue, eye strain, upper limb problems and backache. These breaks are recommended frequently for short periods of time (e.g., micro pauses) and these can be as simple as answering phone calls, photocopying, attending meetings, etc. If such changes of activity are not possible the law requires work to be planned for DSE Users to take work breaks.

DSE regulations do not apply to the following:

- Display screen equipment onboard a means of transport
- Calculators, cash registers or and equipment having small data or measurement display required for direct use of the equipment.
- Workstations provided for school pupils or students.

Responsibilities

TrustEd Schools Alliance are responsible for:

- Provide training to Headteacher's/School Business Managers regarding DSE Assessment.
- DSE Policy and workstation checklist

Headteachers/The Safety Co-ordinator (SBM) are responsible for ensuring:

- Employees are aware of this procedure.
- Employees/Users complete the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Self-Assessment and any issues documented on the checklist are addressed.
- Employees are informed of the policy regarding the provision of eyesight tests for designated DSE users.
- Employees are advised on who to contact 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.

All Staff

All staff should:

- When using a DSE workstation, refer to Appendix 1 and set up that workstation accordingly.
- Refer and follow any local arrangements as advised by your SBM/Headteacher being.

Users should:

- Complete a DSE Assessment using the DSE self-assessment checklist every 2 years provide it to their manager to undertake actions as required.
- If changes to the workstation have been made, a new DSE self-assessment checklist should be completed.
- Ensure that any workstation used is adjusted and set up correctly for themselves before commencing work.
- Manage their workload to incorporate work breaks.
- Ensure that if they are contracted home workers or regular home workers that they undertake a DSE Self-Assessment using the DSE self-assessment checklist for their own home workstation.
- Raise any concerns to their manager and Headteacher/SBM as soon as possible so that issues can be remedied as appropriate in a timely manner.

Completing the DSE Self-Assessment Checklist (Appendix 2)

If display screen equipment is repeatedly used in the same location e.g., fixed desks, it is appropriate for the user's risk assessment to be recorded on the DSE Self-Assessment Checklist (Appendix 2 of this policy).

If hotdesking or laptops are frequently used for short periods of time, the user should complete the DSE Self-Assessment as a generic assessment. Sufficient training and information should be provided to enable them to undertake their own dynamic risk assessment whenever they set up a laptop of hot desk area e.g., setting their chair and workspace to prevent poor posture. Note that a dynamic risk assessment is not a written record.

Eye and Eyesight Test provision

DSE Users may undertake eyesight tests up to once every two years unless the optician specifies otherwise. If the DSE User experiences visual difficulties in the interim period, the request for an eye test must be agreed with the Headteacher/SBM and Appendix 3 completed prior to an eyesight test being arranged.

'Normal' corrective appliances are at the employees' own expense, but DSE Users needing 'special' corrective appliances may be prescribed a special pair of spectacles for display screen work by their optician.

The Headteacher/SBM confirms that an employee is a DSE User using the form in Appendix 3 and agrees the payment of £30 towards an eye test (although we would like to encourage staff to obtain a free eye test where possible as offered by many opticians) If the User requires corrective lenses for DSE use, a further £70 can be claimed towards new glasses or lenses. Written confirmation of this is required from the optician and needs to be returned to the Headteacher/SBM along with a VAT receipt for the eye test and any corrective appliances. Claims must be made at least 12 months prior to retirement.

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 Headteacher/SBM should contact the Trust Director of Finance for further advice. This may result in a further specialist assessment being carried out or a referral to Occupational Health.

Appendix 1 - Minimum Legal Requirements for Workstations

Section 1

1. An employer shall ensure that a workstation meets the requirements laid down in this Schedule to the extent that –

    - those requirements relate to a component which is present in the workstation concerned.
    - those requirements have effect with a view to securing the health, safety, and welfare of persons at work; and
    - the inherent characteristics of a given task make compliance with those requirements appropriate as respects the workstation concerned.

Section 2 - Equipment

(a) General comment

The use as such of the equipment must not be a source of risk for operators or users.

(b) Display screen

- The characters on the screen shall be well-defined and clearly formed, of adequate size and with adequate spacing between the characters and lines.
- The image on the screen should be stable, with no flickering or other forms of instability.
- The brightness and the contrast between the characters and the background shall be easily adjustable by the operator or user, and also be easily adjustable to ambient conditions.
- The screen must swivel and tilt easily and freely to suit the needs of the operator or user.
- It shall be possible to use a separate base for the screen or an adjustable table.
- The screen shall be free of reflective glare and reflections liable to cause discomfort to the operator or user.

(c) Keyboard

- The keyboard shall be tiltable and separate from the screen so as to allow the operator or user to find a comfortable working position avoiding fatigue in the arms or hands.
- The space in front of the keyboard shall be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the operator or user.
- The keyboard shall have a matt surface to avoid reflective glare.
- The arrangement of the keyboard and the characteristics of the keys shall be such as to facilitate the use of the keyboard.
- The symbols on the keys shall be adequately contrasted and legible from the design working position.

(d) Work desk or work surface

- The work desk or work surface shall have a sufficiently large, low-reflectance surface and allow a flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents, and related equipment.
- The document holder shall be stable and adjustable and shall be positioned so as to minimise the need for uncomfortable head and eye movements.

- There shall be adequate space for operators or users to find a comfortable position.

(e) Work chair

- The work chair shall be stable and allow the operator or user easy freedom of movement and a comfortable position.
- The seat shall be adjustable in height.
- The seat back shall be adjustable in both height and tilt.
- A footrest shall be made available to any operator or user who wishes one.

Section 3 - Environment

(a) Space requirements

- The workstation shall be dimensioned and designed so as to provide sufficient space for the operator or user to change position and vary movements.

(b) Lighting

- Any room lighting or task lighting provided shall ensure satisfactory lighting conditions and an appropriate contrast between the screen and the background environment, taking into account the type of work and the vision requirements of the operator or user.

- Possible disturbing glare and reflections on the screen or other equipment shall be prevented by co-ordinating workplace and workstation layout with the positioning and technical characteristics of the artificial light sources.

(c) Reflections and glare

- Workstations shall be so designed that sources of light, such as windows and other openings, transparent or translucid walls, and brightly coloured fixtures or walls cause no direct glare and no distracting reflections on the screen.
- Windows shall be fitted with a suitable system of adjustable covering to attenuate the daylight that falls on the workstation.

(d) Noise

- Noise emitted by equipment belonging to any workstation shall be taken into account when a workstation is being equipped, with a view in particular to ensuring that attention is not distracted, and speech is not disturbed.

(e) Heat

- Equipment belonging to any workstation shall not produce excess heat which could cause discomfort to operators or users.

(f) Radiation

- All radiation with the exception of the visible part of the electromagnetic spectrum shall be reduced to negligible levels from the point of view of the protection of operators' or users' health and safety.

(g) Humidity

- An adequate level of humidity shall be established and maintained.

Section 4 - Interface between computer and operator/user

In designing, selecting, commissioning, and modifying software, and in designing tasks using display screen equipment, the employer shall take into account the following principles:

- software must be suitable for the task.
- software must be easy to use and, where appropriate, adaptable to the level of knowledge or experience of the operator or user; no quantitative or qualitative checking facility may be used without the knowledge of the operators or users.
- systems must provide feedback to operators or users on the performance of those systems.
- systems must display information in a format and at a pace which are adapted to operators or users.
- the principles of software ergonomics must be applied, in particular to human data processing.

Further guidance can be found Working with display screen equipment (DSE) HSE guide

Appendix 2 DSE Self-Assessment Checklist

Name:		**School:**	
Main work location:		**Date:**	

If the employee/user works from various locations this DSE Self-Assessment should be completed as a 'generic' assessment and then dynamically risk assess future workstations. This form should be completed by the employee and then forwarded to their manager.

The Headteacher/SBM should read through and discuss the information with the employee and their line manager, including any problems that have been identified and decide what action to take.

The DSE assessment should be reviewed when:

- Major changes are made to equipment, furniture, work environment or software.
- The nature of work tasks changes considerably.
- It is thought that the controls in place may be causing other problems.

The Headteacher/SBM must review any changes of the risk assessment and maintain a records to show review.

Ensure there is evidence 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 swiveled?		
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 keyboards?		
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: a) Only carry equipment or papers if they are needed. b) Store documents electronically where possible? c) Use a bag / backpack / wheeled trolley / pilot case?		

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

Appendix 3

DSE/VDU Eye Test Requirement Request form

PART A: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE EMPLOYEE:
Name:
Department/Job Role:
What is the distance from your eyes to the Display Screen Equipment:
PART B: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEADTEACHER/SBM I confirm that the above employee is a VDU User: Appendix 2 has been completed and a VDU assessment has been carried out: ☐ The employee is either: A new user **YES / NO** Is due a routine test **YES / NO** Is experiencing visual difficulties which may reasonably be considered to be related to VDU/DSE work: **YES / NO**
Part C: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEADTEACHER/SBM I agree to the repayment of £30 towards an eye test. VAT receipt attached. ☐ I confirm that the employee has provided written confirmation from their Optician of the requirement of corrective lenses for DSE use and therefore agree to the repayment of £70 towards new glasses or lenses. Confirmation and VAT receipt attached. ☐
Signed: **Name:**
Position: **Date:**