CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Local Code of Practice 17

Display Screen Equipment/
Visual Display Units

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Beacon Council

2002-2003
Improving Urban Green Spaces
Libraries as a Community Resource
2003-2004
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REFERENCES

APPENDICES

**DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT/
VISUAL DISPLAY UNITS**

1.   **Introduction**

The aim of this document is to provide guidance to comply with The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations.

The Regulations require the employer to carry out an assessment (Appendix B and C) of all display screen equipment (workstations) where that equipment is used by an employee who can be classified as a 'user'. Not every piece of equipment will therefore have to be assessed.

References

A.   Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

B.   Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

C.   *The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002*

2.   **Application**

This guidance applies to all display screen 'users' within the Children's Service

3.   **Definitions**

3.1   **The Term 'User'**

The Regulations refer to the 'user' of the equipment. A 'user' is defined as someone who habitually uses*, **or is to use***, the equipment as a significant part of their normal work. An employee is also deemed a 'user' if most of the following seven criteria are satisfied:

a)   carrying out of the job depends on the display screen equipment (DSE)

b)   there is no discretion as to the use of the DSE

c)   significant training and particular skills in the use of DSE are needed

d)   there is continuous use of DSE for spells of an hour or more

e)   use is more or less daily

f)   there is a fast transfer of information between the user and screen (e.g. have to key quickly)

g)   a high level of concentration is required

The Regulations also apply to persons who are self-employed, who may use the Council's equipment. Whilst an assessment must be carried out for those persons, they are not covered by the requirement to be offered eye and eye sight tests, (see paragraph (4) for guidance on eye sight testing procedure) training and planning of daily work routines.

Non-employees are not covered by these Regulations therefore schools are not required to assess computers used in the classroom by pupils. However, we still have a duty for the health and safety of others under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and should ensure that screens are not prone to glare or reflections and that the equipment provided is ergonomically suited to the individual's needs.

Council display screen 'users' include:

i)   Word processing operators

ii)   Personal Secretaries

iii)   Data entry clerk

iv)   Librarian

v)   Managers (depending on meeting most of the seven criteria listed above), (a-g)

vi)   Staff using the workstation for more than 2 hours continuously daily

3.2.   **Exceptions to the Regulations**

The Regulations do not apply to televisions, public information screens, portable systems not in prolonged use, 'window' typewriters, calculators and cash registers.

3.3   **A Workstation**

The Regulations, whilst referring to display screen equipment, make reference to the assessment of a workstation. A workstation includes the following:

a)   Desk or Table

b)   Chair

c)   Display screen equipment including screen, keyboard, mouse, etc.

d)   Document holder

e)   Telephone

f)   Printer

g)   Desk lamp

h)	Immediate Work Area and Environment including temperature, humidity, lighting, glare etc.

This list is not exhaustive. The person carrying out the assessment, if in doubt, should include any piece of equipment rather than leave it out of the assessment.

## 4.0	Eye and Eyesight Testing

Employees who are classed as display screen 'users' are entitled, but have no obligation, to undergo an eye and eyesight test. Service Areas are to ensure this facility is offered to:

a)	existing 'users'

b)	An existing employee *who is to become* a display screen 'user'

c)	to new users

Note: a test requested by a new employee should be carried out before that employee commences work with display screen equipment, similarly where an existing employee's work changes (b) that test should also be carried out before the commencement of the new task.

Eye and eyesight retests are to be made available to 'users' every two years unless an eyesight problem is identified at which stage the Service Area should consider an earlier appointment.

For further information regarding the eye and eye sight testing facility, please contact the Human Resources Operations Unit and speak to the Personnel Officer who normally deals with your service/school.

## 5.0	Display Screen Assessments

## 5.1	Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Heads of Service/Governing Bodies to ensure that the requirements of this arrangement are carried out within the Service/School.

Heads of Service/Governing Bodies are required to make sure that assessments are made on all display screen workstations; however, they may delegate the actual task of assessment. Financial provision for any purchase of equipment etc identified as a result of the assessment must be made by Services/Governing Bodies.

## 5.2	The Assessment

a)	The 'Assessor'

The person selected to undertake assessments must have attended a Corporate VDU Assessors course. For further information please contact the *Learning* & Development Unit for details of the next available courses.

b) <u>Users' Self-Assessment</u>

To assist them in carrying out assessments the assessor may ask 'users' of display screen equipment to complete the self-assessment checklist (Appendix C). These forms should be returned it to the assessor within a given time. The assessor must sign the instructions and state a "return" date. The Regulations require the assessor to involve the user in the assessment. The assessor will then have a basis to begin the full assessment with the user's 'problems' already highlighted. This is additionally useful if there is more than one user of a piece of equipment.

Assessors may wish to go through the self-assessment with the user or leave the user to complete alone. The procedure is entirely at the assessor's discretion.

The assessor is responsible for collating the replies and keeping the self assessment checklist in a file for future reference.

Where equipment is used at home it will be necessary for the self-assessment checklist to be used and may involve a home visit by the assessor and the possible provision of suitable workstation equipment.

It is important that the assessor has some knowledge of the equipment in use, e.g. use of the control buttons, as some members of staff may have no problems except that they do not know how to use the contrast and brightness controls or tilt the screen. The assessor may therefore wish to ensure their own knowledge first before issuing the self-assessment checklist.

c) <u>Record of Assessment (Full Assessment Form)</u>

The full assessment form must be completed by an assessor where the display screen equipment and user comes within the terms laid down by the Regulations. ***There is a help sheet at Appendix B which assessors can use to assist them.***

If there is any doubt over any of the questions, help should be sought from either the IS Help Desk or the Health and Safety Unit. One assessment has to be completed per workstation.

Where there is not a requirement to carry out an assessment of a workstation then that information must be recorded by the assessor.

Assessors must involve the user during the course of the assessment as this is a requirement of the Regulations. Users should be made aware of the reason for the assessment and be encouraged to give comments/descriptions 'in their own words'.

At the end of the assessment is a section for the assessor's other comments such as issues which have been raised during the assessment, but may not be incorporated into the form. In that section the assessor may wish to make

an analysis of any problems that could have arisen. When doing this, the assessor should try to keep a broad overview of the whole of the working area. In some instances, e.g. if everyone in the same area/room is complaining of headaches or eyestrain, this may be due to lighting problems or glare, and not a problem with an individual.

6.0 **Implementing Remedial Action**

6.1 Assessor

The information and training that an assessor should have received *will* help them to identify obvious problems prior to carrying out any assessment. Either as the manager concerned or with the relevant assessor, you may take action to eliminate that problem e.g. glare from overhead lights, remedy/ rotate desk 90 degrees. Other problems may be overcome by rearranging daily routines, supplying information, giving training, purchasing equipment.

6.2 Service

Where the assessment identifies the requirement to provide equipment, e.g. blinds, desks, chairs, document holders etc. the Service should prioritise the requests. Where a workstation is particularly bad in equipment, position, training of users, etc, the Regulations state that action must be taken immediately to rectify the situation.

7.0 **Safe Working Procedures for Visual Display Units**

Reference should be made throughout the assessment(s) to the Safe Working Procedures that are part of this Arrangement.

Individual Services or School Health and Safety Policies may identify specific procedures, in particular lines of reporting, communication and ordering of equipment. The Safe Working Procedure is a document that must be given to all users of display screens and their line managers. Those managers have a responsibility to ensure that employees understand the contents of the procedure, it is not sufficient to issue them to the user. Consideration must be given to those persons who do not have a good understanding of the English language or who cannot read.

8.0 **Recording Assessments**

Heads of Service and Head Teachers will make their own arrangements for ensuring that all the assessments are recorded and held on file. That record could be held centrally by the Safety Liaison Officer, the Premises Controller or other person. The assessor and the manager responsible for the display screen equipment must retain a copy. The assessment must be easily available for inspection by visiting enforcement agencies (Health and Safety Executive Inspector) *and officers from the Health and Safety Unit.*

9.0 **Responsibility**

The Head of Service has the responsibility for the following issues:

a) Ensure workstation assessments are completed before work commences.

b) Appoint trained assessors.

c) Record working procedures.

d) ***Provide arrangements so that users can take regular breaks, away from the keyboard, by ensuring variety of work. These breaks should be for at least 10 minutes after an hour's continues use and at regular intervals thereafter.***

e) Provide eye and eyesight testing and retests at least every two years.

f) Ensure display screen arrangements are reviewed when the person, equipment or environmental factors alter.

g) Issue the Safe Working Procedure to all users and keep a record of the distribution.

10.0   Help/Assistance

Help and assistance are available from the Health and Safety Unit and/or the ISTD Help Desk.

SAFE WORKING PROCEDURES FOR DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

INTRODUCTION   The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations were introduced to enable employers and employees to minimise any risks arising from the use of Visual Display Units and other display screen equipment used for work.

The Council has obligations. These include an assessment of all 'workstations' used by a 'user' to establish that it complies with the technical requirements of the schedule to the Regulations (see below for definitions of workstation and user).

The primary purposes of the Regulations are to ensure that you have equipment, furniture and surroundings that enable you to work in adequate comfort.

The assessment exercise cannot be effective without the input of you, the user. This Safe Working Procedure also gives some commonsense advice about how you can achieve comfort at your workstation and gives hints and tips on overcoming some of the problems that may arise.

OBJECTIVES   The objectives of this Safe Working Procedure are:

(i)   to give guidance to users on procedures for the safe installation and operation of display screen equipment

(ii)   to assist the Authority in meeting the overall legal duties

(iii)   to comply with Services Local Codes of Practice.

THE TERM USER   The Display Screen Regulations refer to the 'user' of the equipment. A 'user' is defined as someone who habitually uses the equipment as a significant part of his or her normal work. **An employee is also deemed a 'user' if most or all of the following seven criteria are satisfied:**

a)   carrying out of the job depends on the display screen equipment

b)   there is no discretion as to the use of the display screen equipment

c)   significant training and particular skills in the use of the display screen are needed

d)   there is continuous use of display screen for spells of an hour or more

e)   use is more or less daily

f)   there is a fast transfer of information between the 'user' and screen

g)   a high level of concentration is required

THE WORKSTATION

The Regulations, whilst referring to display screen equipment, make reference to the assessment of a workstation. A workstation including the following:

a)   Desk or Table

b)   Chair

c)   Assembly of display screen equipment including screen, keyboard, mouse etc.

d)   Document holder

e)   Telephone

f)   Printer

g)   Desk lamp

h)   Immediate Work Area and Environment including temperature, humidity, lighting, glare etc.

This list is not exhaustive. The person carrying out the assessment, if in doubt, should include any piece of equipment rather than leave it out of the assessment.

HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Environmental Aspects

Insufficient attention to the working environment can result in operators complaining of one or more of the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Fatigue and loss of concentration
- Stress
- Irritability
- Dry irritating eyes
- Nausea

These symptoms, collectively known as 'Visual Distress Syndrome' can be prevented by instituting the workstation and systems of work standards contained throughout this Safe Working Procedure.

Musculoskeletal problems in keyboard work.

Many of the aches and pains associated with display screen use arise because users sit in a fixed position for too long. Some of the symptoms might be aching and dull pain in the head, neck, lower back and between the shoulders. It is therefore suggested that 'users' take a 5-10 minute break after 50-60 minute continuous screen/keyboard use. Taking a break from screen work does not mean that you have to stop work altogether, but that you can turn your attention to another task away from the screen. The break away from the screen should benefit your eyes, arms, wrists and shoulders.

As a general rule work schedules should be planned to allow flexibility.

It is recommended that no user should work on a display screen for more than a total time exceeding 7 hours per day. This figure however, does not include other work, breaks away from the screen or lunch.

In the case of part-time employees, the above should apply where possible.

Visual fatigue

Visual fatigue can be prevented by adopting a system of work that allows variation of the visual tasks within the overall job. Try to organise your work so that the time spent at the screen is regularly broken by periods of non-screen activity.

Eye and Eyesight testing arrangements

The Authority is under a duty to offer an Eye and Eyesight test to users. You can elect to have an Eye and/or Eyesight test as soon as you become a user of display screen equipment. Subsequently you will be offered re-tests at least **_every two years_**. If however, you experience visual difficulty which may reasonably be caused by work on the display screen equipment within the re-test period, contact your line manager who may arrange for an Eye and Eyesight test as soon as possible.

Provision of Spectacles

Where the results of an eyesight test show that you need glasses **specifically** to work with a display screen the

employer will meet the cost of supplying the basic frame and lenses, up to a laid down amount. Details of this sum are available from the Human Resources Unit or the Headteacher, in the case of school staff.

Please follow the procedures laid down in this users guide (see below) - <u>do not</u> make your own arrangements and ask the Service/School to pay retrospectively.

Note that only basic appliances need be supplied and this does not include so-called 'display screen' glasses that are incorrectly advertised as being a protection device. If you want to have more 'up-market' glasses or frames, or tinted lenses, then you will be responsible for the extra cost. If you need glasses for every day use then your employer does not have to pay towards the cost. It is only where the need is specific to using your screen that the entitlement arises.

Staff wishing to obtain eye and eyesight tests, should contact their line manager who will arrange for the appropriate test. The Human Resources Operations Unit can assist managers by arranging for these tests to be carried out. A copy of the results of the test should be passed to Human Resources Operations Unit who will retain them on the personnel file.

Schools may either use the above service or arrange for staff to attend a local ophthalmic optometrist of their choice. The results of the test should be retained on the employees' personnel file.   For further information contact The Human Resources Operations Unit on 020-8359 2000.

Display Screens and Health

Since the introduction of display screens, many studies have been carried out to see whether there is a risk of harmful radiation exposure from screen work. There is no conclusive evidence to support the fear that display screen radiation is responsible for miscarriages and birth defects to infants born to operators. Further studies have shown there to be no benefit from so-called protection devices such as radiation filter screens and some devices such as lead-lined aprons for pregnant woman may actually be counter productive.

Arrangements for Pregnant Operators

It is recommended that where a user is pregnant and requests not to use the display screen, she should approach her line manager and discuss the possibility of redeployment during the time of her pregnancy.

In General

As with any item of equipment, misuse of display screens can result in a risk to the health and safety of the operator. It is necessary for line managers to ensure that users under their control are aware of the operating parameters of this Safe Working Procedure.

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

The Screen

The screen position should have the ability to tilt and swivel allowing the user to avoid glare reflections and to adopt a comfortable position whilst reading the screen
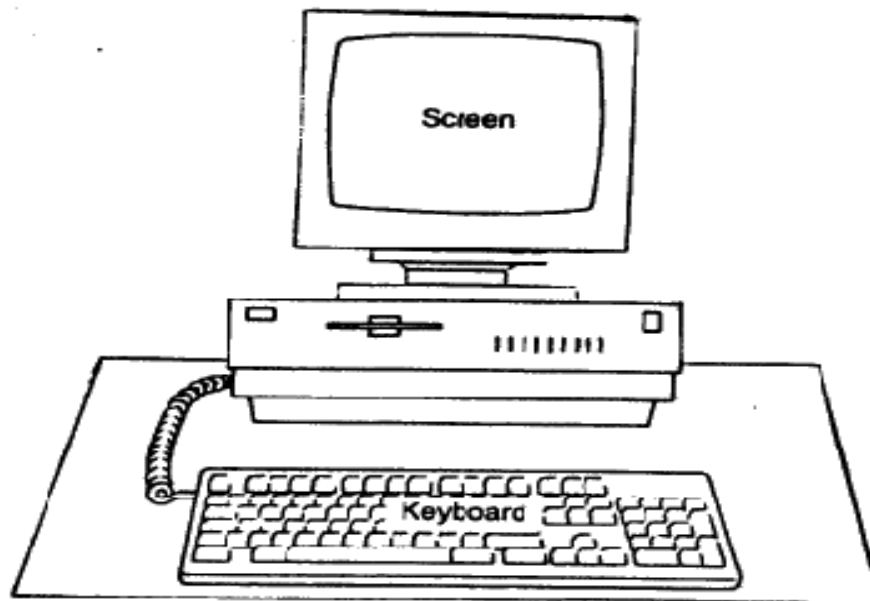
- there should be a contrast or brightness control

- images on screen should be stable, without flicker and legible

- reflection or glare can be avoided by re-positioning the screen away from direct day light or reflected light. Use

window blinds where reflected light is present. Screen filters may be provided to those screens still affected if the above methods have not improved the situation.

Keyboard

Must be suitable for the task, separate from the display screen unit and offer the user a choice in positioning, usually by little legs at the back of the keyboard.

The Desk

Your desk should be large enough to enable the screen and keyboard to be placed directly in front of you. The distance from front to back must allow at least 5 cm between the front of the keyboard and the desk edge. This will enable you to rest your hands between keying tasks. You should be able to vary the position of the viewing distance of the screen. Where the desk has built-in drawers, do not place your screen or keyboard above them or you will have to assume an unsuitable posture when keying. Make sure that you have enough legroom under the work surface - avoid storing materials beneath the desk. Older desks that have a drawer at the centre front are not suitable for users of display screen equipment.

The surface of the desk should not cause disturbing reflection of overhead lights.

Try to organise your work so that the desk is kept clear of unnecessary clutter and obstructions. If you identify a need for additional storage, discuss this with your line manager.

Trolleys

Only trolleys specifically designed for display screens are to be used. The trolleys are to be stable. The casters/wheels are to be maintained so that they are free running. Care must be exercised in locating trolley borne equipment both in and out of use so that it does not obstruct access, cause trip or other
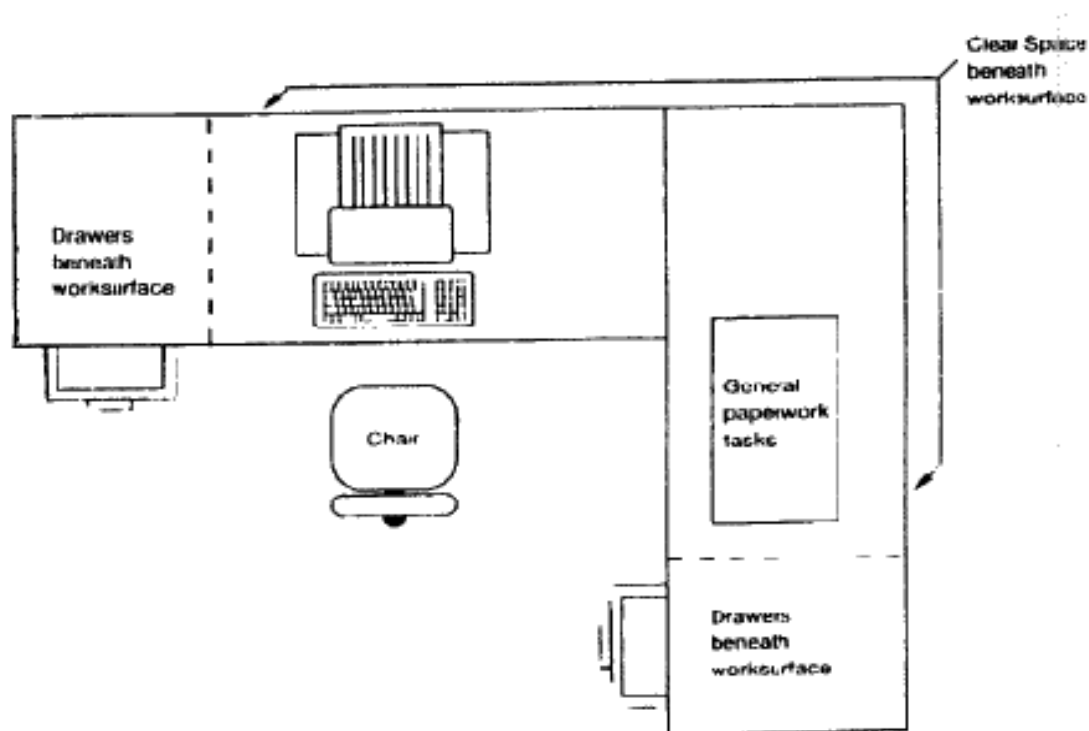
hazards and block fire escape routes.

Backrest angle

Backrest height

Seat height
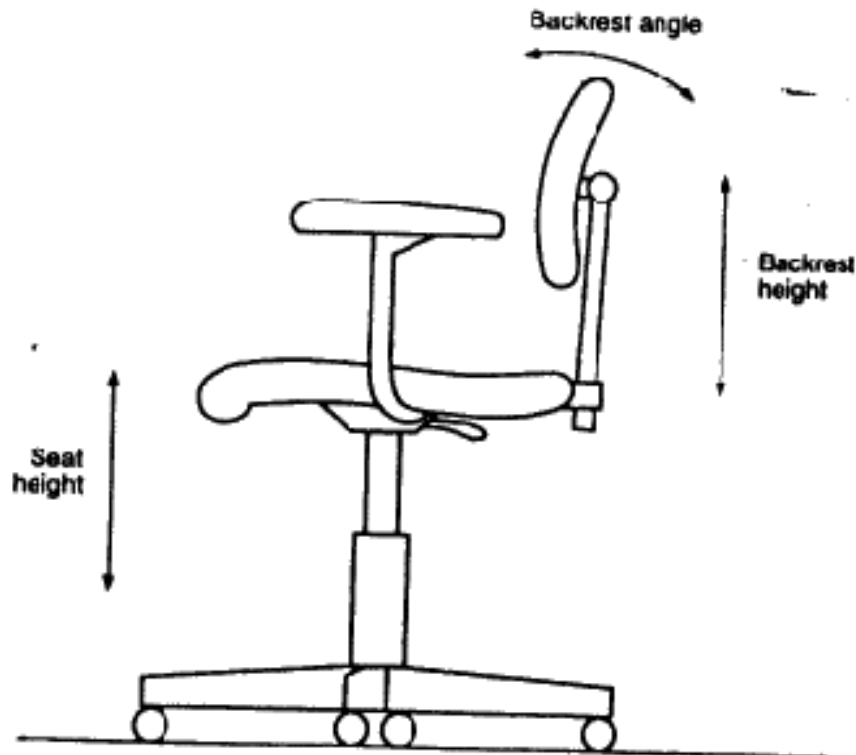
Chairs

The prime requirement of the chair is that it will enable the user to adopt a comfortable position. The minimum requirements being that it can be adjusted for height and the back providing good posture support for the user.

The chair should be stable and enable you to vary position without undue effort. Ensure you know how to adjust your chair. There is no requirement for chairs to have arms. If your chair has arms, ensure that they do not prevent you getting close to the work surface.

Accessories

Document Holder

Where a holder would be of benefit, you should be supplied with one. It should enable you to position the document at the same height and angle as the screen and to reduce awkward neck movements.

Footrest

When seated the users feet should reach the floor or a suitable footrest should be supplied. Where you require the use of a footrest, you should be supplied with one. The footrest should be stable and should enable you to place your feet flat upon it.

Mouse

Where your job requires the use of a mouse, or some other input device, there must be adequate space for safe use. With a mousemat, it is usual for a template, about A5 size to be used. This should be placed on your preferred side, and should be unobstructed. The mouse itself can be specified for use by either a right-handed or a left-handed user.

Wrist Rest

Some people may find the use of a wrist rest advantageous.

Discuss any needs regarding accessories with your line manager.

Software

The software that you use should be understandable and should enable the best use of the keyboard. The screen is to present information in a standard readily understood pattern.

The Work Environment

Lighting

Glare can be a cause for complaint, either by making information impossible or very difficult to see (disability glare), or by being sufficiently obtrusive, resulting in symptoms of discomfort and fatigue for the operator (discomfort glare). The following actions regarding positioning of equipment could be taken:

- the screen to be arranged so that neither the user nor the screen face a window

- where window glare is excessive, blinds should be fitted so that they can be controlled by the user

- fluorescent light should be at right angles to the screen face. Diffusers are to be fitted

- try to avoid highly polished or glossy surfaces e.g. work tops, walls ceilings, partitions etc.

Where the general light level is low it may be helpful for you to have a desk lamp.

Temperature

It is sometimes impossible to reach an agreement on what is a comfortable working temperature, people often have different preferences. Several factors have a bearing on this, including work rate, clothing and individual health.

The recommended temperature for an area with a display screen is somewhere between 19 and 23 Celsius although this is not a statutory temperature range.

Humidity

The humidity level should be maintained at an acceptable level for comfort. Very dry air can cause discomfort. Going to the other extreme, excessive humidity can be most uncomfortable. Somewhere between 40% and 60% is recommended.

Noise

The display screen equipment emits very little noise, certain printers may produce a level of noise that is a nuisance and unacceptable within the work environment. It may be possible to fit an acoustic cover, or move the printer away from normal office conversation.

Training and Information

Your service area will give you suitable and sufficient instruction and training on how best to use your display screen equipment. This should include:

- advice on how to properly adjust your furniture and equipment

- the importance of looking after your equipment

- how your system and the software should be used

- the duties of employers and employees under the Regulations

- your involvement in workstation assessments

- any risks that your employer has identified and the proposed action to remedy those risks

- the importance of regularly breaking from screen work

Where safety representatives have been appointed, they are also entitled to information and training.

Training should be updated as necessary, for example, when new software, furniture or display screen equipment is introduced.

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET

ASSESSMENT HELP SHEET
FOR ASSESSORS OF DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (VDUs)

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 require the Council to carry out an assessment of the equipment and working area, to establish any risks to the health and safety of users of that equipment.

It is important that <u>all</u> questions are answered on this record form as the assessor is responsible by law for the decisions, conclusions and recommendations made. The assessment should identify areas where there is a variance during the working day i.e. lighting levels differ from the morning to the afternoon in winter months.

NOTE

Before carrying out an assessment ensure that you have completed the Council's assessment course.

Reference may be made to the users' Self-Assessment form if completed when carrying out a full assessment of the workstation. The Service Area policy for use with Display Screen Equipment should also be referred to during the assessment.

It must be important in carrying out the assessment that, when problems are identified, the employees' hopes are not raised with the impression given that solutions and recommendations will be implemented immediately or are possible (or easy) to implement – some are! The Service Area Management Team will have to prioritise the recommendations according to the degree of risk to health and safety.

Assessors should not just ask a question to receive a YES/NO answer, they must also ask the user to show how a control is operated; where supplies of cleaning chemicals are kept; the procedures for repairs etc.

All boxes should be answered by a YES or NO answer.

Ensure that all work equipment used is circled on the assessment form.

USER

- Reference should be made to the policy to establish significant use of the workstation. Prolonged spells of more than one hour plus other criteria determine the individual is a 'user' under the Regulations.

SECTION 1

Space

- It is a legal requirement that all employees have a minimum working space 3.7m^2 or 11m^3. Measurements may already be in existence and space standards checked. This does not, however, mean that there is sufficient space to work safely.

- Users need reasonable space to be able to move their seats back and walk away from the equipment.

SECTION 2

Lighting and Electrical

- Lighting in most situations where a workstation is in use should be measured between 300 and 500 lux. Measurements may already have been taken.

- It is important that users are able to read documents that they may be typing or reading from.

- Glare and reflections on the screen make it difficult to see the work being typed.

- It may be appropriate that users should wear dark clothes when using a workstation to prevent their bright clothes being reflected onto the screen.

- Cables must be tidy and ideally one plug in one socket. Multi-adaptors must <u>not</u> be used. Gangs of sockets are acceptable but action should be taken to provide more sockets. Where extension reels are used, they must be fully extended before use.

- Lighting which is flickering (fluorescent tubes) are not only a problem but also irritating. However not everyone can perceive flicker.

- Lighting and workstation layout should be co-ordinated to prevent reflections or glare.

SECTION 3

Noise

- The Noise at Work Regulations 1989 lay down levels where the employer must take action to eliminate or reduce those levels. This occurs where the level of noise is impairing the ability to hear or be heard at normal speech levels.

- Any equipment that produces noise likely to be a distraction should be acoustically shielded or moved away from the user. An absorbent surface may also help to reduce noise and the transmission of vibration. Recommendations in European Law state levels should be no greater than 55dB for tasks demanding a high degree of concentration, and no greater than 60dB for other on-screen work.

SECTION 4

Temperature

- There is a legal requirement to provide a minimum temperature of 16°C after the first hour of work and maintained at that level and if possible adjustable.

- The temperature levels must be comfortable for the user.

- The equipment must not become too hot that it causes an injury or discomfort.

- Where there is a problem with heat or cold, temperature readings may be required to be taken.
  All buildings should have thermometers.

- There are no maximum temperatures laid down in the Regulations. Working in high temperatures is known to cause drowsiness and inefficiency ultimately resulting in health problems.

- Effective means of ensuring air circulation must be provided. The air can be fresh, i.e. from outside or can be artificially purified i.e. air conditioning plant. Fresh air has the advantage of a good humidity balance although a drawback is an inconsistency of temperature and variable quality. Open windows also mean draughts and noise.

- Look to see if windows can open or have been painted shut. Ask whether air conditioning, if provided, can be controlled.

SECTION 5

Humidity

- An adequate level of humidity must be maintained for the comfort of users (between 40% and 60% in an office). What constitutes a comfortable level is dependent upon variables such as workrate and temperature.

- Poor humidity is often cited as a contributory cause of 'sick building syndrome'.

- Poor humidity will show itself in many forms for example:

  a) dryness of the skin, throat
  b) look for signs of dry humidity such as complaints of sore eyes (contact lens wearers suffer more)
  c) build up of static electricity
  d) facial rashes may occur although rarely.

It is best not to describe the above but to let the user indicate whether they suffer from a dryness of the throat, etc.

Where such problems exist, call the Health and Safety Unit.

- The moisture content of the air can be too high and is usually caused by a process involving the use of liquids. De-humidifiers draw out moisture from the air and can be run to drain or require regular emptying.

SECTION 6

Maintenance of Equipment

- Equipment should not be manually handled except to move on a trolley from one place to another.

- Where there are a number of users of equipment, each user must carry out a visual inspection of that equipment to ensure it is safe to use before they use it – training will be required.

- Ask the user what is the procedure to report faults – if they do not know get their Manager to tell them. Procedures need to be adequate.

SECTION 7

Access/Egress

- Where a Disabled person uses equipment, has consideration been given that cables etc have been placed in a safe position – even under the table/desk?

- Relating this to Section 1, could the user escape easily if the fire alarm sounds, or do they have to move a lot of equipment out of the way?

SECTION 8

Display Screen

- It may sound simple but some people do not know how to adjust the brightness and contrast. Ask the user to show you how to operate the equipment.

- Users' eyesight will vary and so the user will need to adjust the distance of the screen from them as well as tilt the screen, again some people do not know how to do this – ask them to show you.

- A minority of people has a sensitivity of vision that makes them aware of the image renewal process (flicker), it is important to find this out. It may be technically possible to modify the display screen equipment.

- Has an anti-glare filter screen been provided for the sake of it – find out why one was provided. Were other alternatives looked at first?

- Cleaning the screen and filter is an important DAILY routine that many people forget.

- Filters are a last resort!

SECTION 9

Keyboard and Input Devices

- Space and use of the keyboard is important to give sufficient space for the arms and wrists. There are a number of different keyboards on the market.

SECTION 10

Work Desk and Surface

- Space and room to work are important as are the colour of the desk and the amount of paper on it (reflections onto the screen).

- Are users cluttering up the work area unnecessarily, e.g. with personal belongings?

- Document holders are useful not only to keep the work surface clearer but also to prevent the user from unnecessary head, neck and eye movements. Holders should be at the same height and angle as the display screen and immediately alongside.

- Consideration must be given to the height of the user. Can their legs fit under the desk/table?

SECTION 11

Work seat or chair

- Are all castors working properly or are people using damaged/unsafe equipment?

- Seats must be adjustable in height, backs adjustable – ask the user to show you how to adjust the seat. The chair needs to be comfortable for the user particularly in respect of the position of the arms when using the display screen.

SECTION 12

Footrest

- Where a user's feet cannot touch the floor a footrest must be supplied. Makeshift footrests are not allowed, as they can be a hazard.

SECTION 13

<u>User Computer Interface</u>

- Stress and fatigue are important health problems to consider.

- Does the user feel fatigued and stressed because of the unsuitability of the software, lack of training on the software and equipment, etc.

- Where performance monitoring is used, the user must know of it.

SECTION 14

<u>User Personal Factors</u>

- Reference should be made to the Local Code of Practice for Working with Display Screen Equipment.

- Eye and eyesight tests are on offer from the Council, they need not be taken up by the user.

- Rest breaks must be taken.

- The Manager/Supervisor must monitor the workload and the user should have the discretion and flexibility to decide when to take a break.

- Is work properly programmed to ensure breaks from the equipment? Rest breaks are often taken after the onset of fatigue. Proper job design should aim for prevention rather than cure.

- The aim is to reduce fatigue and stress that is caused by using the equipment continuously, for too long or because of medication.

- Very few people are photosensitive epileptics – users may not know whether they are or not. If they are, then have they had any problems? If they have, reference may have to be made to the Occupational Health Unit (referral must be made through the Personnel Unit).

SECTION 15

<u>User Training</u>

Managers should have identified training needs on in-house courses or external courses. Managers must also give induction training. Many users are just shown the equipment and no one asks any obvious questions.

Is training continuous or has it been a 'one-off'?

SECTION 16

<u>Information for Employees</u>

- The name of the Safety Representative may not be known – attempts should be made to identify them. Have they been involved in the provision and use of the equipment – ask the Manager/Supervisor to ensure that they have.

- Ask the employee if they have read the Local Code of Practice on Display Screens, if they have not, ask their Manager to get a copy and go through it with the employee.

SECTION 17

Employee Consultation

- Employees must be informed of this assessment, told of health and safety issues relating to the use of the equipment when not following the Code of Practice and consulted in the use and position of equipment.

SECTION 18

Job Design

- Stress and fatigue must be controlled and by good job design they can be. Where possible, rest breaks and off-screen activities should be planned into the working day.

SECTION 19

Any Other/Specific Factors

This section is intended to identify areas which the user raises as being a problem which they foresee/perceive.

Any comments the assessor wishes to make should be stated in this section.

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

ASSESSMENT FORM

LOCATION OF WORKSTATION   RECORD NO. _____

_____   DATE _____

DESCRIPTION OF EQUIPMENT

MAKE AND MODEL _____

SERIAL/CODE NUMBERS _____

WORK STATION EQUIPMENT IN USE

WORK DESK	MICROFICHE	TELEPHONE
CHAIR	FILTER SCREEN	DESK LAMP/LOCAL LIGHTING
DISPLAY SCREEN	PRINTER	OVERHEAD LIGHTING
KEYBOARD	FOOTREST	ELECTRIC FAN
OTHER INPUT DEVICE	DOCUMENT HOLDER	EXTERNAL DRIVES

(CIRCLE WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE)

	YES/NO
USER	
Is the workstation used by more than one person?	
Is there a user who uses the workstation for a significant amount of their time (see policy)	
1. Space	
Is there sufficient space (legal minimum $11m^3$ or $3.7m^2$), with enough storage to enable easy access to the workstation?	
Does the space permit reasonable variation in the position of furniture and equipment and allow ease of movement for the user?	
2. Lighting/Electrical	
Is there adequate lighting for display screen work?	
Have desklamps or other local lighting been supplied if required?	
Can lighting be dimmed or adjusted?	
Are the windows/skylights visible in screen?	
Have adjustable window blinds (or alternative type of easily adjustable covering) been fitted?	
Have fixtures and fittings been positioned to avoid reflections upon the workstation?	
Is the cabling secure and tidy?	
Are there an adequate number of sockets available? Is there a need for extension leads?	

3. **Noise**	
Have sources of noise been reduced or equipment moved away from the workstation?	
4. **Temperature**	
Is the temperature maintained at a level that ensures operator comfort?	
Have all sources of excess heat (i.e. those likely to cause injury or discomfort to operators)been eliminated or suitably controlled?	
Can users adjust the temperature?	
Is there adequate ventilation?	
5. **Humidity**	
Does the air feel comfortable? If not, have controls been considered (e.g. plants, humidifier)?	
6. **Maintenance of Equipment**	
Is work equipment in a good state of repair?	
Are there adequate procedures to report faults?	
Are the response times achieved?	
7. **Access/Egress**	
Is escape easy in an emergency?	
Is provision for Disabled users adequate?	
8. **Display Screen**	
Do the display screen controls operate easily for brightness and contrast?	
Can the screen be swivelled and tilted?	
Can the screen height and distance be adjusted?	
Are the characters on the screen easily readable?	
Is screen image stable (no swim or flicker)?	
Are there reflections in the screen surface?	
Are they distracting?	
Is the anti-glare filter necessary?	
Does the user know how to clean the screen and filter?	
Does the user know where to obtain supplies?	
9. **Keyboard and Input Devices**	
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?	
Can it be tilted?	
Is there adequate space in front of keyboard to rest wrists	
Is a wrist rest required?	
Is user familiar with keyboard layout?	
Is it located close to the user?	

Is a mousemat available?	
Is user left handed?	
Does this affect input device position or layout?	
Are cleaning materials available?	
Does user know where to get them?	

10. Work desk and surface

Is space adequate to allow a flexible and comfortable arrangement of work?	
Is there room for paperwork or other items?	
Is there adequate storage for items to be relocated?	
Is other desk equipment reachable?	
Is desk surface free from reflection or glare?	
Is a document holder required?	
Does user know how to adjust it?	
Is work surface height and,or tilt adjustable?	
Does user know how to do it?	
Can work seat move under surface?	
Is there room to get legs under comfortably?	

11. Work seat or chair

Is it stable?	
Does it allow easy freedom of movement (do the casters and swivel mechanism work smoothly)?	
Is the height adjustable?	
Is tilt adjustable?	
Is the seat width adequate?	
Is the seat length adequate?	
Are chair arms of adequate length?	
Are chair arms detachable?	
Do they need to be? Does the backrest give adequate lumber support?	
Is it adjustable for height?	
Is it adjustable for tilt?	
Does the user know how to adjust it?	

Is the floor surface sound and stable?	
Is upholstery comfortable/in good condition?	

12. Footrests

Can both the user's feet reach the ground?	
If not is a footrest provided?	
Does the footrest have a stable surface?	
Does it accommodate both feet together?	
Is the footrest surface adjustable for angle?	

13. User computer interface

Is software suitable for task?	
Is software easily understood by the user?	
Does user feel in control of task?	
Is training provided in use of software?	
Is on-line help available?	

14. User personal factors

Is the user aware of the council's offer of an eye and eyesight test?	
Has user had an eye tes within the past 2 yearst?	
Has the user requested a test?	
Are glasses necessary and have they been provided?	
Can user leave workstation during breaks?	
Does user know how to report defects/problems?	
Does the user work alone? Is there some system for regular contact?	
Is user taking long term medication which may effect their use of the equipment? (Refer to Occupational Health Unit)	
Is user aware of being a Photosensitive Epileptic?	
Does supervisor know Emergency Treatment procedures for the above?	

15. User Training

Has adequate training been given in the possible risks arising from the use of <u>all</u> the equipment?	
Has the user been trained in how to adjust the position of the furniture and equipment?	
Is the user supervised to take regular breaks from the screen?	
Has the user been trained in the importance of adopting a comfortable posture?	
Does the user know the procedures to follow where it is believed that a health and safety problem has arisen?	

16. Information for Employees

Has the safety Representative been given all the available information relating to the safe use of equipment?	
Does the user know of the existence of, and read the Local Code of Practice?	
17. Employee consultation	
Has the employee, or the employee's representative, been consulted about health and safety issues related to the use of display screen equipment?	
18. Job Design	
Has the job been designed to incorporate off-screen activities within working day?	
Does the job place un-necessary pressure on User, e.g. time constraints, peaks and troughs.	
Have steps been taken to minimise repetitive or boring tasks, such as continual data entry?	

19. Any other/specific factors

Signature of Assessor _____   **Date** _____

Signature of User _____   **Date** _____

PRINT NAME _____
of user

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET

**SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST HELP SHEET FOR USERS OF
DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (VDUs)**
(DO NOT DETACH FROM THE SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM)

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations require the Council to carry out an assessment of your equipment and working area, to establish any risks to your health and safety in using that equipment.

It is important that all the questions are answered fully and truthfully, not forgetting that some areas may be different at various times of the day, e.g. is lighting sufficient regardless of the time of day remembering that it will be dark at 4 p.m. during the winter months.

The following is a step by step useful guide to completion of the Assessment form but it is hoped that the majority of the questions are self-explanatory. Questions in this guide are for you to consider before answering the questions on the assessment form. They are not additional questions but are there to make you think about your working area.

SECTION 1

Lighting

- The Council needs to know whether individuals have a problem with their lighting above and around the equipment.

- Are overhead lights, desk lamps or bright objects or surfaces (walls) even your own clothing reflected in the screen, such that it is difficult to read the characters on the screen? Have you thought of moving the screen to overcome those reflections? Consider this before answering the assessment form questions.

- Is the overhead lighting controlled in banks of lights with an on/off control by one switch or pull cord, rather than each individual light having its own switch/pull cord? For example, can you switch the overhead lights off and use a desk lamp instead?

SECTION 2

Temperature and Humidity

- There may be a need to monitor the temperature and dryness of the air (humidity) at your workplace. For example, is the room too hot in the morning and cold in the afternoon? If it is, make that comment on the last page of the assessment form.

- Do you suffer with dry throat and eyes on a regular basis that you think might be related to the working area, if you do the humidity may need monitoring.

SECTION 3

Noise

- Consider if the equipment you use creates a lot of noise that distracts you from your work?

- Consider other machines/equipment nearby which also distracts you from your work.

SECTION 4

Space

- There is a legal limit for the amount of room you are required to have. Is the room/area, in your opinion, sufficient for you to work safely? Ignore the fact that you may be the sort of person who likes to place things on the floor instead of in the correct place. If you have caused the clutter or space reduction rectify the situation before answering the question.

SECTION 5

Chair

- If you are a user of display screen equipment then you must be able to use the proper equipment for the job. In respect of your chair, can you adjust the height, angle and height of the backrest? Is it stable, easily moveable, etc? Bear in mind, when answering, and use the comments page on the assessment form, that whilst you can adjust the seat height, is it easy to do so? If there is a problem in adjusting the chair, state the problem.

SECTION 6

Desk

- Consider whether you have enough space to be able to do your work on the desk. (Refer to Section 8 Document Holder).

- The majority of desks are not adjustable but you could be the very tall person who needs an adjustable – state this on the Comments page of the assessment form.

- Reflection from its surface can cause a problem, is this the case with you?

SECTION 7

Footrest

- You may need a footrest. Has it been supplied? If you need one but don't have one, then ask your manager. If your feet can touch the floor by adjusting your chair and you are still comfortable whilst working, you do not need a footrest.

SECTION 8

Document Holder

- People who use the equipment to produce reports, copy typists and the like, may need extra room on the desk or require a document holder to prevent them having to look up and down between the work and the screen too many times.

SECTION 9

Display Screen

- If you don't know where the controls are then ask your manager, and <u>then</u> answer the questions. Only if there are inadequate or no controls, you need to say no.

- The screen should tilt and swivel freely, have you been shown that they do? Try to alter the position of the screen before answering the assessment form question.

- If there is a flicker on the screen, you may be the only one to see this. If you know this make a comment on the last page of the assessment form.

SECTION 10

Keyboard

- Most keyboards are now separate from the screen but yours may not be. Does it tilt? Try to see if it does before answering the assessment form question.

- The symbols may be hard to see because they may have worn down or the keyboard is dirty because you don't clean it.

- Consider whether the keyboard is comfortable to use or do you need room to rest your wrists.

SECTION 11

Software

- Have you been shown how to use the system on your display screen? Have you been trained or have you 'picked up' the use from colleagues or are you self-taught?

SECTION 12

Training

- Do you know about the Council's Safe Working procedure for working with your equipment? Ask your manager for more information.

- Do you know what to do if the equipment breaks down? If you don't know, have you asked anyone about the proper procedure first?

-       Have you been offered an eye and eyesight test or is it not applicable to you? Not everyone will be entitled to an eye and eyesight test.

-       Ask your manager if you are unsure of the Date Protection requirements.

SECTION 13

Any other comments

-       A yes or no may not suffice, you might want to expand on your answers, or clarify why you are saying yes or no. Use this to raise any issues that you feel apply to your use of a display screen.

Thank you for your assistance.

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

Record No._____

SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Name:_____ **Department:**_____
Date:_____

Location of Workstation

The completion of this checklist will enable you to carry out a self-assessment of your own workstation. Your views are essential in order to enable us to achieve our objective of ensuring your comfort and safety at work.. Please circle the answer that best describes your opinion for each of the questions listed. The form should be returned to _____ as soon as it has been completed.

1. Lighting		
Describe the lighting at your usual workstation.		
about right	too bright	too dark
Do you get distracting reflections on your screen?		
never	sometimes	constantly
What control do you have over local lighting?		
full control	some control	no control
2. Temperature and humidity		
At your workstation, is it usually:		
comfortable	too warm	too cold?
Is the air around your workstation:		
comfortable	too dry? (e.g. causes dry throats, eyes etc)	
3. Noise		
Are you distracted by noise from work equipment?		
never	occasionally	constantly

4 Space	
Describe the amount of space around your workstation?	
adequate inadequate	
5. Chair	
Can you adjust the height of the seat?	yes/no
Can you adjust the height and angle of the backrest?	yes/no
Is the chair stable?	yes/no
Does it allow movement?	yes/no
Is the chair in a good state of repair?	yes/no
If your chair has arms, do they get in the way?	yes/no
6. Desk	
Is the desk surface large enough to allow you to place all your equipment where you want it?	yes/no
Is the height of the desk adjustable?	yes/no
If not, is it about right, too high or too low for your use?	
about right too high	too low
Does the desk have a matt surface (non-reflecting)?	yes/no
7. Footrest	
If you cannot place your feet flat on the floor whilst keying, has a footrest been supplied?	yes/no
8. Document Holder	
Do you use a document holder?	yes/no
If 'no', do you feel you would benefit from using one?	yes/no
If you have a document holder, is it adjustable to suit your needs?	yes/no

9. Display Screen	
Can you easily adjust the brightness and the contrast between the characters on screen and the background?	yes/no
Does the screen tilt and swivel freely?	yes/no
Does the screen image flicker? (Does the image move/wave up and down?)	yes/no

10. Keyboard	
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?	yes/no
Can you raise and lower the keyboard height by tilting it?	yes/no
Can you easily see the symbols on the keys?	yes/no
Is there enough space to rest your hands in front of the keyboard?	yes/no

11. Software	
Do you understand how to use the software?	yes/no

12. Training	
Have you been trained in the use of your workstation?	yes/no
Have you been trained in the use of software?	yes/no
If you were to have any problems relating to display screen work, would you know the correct procedure to follow?	yes/no
Do you understand the arrangements for eye and eyesight tests?	yes/no
Are you aware of, and been trained in, the requirements of Data Protection?	yes/no

Signature: .... Date:
....

PRINT NAME: ....
....

Location of Workstation:
....

(Room No. if applicable,
....
Section and address)

....

13. Any other comments?