

# Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Policy

## Policy Purpose

This is the Council's policy on display screen equipment (DSE). It aims to make sure DSE users' workstations, equipment and working practices are well designed, meet legal standards and won't cause them harm.

The Council is committed to meeting its legal obligations under health and safety (H&S) law. For the DSE Policy, this means the requirements of:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

The Council is also committed to following ergonomic principles to make sure that work tasks, equipment and the working environment are suitable for every worker, so that work can be done safely and productively.

## Document control

Author	Sue Kelly
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## Policy application

1. This policy applies to all employees, contractors, members and volunteers who are classed as DSE users or operators. The policy also includes responsibilities and actions for managers of DSE users and operators.
2. The policy and linked guidance use these definitions...
  - **DSE user** - the law applies to 'habitual users' of DSE. This means someone who uses it as a significant part of their normal, daily work. An employee would be classed as a DSE user if:
    - their job depends on DSE to get done
    - they have little or no control over when and whether to use DSE
    - their job needs particular DSE skills
    - they use DSE daily in continuous stretches of at least an hour
    - they need to maintain a high level of concentration and attention when using DSE.

The legal requirements apply to users working at Council premises, at home and at other employers' premises.

- **DSE operator** means a self-employed person or volunteer who works at Council workstations and whose use of DSE would make them a user if they were an employee.

The Council's responsibilities for users and operators are similar, so the policy and guidance documents cover the two groups and refer to them both as DSE users.

- **DSE** means any alphanumeric or graphic display screen. It includes conventional screens and other types, such as plasma, liquid crystal and touchscreens. It also includes non-electric screens such as microfiche. The regulations **don't** apply to DSE on board a means of transport, in drivers' cabs, on calculators, cash registers or window typewriters. They also don't apply to DSE intended for use by the public, such as cash machines and computers in libraries or Council reception areas.
- **Workstation** means all items used with and for DSE, such as the furniture, equipment and the environment immediately around them. This includes the screen, keyboard, mouse, other computer parts and accessories (such as a Wyse terminal, hard drive or laptop docking station), desk and chair.
- **Health risks linked to DSE** include physical problems, usually musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), visual fatigue and mental stress.

These problems are often due to fatigue, static postures and intensive workloads; they're not a unique or inevitable consequence of DSE work. Risks to users should be low if ergonomic principles are followed in the workplace.

## Principles

3. Decisions about equipment, furniture or software for DSE users must include an evaluation of potential H&S implications **before** orders are placed. The evaluation process should include consulting DSE users and their H&S representatives. This is to make sure that:
  - appropriate minimum standards and best practice guidance are met, such as for ergonomic design
  - possible health issues are identified and resolved
  - equipment and software is suitable for the task and users' needs.
4. DSE users must receive training and information about the Council's policies and procedures linked to DSE. These will include possible health symptoms that DSE users need to be aware of.
5. DSE assessments must be done for all users using our DSE 1 form. The assessments are based on users' self-evaluation of their workstations, work environment, working practices and health. Assessments need to be completed:
  - by new recruits and new users before they begin DSE tasks
  - whenever DSE tasks change significantly and / or new software or equipment is used
  - whenever a user feels that their DSE tasks are impacting on their health **or** their health could affect their ability to use DSE safely
  - by all users at least **every two years**.

The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the health risks users could be exposed to and then take action reduce them to the lowest level that's reasonably practicable.
6. DSE workstations must be designed to meet current legal and best practice standards.
7. DSE users' work routines and workloads must be proactively managed and monitored. This is to make sure they include sufficient task variety, off-screen time or, where this isn't possible, formal breaks to prevent fatigue and musculoskeletal problems.

8. Free eye tests must be provided for DSE users **on request** using the Council's Eyecare Voucher Scheme. Special corrective glasses must be paid for if recommended by an optician because they're needed for DSE work and a normal prescription won't correct the user's vision.
9. Managers must risk assess any new DSE devices, especially portable items such as notebooks and tablets, to check that they're suitable for the task, environment and users. This must be done **before** the items are bought and put into use. The aim of doing this is to meet legal requirements to protect employees' health and avoid costly mistakes if the equipment proves unsuitable.
10. Laptop users must follow the health and safety instructions outlined in the Using Laptops Safely - Employees' Guide.
11. Tablet and smartphone users must follow the advice given about these devices in the DSE - Managers' and Users' Guide. A separate guidance leaflet is also available.
12. Health advice on all work-related issues, including problems linked to DSE, is available from Occupational Health.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

13. Everyone shares a responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and for that of their colleagues. Appendix 1 details individual responsibilities under this policy. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent outlines the main roles and responsibilities that underpin all policies.

### **Actions**

14. Managers must identify all employees within their service who are DSE users, explain the key actions outlined in this policy and then work together with them to make sure they are completed.
15. DSE users also need to complete the RoSPA: Display Screen Equipment and Workstation Safety course on the [DCC e-learning portal](#) as part of their induction and then every two years as a refresher training. This covers the information users' need to:
  - set up their workstations correctly
  - understand and identify possible health risks linked to DSE use
  - complete DSE assessments.

The course is available through the Occupational Health and Safety e-learning pages on iDerby and the Schools' Information Portal.

16. Each DSE user must complete a DSE 1 workstation self-assessment checklist **at least every two years**. See paragraph 5. Once complete, the form should be sent to the individual's manager for review and follow-up as necessary.
17. Managers need to review completed DSE 1 forms and take action to resolve any problems they identify. If there are any health concerns, Occupational Health should be contacted for advice. It may be appropriate to refer an employee to OH for an assessment and further support.
18. Employees need to tell their manager about any health concerns they have linked to DSE work. This is so that any appropriate adjustments can be made or support offered.
19. DSE users who work from home must also complete a [homeworking health and safety risk assessment](#) and get it approved by their manager.

### Support and information

20. The [Health and Safety Team](#) (HST) provides advice and tailored e-learning on DSE use. Contact HST by:
  - calling 01332 640748, or
  - emailing [employee.healthandsafety@derby.gov.uk](mailto:employee.healthandsafety@derby.gov.uk)

The team has also developed a suite of guidance documents to help managers and employees. These include:

- the Display Screen Equipment Guide for Managers and Users
- a DSE 1 process flowchart
- the Using Laptops Safely - Employees' Guide.

Copies can be found on the Occupational Health and Safety pages on [iDerby](#) and the [Schools' Information Portal](#), or by contacting the HST.

21. [Occupational Health](#) (OH) gives advice and support to managers and employees on health and ergonomic issues. Contact OH by:
  - calling 01332 **640543**, or
  - emailing [occupational.healthservice@derby.gov.uk](mailto:occupational.healthservice@derby.gov.uk).
22. **Access to Work**. An Access to Work grant can help to pay for practical support for employees with health conditions. Check out [www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work) for more information.

## **DSE Policy Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Everyone shares a responsibility for looking after their own health and safety and for that of their colleagues and service-users.

### **Chief Executive and Directors - Tiers 1 and 2**

2. Leaders' beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and management style set the organisation's culture. To improve health and wellbeing in relation to DSE work, this means you need to:
  - oversee the implementation of DSE arrangements and action plans within your services
  - actively check that DSE assessments are done and action taken to deal with any problems they highlight
  - make sure adequate resources are available for risk control measures
  - make sure that DSE users and their Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives are consulted about plans for new DSE work processes, equipment or software that will affect them.

### **Managers**

3. Managers should have the detailed knowledge of their employees, work environments and activities that is essential for effective DSE risk assessment and risk management. Managers are responsible for:
  - identifying DSE users within their teams
  - getting users to complete the corporate DSE e-learning course
  - helping users to complete DSE 1 forms and acting on the results
  - raising any concerns they have with the Health and Safety Team (HST)
  - taking positive action to deal with any workstations, equipment or work practices that don't meet minimum standards
  - planning DSE users' daily work activities and tasks to make sure their health isn't put at risk
  - reviewing and revising DSE assessments regularly, particularly if users raise health concerns or if their work changes
  - doing regular workplace inspections and spot checks to identify any DSE-related problems
  - checking that users are following best practice advice and agreed safe working practices
  - monitoring users' well-being and following up any DSE-related health concerns by raising a referral to Occupational Health (OH), as appropriate

- making sure users get adequate information to allow them to use DSE safely
- consulting employees and their H&S representatives about any significant changes planned to DSE work activities
- risk assessing any proposed new DSE, such as tablets, before ordering them.

## Employees

4. Employees have responsibilities as well as rights. These include:
- completing the corporate DSE e-learning course
  - filling in a DSE 1 - Workstation Self-assessment Checklist **at least every two years** if they're a DSE user
  - reporting any hazards, risks or unsafe situations they identify at work. This might include inadequate workstations, trailing cables or over-intensive DSE work schedules.
  - being co-operative and proactive in all health and safety issues
  - telling us promptly about any health concerns or problems they have when using DSE, so we can take appropriate action
  - reporting any problems or shortcomings in the Council's health and safety arrangements. This includes any concerns they have about DSE
  - following training and advice about safe DSE working practices.

## Officers who specify equipment for DSE users

5. Officers who specify any equipment, furniture or software for DSE users must make sure health and safety issues are taken fully into account. This means they should:
- consult HST, health and safety representatives and users
  - make sure equipment is suitable for its intended use and doesn't cause any health risks. This is especially important for specifying laptops, so get more advice from HST **before** placing an order
  - check equipment meets appropriate minimum standards and best practice recommendations.

## Trade union health and safety representatives (HSRs)

6. HSRs have legal rights in the workplace. These include the right to:
- inspect and take copies of documents linked to health and safety in the workplace
  - be consulted about any planned changes that could affect their members' health and safety
  - monitor and review DSE policies and arrangements
  - investigate hazards, accidents and their members' complaints

- do inspections.

### **Health and Safety Team (HST)**

7. The HST's responsibilities under this policy include:

- developing, reviewing and publicising corporate DSE policy, standards and guidance
- monitoring and reporting on corporate performance for DSE assessment and risk management
- auditing and reviewing directorate arrangements for DSE, as part of the Council's health and safety management system
- co-ordinating and monitoring corporate DSE training
- giving support, advice and information on DSE to managers, employees and health and safety representatives
- checking that arrangements are implemented and DSE assessments done
- monitoring the standard of DSE assessments and the effectiveness of protective measures
- reporting progress and problems through the appropriate management system. This may include their directorate management team, JCC, or the Corporate Health and Safety Committee, CHSC.

### **Occupational Health (OH)**

8. OH is responsible for:

- reviewing management referrals made because of stated health and DSE concerns
- carrying out specialist assessments
- providing appropriate advice and reports about DSE use to employees, managers and H&S advisers, as appropriate
- identifying any health trends or problems linked to DSE that require a corporate response
- giving specialist advice on health and ergonomic issues
- seeking further medical assessment for health concerns where required.