

THE CALDECOTT FOUNDATION  
DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE)  
PROCEDURE

## 1 Introduction

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, there is a requirement to ensure that all workplaces and systems of work are safe and without risks to health. Additionally, the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 place a duty on employers with regard to minimum health and safety requirements for work with display screen equipment.

This document will provide guidance in respect of complying with legislation and with the Caldecott Foundation's Health & Safety Policy.

## 2 User Designation

The regulations state that persons who habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work need to be assessed as "designated users". In some cases it will be clear that the use of display screen equipment is more or less continuous on most days, for example secretary, clerk/typist, admin personnel.

However, in some cases, where use is less continuous and less frequent, other factors connected to the job will need to be assessed. It will generally be appropriate to designate a person as a "user" if most or all of the following criteria apply:

- *Dependency*: how much the individual depends on the display screen equipment to do their work
- *Discretion*: whether the individual has any discretion as to the use or non-use of the display screen equipment
- *Significant Training*: whether the individual requires significant training and/or particular skills in the use of display screen equipment
- *Uninterrupted Use*: whether the individual normally uses display screen equipment for continuous periods in excess of an hour
- *Daily Use*: whether the individual uses display screen equipment as stated above more or less daily
- *Data Transfer Rate*: whether fast transfer of information between the individual and screen is an important requirement of the job
- *Criticality of Errors*: whether the performance requirements of the system demands high levels of concentration by the user, for example, where the consequences of error may be critical.

It is appreciated that in certain circumstances a user Designation Form (Appendix 1) will need to be completed in order to assess the individual concerned. Reference should be made to the Guidance on Establishing User Designation (Appendix 2) to undertake this assessment.

### **3 Workstation Assessment**

There is a requirement to carry out an assessment of all workstations used by designated “users” so as to identify any risks present and reduce them to the lowest extent reasonably practicable. For typical applications of display screens in offices remedial action is often straightforward, for example:

- Postural problems may be overcome by simple adjustments to the workstations such as repositioning equipment or adjusting the chair. Postural problems can also indicate a need to provide reinforced training for the user on correct hand position, posture, how to adjust equipment, etc. In some cases equipment will need to be purchased such as footrests and document holders.
- Visual problems may also be tackled by straightforward means such as repositioning the screen or using blinds to avoid glare, placing the screen at a more comfortable viewing distance from the user, or by ensuring the screen is kept clean. In some cases new equipment such as window blinds or anti glare screens will need to be purchased.
- Fatigue and stress may be alleviated by correcting obvious defects in the workstation as indicated above. In addition, as in other kinds of work, good design of the task will be important. Wherever possible the task should provide users with a degree of personal control over the pace and nature of their tasks.

#### **Process involved**

##### **a) Initial Workstation Checklist (Appendix 3)**

The designated user to complete the checklist and send to the Health & Safety Officer who will review the details and decide on whether further assessment is required due to comments noted.

Priority is to be given to assessments being carried out initially on those staff who have been identified as designated users. The workstations of staff that are not identified as being habitual users will be assessed on a rolling programme throughout the Foundation.

##### **b) Workstation Assessment (Appendix 4)**

Using the initial checklist as a basis the nominated assessor will complete the workstation assessment. The full workstation assessment should be completed in liaison with the user and any risks identified should be noted and the user informed. The form should be completed detailing remedial action and forwarded to the Health and Safety Officer.

NB – There is a requirement to ensure that all risks identified are remedied as quickly as possible, and costs of such to be borne by the relevant department.

Should the risk assessment findings indicate that further investigation and/or assessment is required, this will be undertaken through the Health and Safety Officer to ensure that the appropriate control measures are implemented and the correct equipment purchased to meet the user's particular needs.

## 4 Daily Work Routine of Users

Whenever possible, tasks involving work on DSE should be designed to consist of a mix of screen based and non screen based work to prevent fatigue and to vary visual and mental demands. Where DSE work involves intensive use of the keyboard, mouse or other input device, any activity that would demand broadly similar use of the arms or hands should be avoided during breaks.

Similarly, if the DSE work is visually demanding, any activities during breaks should be of a different visual nature. Breaks must also allow users to vary their posture.

Where work cannot be organised, for example in jobs requiring only data or text entry or screen monitoring requiring sustained attention and concentration, deliberate breaks must be introduced.

There are no hard and fast rules regarding breaks, but points to consider are:

- Breaks or changes of activity should be included in working time. They should reduce the workload at the screen, ie, should not result in a higher pace or intensity of work on account of their introduction.
- Breaks should be taken when performance and productivity are still at a maximum, before the user starts getting tired. This is better than taking a break to recover from fatigue. Appropriate timing of the break is more important than its length.
- Short, frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional, longer breaks; for example a 5 to 10 minute break after 50 to 60 minutes continuous screen and/or keyboard work is likely to be better than a 15 to 20 minute break every 2 hours.
- Wherever practicable, users should be allowed some discretion as to when to take breaks and how they carry out tasks; individual control over the nature and pace of work allows optimal distribution of effort over the working day.
- Changes of activity (time spent doing other tasks not using the DSE) appear from study evidence to be more effective than formal rest breaks in relieving visual fatigue.
- Breaks must also allow users to vary their posture, and if possible they should be taken away from the DSE workstation to allow the user to stand up, move about and/or change posture.

It is recommended that users take breaks from their screens for a few minutes every hour to do other things such as photocopying, filing, telephoning, compiling, organising stationery, replenishing stocks, making a cup of tea etc.

## 5 Eyesight Test

There is no reliable evidence that work with display screen equipment causes any permanent vision defects to eyes or eyesight, but research shows that it may exacerbate pre-existing vision defects. This, combined with poor working conditions, may give some users temporary visual fatigue and/or headaches.

Uncorrected vision defects can make work at display screens more tiring and stressful, therefore correcting defects can improve comfort, job satisfaction and performance.

The regulations state that all users should be provided with an appropriate eye and eyesight test at regular intervals. The test includes an examination of the eye and a test for vision. With regard to work on display screens, the test takes account of the nature of the user's work, for example, time spent in

front of screen, size of screen, position of screen, whether above or below eye level, working distance away from screen etc.

The cost of the eyesight test for a user is to be borne by the Caldecott Foundation and in addition should the result of the eyesight test indicate a defect in sight which requires correction when working on display screen equipment, there is a requirement to provide the user with a special corrective appliance.

Special corrective appliances (normally spectacles) will be those appliances prescribed for vision defects at the viewing distance or distances used specifically for the display screen work concerned.

In order to effectively implement the requirement of the regulations the Caldecott Foundation has adopted a formal procedure for the payment of such provisions as eyesight tests and the provision of corrective appliances. Reference needs to be made to this procedure (Appendix 5).

## **6 User Training**

The regulations state that persons designated as display screen equipment users must receive relevant health and safety information and training. In relation to the provision of information, reference needs to be made to the HSE's leaflet 'Working with VDUs' and the training to be provided is aimed at reducing or minimising the risks, such as upper limb pains and discomfort, eye strain, stress and fatigue.

Aspects which will be covered in the training package for designated users:

- A simple explanation of the causes of risk and how this can cause harm/injury, for example, poor posture leading to upper limb pains and discomfort.
- How possible health risks can be reduced/eliminated, with particular reference to the role of the user.
- The use and arrangement of workstation components to facilitate good posture, prevent over reaching and avoid glare and reflections on the screen.
- The need to take advantage of breaks and changes of activity.
- Information on the regulations and how they affect the users, particularly with regard to eyesight tests, breaks away from the screen and the risk assessment exercise and their contribution as users.
- The Caldecott Foundation policies and procedures with regard to the use of display screen equipment and arrangements for reporting symptoms or problems with the workstation, etc.

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Display Screen Equipment Arrangements

User Designation Form

See Appendix 2 (attached) for instructions on completing this form

Name: .....

Department: .....

Location: .....

Factor	Circle as appropriate			
	Level	Points	Weighting	Score
1. Dependency	L M H	3 6 9	0.1	
2. Discretion	L M H	3 6 9	0.2	
3. Significant Training	L M H	3 6 9	0.05	
4. Uninterrupted Use	L M H	3 6 9	0.4	
5. Daily Use	L M H	3 6 9	0.1	
6. Data Transfer Rate	L M H	3 6 9	0.1	
7. Criticality of Errors	L M H	3 6 9	0.05	
<b>Total User Score</b>				

User Threshold = 4.7

Designated User      Yes / No      (delete as appropriate)

Refer to Guidance on Establishing User Designation (Appendix 2)

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### Display Screen Equipment Arrangements Guidance and Suggested Questions on Establishing User Designation

When more than one software package is used the resultant level should reflect both the degree to which the factor applies and the comparative usage of each program.

#### 1 Dependency

- To what extent do you depend on your computer system to carry out your work?
- Are there any alternative means of achieving the same results?
- If alternative means exist, are they readily available?

- LOW** - the individual can readily carry out the task using other means, eg, typewriter  
**MEDIUM** - other means are available, time or presentation preclude their use  
**HIGH** - the work has been designed to make use of the equipment. Other means are not available and/or practical

#### 2 Discretion

Can result from the freedom to select the method of work or the seniority to delegate the DSE work to others.

- What discretion do you have as to the use or non-use of the display screen equipment?
- Can you choose what method you use to carry out your work?
- Can you plan your own work routine, ie, one long session or several shorter ones, am/pm?

- LOW** - the individual has complete freedom as to use or non-use of the equipment  
**MEDIUM** - there are some options regarding equipment use; screen equipment use can be deferred to another time  
**HIGH** - the individual is given no choice regarding work method

#### 3 Significant Training

The deciding factor should be the recommended training for the system in use, not the actual amount received as this will vary between departments.

- What training did you have to carry out your work using your computer system?
- How long did it take for you to become accustomed to the software package you are using?
- Do you feel that there are any particular skills required to carry out your job using display screen equipment?

- LOW** - word processor, database, spreadsheet 3-5 day courses word processor or computer training as part of a vocational course

- MEDIUM** - specialised package training, either in-house or residential courses, duration of 5 days or more
- HIGH** - full/part time training or education courses where different packages are used and compared to carry out the same or similar functions, courses involving the use of high or low level computer languages in order to design or amend a software package

#### 4 Uninterrupted Use

For continuous spells:

- How long do you use the display screen equipment at any one time?
- Would you describe this use as "continuous" or are there interruptions?
- What causes these interruptions – telephones, writing notes, pause for thought, calculations, enquiries from colleagues or the public, other?

- LOW** - uninterrupted use up to one hour
- MEDIUM** - uninterrupted use of over one hour but less than three hours
- HIGH** - uninterrupted use of three hours or more

#### 5 Daily Use

Use as above for x number of days per week. Workers whose VDU use is subject to monthly/seasonal variations should refer to times of intensive use.

- How often would you use the display screen equipment in this way?
- Are there any monthly or seasonal variations in your use of display screen equipment?

- LOW** - on occasions
- MEDIUM** - two or three times per week
- HIGH** - four or five times a week

#### 6 Data Transfer Rate/Speed

- How would you describe your speed at inputting data?
- Do you touch type?
- What is your current typing speed (estimate)?

- LOW** - speed not essential, obtaining data/results is the object of the exercise, eg, spreadsheets, obtaining data from complicated databases
- MEDIUM** - touch typing, inputting data from hard copies or audio tape
- HIGH** - inputting large quantities of data where fast transfer of information is required

#### 7 Criticality of Errors

- How quickly will any error that you may make be discovered?
- What would be the consequences of any error you may make?
- What level of concentration, while using the display screen equipment, does the job require?
- Do you have to pay close attention to what is being displayed on the screen?

## Appendix 2

- LOW* - copy typing, memoranda, letters, reports, errors usually found before work issued
- MEDIUM* - inputting figures and codes, audio typing, writing reports, using databases and spreadsheets, extracting information from specialised packages, errors result in annoyance and some disruption, usually discovered within three months
- HIGH* - writing programs/fault-finding programs, using packages to design a system/structure, errors having critical consequences, identified after three months (approx), eg, Bridge Engineer

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**Display Screen Equipment Arrangements  
Initial Workstation Assessment Checklist**

To comply with the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 and to ensure your health and safety when using display equipment, you are requested to complete this checklist, which should be returned to the Health & Safety Officer.

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>School/Dept:</b>		<b>Job Title:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>		<b>Line Manager:</b>	

<i>Please tick the most appropriate response and add any additional comments</i>				<b>Comments</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
	Is your chair comfortable?			
	Does it have adjustable features (seat height, back height, tilt)?			
	Do you know how to adjust your chair?			
	Does the chair support your lower back whilst working?			
	Are your feet flat on the floor without putting too much pressure on the back of your legs?			
<b>2</b>	<b>Desk</b>			
	Is there enough room on your desk for your equipment and paperwork?			
	Is all equipment within easy reach?			
	Is there enough storage space for work items?			
	Is there enough desk space to rest wrists and hands?			
<b>3</b>	<b>DSE Equipment</b>			
	Can you adjust the keyboard to a comfortable position for use?			
	Can you easily adjust the screen to a comfortable position for typing/data entry?			
	Does the screen swivel and tilt?			
	Can you adjust the screen height?			

	Are there reflections or glare on the screen?			
<b>4</b>	<b>Work arrangements</b>			
	Do you have sufficient breaks from VDU work?			
	Have you received adequate training on VDU equipment?			
	Are the computer programs easy to use?			
	Do you have to work to tight deadlines?			
<b>5</b>	<b>Environment</b>			
	Is there enough room to change position and vary movements/			
	Is the temperature in the office satisfactory to enable you to work comfortably?			
	Is the lighting sufficient to enable you to work comfortably?			
<b>6</b>	<b>Health concerns</b>			
	Do you suffer any discomfort or other symptoms when or after working at your workstation?			
	Please specify:			
	• Hands			
	• Arms			
	• Shoulders			
	• Neck			
	• Lower back			
	Do you suffer from tired or sore eyes during or after working at your workstation?			

Thank you for completing this checklist. Please return to the Health & Safety Officer and if necessary a further assessment will be carried out.

Training will be provided to assist you in addressing issues concerned with your workstation.

In the meantime please read also the HSE's leaflet entitled 'Working with VDUs'



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Display Screen Equipment  
Workstation Assessment Form

The following checklist is designed to comply with the assessment requirements of individual Display Screen Equipment (DSE) workstations in accordance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) regulations 1992, and associated guidance.

Workstation location:		Name of user:	
		Signature:	
Name of Assessor:		Date of assessment:	
Signature:		Date of review:	
Any further action needed? Yes / No		Follow up action(s) completed on:	
Risk Factors	Tick answer		
	Yes	No	
<b>1. DISPLAY SCREENS</b>			<b>Things to consider</b>
Are the characters clear and readable?			Make sure the screen is clean and cleaning materials are made available. Check that text & background colours work well together.
Is the text size comfortable to read?			Software settings may need adjusting to change text size.
Is the image stable, ie, free of flicker?			Try using different screen colours to reduce flicker, eg, darker background and lighter text, increase refresh rate of monitor setting.
			<b>Comments/Action to take</b>

			If problems still exist, contact your IT support.	
Is the screen's specification suitable for its intended use?			For example, intensive graphic work or work requiring fine attention to small details may require large display screens.	
Are the brightness and/or contrast adjustable?			Separate adjustment controls are not essential, provided the user can read the screen easily at all times.	
Does the screen swivel and tilt?			Swivel and tilt need not be built in; you can add a swivel and tilt mechanism. However you may need to replace the screen if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swivel/tilt is absent or unsatisfactory</li> <li>• Work is intensive; and/or</li> <li>• The user has problems getting the screen to a comfortable position.</li> </ul> The height of the screen should be roughly at eye level. A monitor stand may be required. If using an LCD screen ensure it is adjustable in height, alternatively use a monitor stand.	
Is the screen free from glare and reflections?			Find the source of the reflections. You might need to move the screen or even the desk and/or shield the screen from the source of reflections. Screens that use dark characters on a light background are less prone to glare and reflections.	
Is the user facing the screen?			Position the screen in front of the user to avoid any twisting.	
Are adjustable window coverings provided and in adequate condition?			Check that curtains/blinds are in good working order. If not report to Maintenance. If these measures do not work, consider anti-glare screen filters as a last resort and seek specialist help.	

<b>2. KEYBOARDS</b>				
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?			This is a requirement, unless the task makes it inappropriate (eg where there is a need to use a portable computer)	
Does the keyboard tilt?			Tilt need not be built in	
Is it possible to find a comfortable keying position?			<p>Try pushing the display screen further back to create more room for the keyboard, hands and wrists. Keep elbows close to the body, do not overstretch the arms.</p> <p>Users of thick, raised keyboards may need a wrist rest. Users may find the use of a compact mini-keyboard more comfortable.</p>	
Does the user have good keyboard technique?			<p>Training can be used to prevent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands bent up at wrist</li> <li>• Hitting the keys too hard</li> <li>• Overstretching the fingers</li> </ul>	
Are the characters on the keys easily readable?			<p>Keyboards should be kept clean. If characters still cannot be read, the keyboard may need modifying or replacing.</p> <p>Use a keyboard with a matt finish to reduce glare and/or reflection.</p>	

3. MOUSE				
Is the device suitable for the tasks it is used for?			<p>If the user is having problems, try a different device. The mouse and trackball are general-purpose devices suitable for many tasks, and available in a variety of shapes and sizes.</p> <p>Alternative devices such as touch screens may be better for some tasks (but can be worse for others).</p> <p>Check the device has been set to suit the user (for right or left hand user).</p>	
Is the device positioned close to the user?			<p>Most devices are best placed as close as possible, eg, right beside the keyboard.</p> <p>Training may be needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevent arm overreaching</li> <li>• Tell users not to leave their hand on the device when it is not being used</li> <li>• Encouraged a relaxed arm and straight wrist</li> </ul> <p>A compact keyboard will help the user to avoid overreaching.</p>	
Is there support for the device user's wrist and forearm?			<p>Support can be gained from, for example, the desk surface. If not, a separate supporting device (gel filled) may help.</p> <p>The user should be able to find a comfortable working position with the device.</p>	
Does the device work smoothly at a speed that suits the user?			<p>Check if cleaning is required (eg, of mouse ball and rollers). Check the work surface is suitable. A mouse mat may be needed.</p>	
Can the user easily adjust software settings for speed and accuracy of pointer?			<p>Users may need training in how to adjust device settings.</p>	

<b>4. SOFTWARE</b>				
Is the software suitable for the task?			Software should help the user carry out the task, minimise stress and be user friendly. Check users have had appropriate training in using the software. Software should respond quickly and clearly to user input, with adequate feedback such as clear messages.	
<b>5. FURNITURE</b>				
Is the work surface large enough for all the necessary equipment, papers etc?			Create more room by moving printer, reference materials etc elsewhere. Use multilevel trays for papers/ documents. If necessary consider providing new power and telecom sockets so equipment can be moved. There should be some scope for flexible re-arrangement.	
Can the user comfortably reach all the equipment and papers they need to use?			Rearrange equipment, papers etc to bring frequently used things within easy reach. A document holder may be needed, positioned to minimise uncomfortable head and eye movements.	
Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?			Consider mats or blotters to reduce reflections and glare.	
Is the chair stable and suitable for the user? Does the chair have a working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seat back height and tilt adjustment?</li> <li>• Seat height adjustment?</li> <li>• Swivel mechanism?</li> <li>• Castors or glides?</li> </ul>			The chair may need repairing or replacing if the user is uncomfortable, or the adjustment mechanisms are faulty. Contact Health & Safety Officer.	

Is the chair adjusted correctly?			<p>The user must be familiar with the chair adjustments. Adjust the chair height to sit with elbows at approx 90° &amp; 2cm above the desk when touching the G &amp; H keys. The user should be able to carry out their work sitting comfortably.</p> <p>Consider training the user in how to adopt suitable postures while working.</p> <p>The arms of chairs can stop the user getting close enough to use the equipment comfortably.</p> <p>Consider chairs without armrests or alternatively adjustable armrests.</p>	
Is the lower back supported by the chair's backrest?			<p>The user should have a straight back, supported at all times by the chair, with relaxed shoulders.</p>	
Are forearms horizontal and eyes at roughly the same height as the top of the screen?			<p>Adjust the chair height to get the user's arms in the right position; adjust the monitor height/tilt if necessary.</p>	
<b>6. ENVIRONMENT</b>				
Is there enough room to change position and vary movement?			<p>Space is needed to move, stretch and fidget.</p> <p>Consider reorganising the office layout and check for obstructions.</p> <p>Cables should be tidy and not a trip or snag hazard.</p>	
Is the lighting suitable, eg, not too bright or too dim to work comfortably?			<p>Users should be able to control light levels, eg, by adjusting window blinds or light switches.</p> <p>Consider shading or repositioning light sources or providing local lighting, eg, desk lamps (but make sure lights don't cause glare by reflecting off walls or other surfaces).</p>	

Does the air feel comfortable?		<p>VDUs and other equipment may dry the air. Green plans may help to increase moisture levels in the air.</p> <p>Circulate fresh air if possible.</p> <p>As a last resort, if discomfort is severe, consider a humidifier.</p>	
Are levels of heat comfortable?		<p>Can heating be better controlled?</p> <p>More ventilation or air conditioning may be required if there is a lot of electronic equipment in the room. Or, can users be moved away from the heat source?</p>	
Are levels of noise comfortable?		<p>Consider moving sources of noise, eg, printers away from the user. If not, consider soundproofing.</p>	
<b>7. ELECTRICAL</b>			
Have you carried out a user check (visual inspection) of the visually accessible parts of the equipment and its cable, plug and extension cable?		<p>Carry out a user check when the equipment has been relocated.</p> <p>Any faults or significant wear and tear must be reported and repaired as soon as possible.</p> <p>Do not use any equipment if defective. Remove from operation and inform the Maintenance Department</p>	



## THE CALDECOTT FOUNDATION

### Display Screen Equipment Arrangements Eye Test Procedures

#### Introduction

The Regulations state that designated users should be provided with an appropriate eye and eyesight test at regular intervals. The test includes an examination of the eye and a test for vision. It takes into account the work undertaken on the display screen, time spent in front of the screen, size of screen, position of screen, working position away from the screen etc.

#### Payment

The Regulations require that an employer must provide corrective appliances for a designated user if they require a different prescription or type of lens for DSE work than for their normal everyday spectacles.

The cost of the eyesight test for the user is to be borne by the Caldecott Foundation and in addition should the result indicate a defect in sight which requires correction when working specifically on display screen equipment, there is a requirement to provide the user with a basic corrective appliance. The cost of this appliance, or contribution towards the cost to be borne by the Caldecott Foundation.

#### Procedure

- 1 To meet legislation The Caldecott Foundation will Register with Tesco Opticians. All eye testing and provision of corrective lenses will be provided by them. Anyone choosing not to use this scheme will not be reimbursed any costs incurred.
- 2 Any 'user' requesting an eye test should contact the Health and Safety Officer who will confirm eligibility and inform the 'user' of the method to be undertaken.
3. Information of the scheme can be found at:

[https://www.tescoopticians.com/Corporate/vdu\\_package.aspx](https://www.tescoopticians.com/Corporate/vdu_package.aspx)