



Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Policy and Procedure

November 2024

History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1.1	Changed format in line with other H&S Policies and Procedures. Updated information in section 1 Introduction – in Policy and section 5 Use of Laptops – in procedure	K Drum	April 2018
1.2	Full review and update of procedure. Section 9 updated to outline the Ideagen online training modules. Working from home and working on the move included – (Hybrid model working). Include HSE Guidelines INDG36 (rev4). Section 10 language updated to read clearly. Referrals to CMIS updated to ISLT	K Fitzgerald	Oct 2021
2.0	Complete review of procedure. Health & Safety Committee updated to Health, Safety and Safeguarding Committee	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024
2.1	Feelrite updated to iHasco	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024
2.2	Statement added in H&S Manager responsible for: “Ensuring all staff with any staff member with any health, mobility or musculoskeletal issues, are issued or reissued with the online DSE Training and assessment tools, as necessary”	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024
2.3	DSE training updated to say that that: “DSE Assessment will be discussed during H&S Induction by the H&S Manager and training link will be issued via email”	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024
2.4	Worktops updated to Workstations	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024
2.5	Statement added: “Report all damage immediately to Facilities and do not attempt to use the appliance”	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024
2.6	HR Department updated to People Services	K Fitzgerald	12/11/2024

2.7	"£45 per pair can be claimed" has been updated to: "You must request the cost of a 'basic pair' and you will be able to reclaim this amount. The cost may vary depending on which optician is used"	K Fitzgerald/D Kerr	12/11/2024

1 Introduction

The Health and safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (As amended 2002) were introduced under the provisions of the Health and Safety at work Act 1974. The Regulations lay down minimum health and safety requirements for working with display screen equipment. New workstations, or existing ones that are substantially modified, must conform to these requirements, in line with HSE Guidelines INDG36(rev4).

The following procedure outlines the means by which Borders College conforms to the legal requirements of the Health and Safety (Display screen Equipment) Regulations, and its undertaking for staff, students and other users.

Borders College have taken into consideration Hybrid Working Model for college staff. The E-Learning training modules from iHasco reflect this. All questions are automatically directed to the Health & Safety/Human Resource departments to enable all issues to be dealt with on an individual user basis.

The main health hazards from working with DSE equipment are:

- Upper limb disorders (including pains in the neck, arms, elbows, wrists, hands and fingers) often referred to as Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI)
- Backache
- Fatigue and stress
- Temporary eye strain (not damage)
- Headaches

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that Borders College fulfils its obligations to the relevant health and safety legislation by means of:

- analyse workstations to assess and reduce risks
- make sure controls are in place
- provide information and training
- provide eye and eyesight tests on request, and special spectacles if needed
- Issue training modules for Workrite and Feelrite when the user or DSE changes.
- the provision of suitable work equipment providing users with information on the associated risks to health and the operational arrangements to minimise risks to health
- provide the user with training modules for e-learning DSE assessments for: working in the office, working from home and working on the move. The user to complete 1-3 as relevant for their working practices.
- referring users with DSE work related ill health to the College's Occupational Health Surveillance provider.
- the provision of eye and eyesight tests for users, and a contribution to the cost of spectacles, where these are required specifically for DSE work.

2 Scope

This policy will apply to all staff classed as 'users', employed by the College including agency or volunteer staff and will extend to basic DSE equipment including laptops, tablets, iPads and other handheld devices including mobile phones and peripherals such as mice or any other devices supplied by the College in connection with DSE work.

3 Key Principles

3.1 Definitions

3.1.1 Display Screen Equipment – means any alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved that is the property of the College. The procedure also covers non-electronic systems such as microfiche viewers and

3.1.2 User – means employees and self-employed who habitually uses DSE as a significant part of normal work.

A person will also be classified as a user if most or all of the following criteria apply:

- a) The job cannot be done effectively or at all without DSE
- b) The worker has no discretion over whether to use DSE
- c) The job requires significant training or particular skills
- d) The person uses DSE for periods of an hour or more at a time, more or less on a daily basis
- e) The task depends upon the fast transfer of information between the worker and the screen

This will apply whether they are employed to work:

- 1) At their employers workstation
- 2) At a workstation at home
- 3) At another employers workstation

3.1.3 Workstation – shall mean an assembly comprising:

- Display screen equipment (whether provided with software determining the interface between the equipment and its operator or user, a keyboard and any other input device)
- Any optional accessories to the display screen equipment
- Any disk drive, telephone, modem, printer, document holder, work chair, work desk, work surface or other item peripheral to the display screen equipment, and
- The immediate work environment around the display screen equipment

3.2 Exemptions

This Policy/procedure does not cover the following:

- DSE in a driver cab or control cabs for machinery or vehicles.
- DSE on board a means of transport
- Any system intended mainly for public use
- Portable systems not in prolonged use
- Small data display screens on calculators, cash registers, medical and scientific equipment, etc.
- Display panels on “Window typewriters”

4 Responsibilities

4.1 The Health Safety & Safeguarding Committee have the responsibility for approving this Policy and Procedure.

4.2 The Health and Safety Manager has responsibility for:

- updating this policy in line with current legislation and best practice
- ensuring all staff identified as users are issued a login for the online DSE Training and Assessments tool
- ensuring all staff with any staff member with any health, mobility or musculoskeletal issues, are issued or reissued with the online DSE Training and assessment tools, as necessary
- giving advice and guidance to managers and staff around DSE
- taking the role of DSE assessor
- implement any actions that arise from self-assessments
- liaise with Occupational Health Provider if staff need specialist advice

4.3 Managers have a responsibility to:

- ensure that all staff identified as ‘users’ complete the online DSE Training and Assessments tool
- ensure that all relevant policies and procedures are implemented and disseminated to staff within their area of responsibility
- Implement appropriate recommendations made by the DSE assessor and/or Occupational Health Adviser

4.4 All staff have a responsibility to:

- abide by the Key Principles of this Policy
- advise their line manager of any health conditions that may increase the risk from working with DSE
- Complete the online DSE Awareness training and assessment from iHasco
- Discuss any outcomes of the assessment with the Health & Safety Manager
- Make any changes indicated by the assessment or when recommended by a DSE Assessor
- Notify the DSE Assessor of any significant changes associated with the DSE
- Report any health problems related to DSE work to their line manager/supervisor or DSE Assessor

5 Related Documents

5.1 Health and Safety Procedures Manual

5.2 Health and Safety Policy

5.3 Related legislation and Approved Guidance

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended in 2002

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

6 Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more regularly if required.

7 Workstation Standards

The College shall ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that all workstations meet the minimum statutory requirements.

The College will undertake to perform an analysis of workstations in order to evaluate the safety and health conditions to which they give rise for employees, particularly as regards possible risks to eyesight, physical problems and problems of mental stress. The analysis of workstations will reduce any risks identified to the lowest extent reasonably practicable. Assessments will be updated when required and records will be kept on file.

Where one workstation is used by more than one worker, whether simultaneously or in shifts, it will be analysed and assessed considering all those covered by the regulations.

8 Assessment of Workstations

An assessment of workstations is a requirement under the DSE regulations 2002. All new or existing members of staff who feel they habitually use display screen equipment as part of their working day should have an assessment carried out on their workstation.

The College provides an online self-assessment and training program called “Display Screen Equipment” and is provided via iHasco. This guides employees through an online assessment and provides training on how a workstation should be set up to reduce the risks to the employee.

The DSE Assessment will be discussed by the Health and Safety Manager, during staff induction, and a training link will be issued via email.

Upon completion, the Health and Safety Manager will follow up on any potential problems highlighted and make recommendations for improvement.

9 Equipment

9.1 Display Screens

- All screens will tilt and swivel
- All characters will be well defined and clearly formed with no flickering present
- The screen will be free from reflective glare and reflections as far as is practicable
- Brightness and contrast will be adjustable to suit the needs of the user

9.2 Keyboards

- The keyboards shall tilt and separate from the screen to allow comfortable position
- The space in front of the keyboard shall be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the operator
- The symbols on the keys shall be adequately contrasted and legible from the design working position

9.3 Work chairs

The work chair shall be stable and allow the operator easy freedom of movement and a comfortable position.

- The seat shall be adjustable in height
- The seat back shall be adjustable in both height and tilt
- A footrest/backrest shall be made available to anyone who requests it

9.4 Workstations

- Workstations shall have a sufficiently large, low reflective surface and allow a flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents and related equipment
- Document holders where used, shall be stable and adjustable

10 Working Environment

10.1 Lighting

The College shall undertake to ensure that satisfactory lighting conditions and an appropriate contrast between the screen and the background are of a standard that considers the type of work and user's vision requirements.

Disturbing glare and reflections should be prevented wherever possible.

10.2 Noise

High levels of reported noise emitted by equipment belonging to workstation(s) shall be assessed and where necessary reduced as far as is reasonably practicable.

10.3 Heat

Excessive heat levels reported to be emitted by workstation equipment/other means within the work area shall be assessed and reduced as far as is reasonably practicable.

10.4 Radiation

The level of radiation emitted from Display Screen Equipment is minimal, therefore no special action is required on the part of the College or the "User".

10.5 Humidity

An adequate level of humidity shall be maintained for the comfort of all College "Users", this will be dependent upon variables such as work rate and ambient temperature.

10.6 Temperature

An adequate working temperature for "users" will be maintained, as per the Facilities Department Service Level Agreement.

11 Use of Laptops

Portable DSE such as laptops and handheld devices are subject to the Regulations if in prolonged use for work purposes. People who habitually use portable DSE should be trained in how to minimise risks, for example by sitting comfortably, angling the screen so it is easy to read and taking frequent breaks. Wherever possible, portable DSE should be placed on a firm surface at a comfortable height. Where portables are in prolonged use at the user's main place of work, additional steps can be taken to reduce risks, eg by using a laptop stand.

As the regulations state that the keyboard and screen must be separate, specific modifications will be required to laptops in prolonged use. There are several options:

- a) Place the laptop on a specially made platform and use a separate keyboard and mouse
- b) Use the laptop with a separate monitor
- c) Use the laptop with a docking station

The smaller size and design of laptop computers mean that, if used wrongly, users can experience discomfort. This is because the smaller screen and keyboard encourages users to bend over, causing shoulder and neck problems. As a result, it is College procedure that laptops will be used according to the following guidelines:

- If using your laptop on the move, wherever possible, keep the use of laptops in stationary cars to a minimum. This is to prevent the additional stress on the spine and the increased likelihood of injury that could arise from unsuitable seating and limited space
- Don't overload your laptop bag. Distribute weight evenly as possible
- Wherever possible the laptop should be positioned on a firm surface, which is the right height for its use. Lap Top Riser can be requested from The Health & Safety Manager, if required

- You are advised to angle the computer screen to minimise reflections
- Ensure that you have enough space in front of the laptop to rest your wrists and forearms whilst working
- Take regular breaks, at least ten minutes in every hour
- If any discomfort is experienced whilst using a laptop, it must be reported immediately
- Software – No software or extra hardware will be installed except by College ISLT staff. No Software must be removed or switched off except by College ISLT staff
- DO NOT leave laptops in your vehicle within view or unattended for long periods of time

12 Rest Breaks

It shall be the responsibility of each supervisor of staff/students using Display Screen Equipment to ensure that activities are planned to interrupt work periodically on that equipment by such breaks or changes that allow the “user” to vary their posture and reduce eye strain.

It should be noted however, that breaks or changes should be taken before the onset of fatigue, and not in order to recuperate, the timing of these breaks is more important than its length.

It is recommended wherever possible; the breaks should be taken away from the screen.

This duty on the “supervisor” to plan does not, however, imply a need to draw up a precise and detailed timetable for periods of DSE work and breaks.

There is no legal guidance on breaks and it would depend on the kind of work being undertaken, but it is advisable to break up long spells of DSE work. Frequent short breaks are better than infrequent longer ones; 5-10 minute breaks every hour are better than 20 minutes every 2 hours. Ideally, users should have some choice about when to take breaks.

13 Eye and Eyesight Tests

Under Regulation 5 of the Display Screen Equipment regulations the College will undertake to provide at the request of the “User” an appropriate eye and eyesight test, with any such test being carried out by a competent person. This will be undertaken where:

- A member of staff has completed a DSE user questionnaire issued by the HR Department and they satisfy the Criteria for a “User”
or
- Is an employee who does not habitually use Display Screen Equipment as a significant part of his/her normal work but is to become a user in the undertaking in which they are currently employed
- The request for eyesight testing is one where the use of glasses/contact lenses is essential for carrying out work on Display Screen Equipment

Display Screen Equipment Eye Test Procedure

As a qualifying display screen equipment (DSE) user, you are entitled to undergo an eye and eyesight test with an optician. The purpose of this is to determine whether or not you require spectacles for use with DSE equipment.

This may be done during the working day. However, where possible, we expect you to arrange an appointment for the beginning or the end of the day or during your lunch break.

Please complete the Display Screen Users Questionnaire and return it to People Services prior to making your appointment. If you have answered yes to all of the questions in the questionnaire. You must request the cost of a “basic pair” and you will be able to reclaim this amount.

The cost may vary depending on which optician is used.

Please note that we cannot refund the cost of your eye test or glasses unless this process is followed.

14 Corrective Appliances

“SPECIAL” corrective appliances shall be those provided to meet the requirements of the regulations including appliances prescribed to correct vision defects at viewing distance for the display screen work concerned.

“NORMAL” corrective appliances shall be spectacles prescribed for any other purpose.

N.B. Anti-glare screens, and so called VDU spectacles and other devices that purport to protect against radiation, are NOT special corrective appliances and will not be classed as so by the College.

The College reserves the right to specify that “users” tests and corrective appliances are provided by a particular Company or professional.

Normal corrective appliances shall be at the “users’” expense.

The following guidelines apply:

- I. Users needing special corrective appliances may be prescribed a special pair of spectacles for display screen work. The College’s liability for costs extends only to payment for the cost of a basic appliance, i.e. of a type and quality adequate for its function, up to the cost of £45.00.
- II. If a User wishes to choose more costly appliances e.g. with designer frames not necessary for work, then the College is not obliged to pay for these.
- III. In these circumstances, the College will opt either to provide a basic appliance, or contribute a portion of the total cost of a luxury appliance equal to the cost of a basic appliance, with the balance being met by the User.

- IV. If Users are permitted by the College to choose spectacles to correct eye or vision defects for purposes which include DSE work but cover an even wider range, then the College will only contribute the costs attributable to the requirements of the display screen work involved.
- V. If a User wishes to use their own optician, the College will contribute an amount sufficient to cover the cost of a VDU specific eye test, provided a VAT invoice is produced.

15 Provision of Training

Where a person is already a User or is an employee who does not habitually use DSE as a significant part of their job but is to become a user as a result of a change in their position, the College shall ensure that they are provided with adequate health and safety training in the use of any workstation upon which they may be required to work.

The College uses an online Training and Assessment tool to achieve this, and further training can be requested by contacting the H&S Manager if required.

Line Managers should forward the names of eligible staff to the Health and Safety Manager so that training can be arranged.

16 Guidance Notes for Display Screen Users

Health and Welfare

- Always adjust furniture and equipment to suit your needs – do not adjust your own posture to suit the workstation
- Avoid adopting a static posture and avoid prolonged DSE work without a change of activity
- Always report problems with your furniture, equipment or health to your Supervisor/Line Manager as soon as these arise

Electrical Equipment

Look out for and report to your Supervisor/Line Manager/Facilities:

- Loose connection, unearthed equipment, damaged cables, defective cables, defective insulation, overloaded circuits, broken switches, worn or dangerous appliances, trailing leads, broken switches, and liquids if spilt could cause a short circuit
- Do not attempt to repair electrical equipment yourself
- Report all damage immediately to Facilities and do not attempt to use the appliance
- Do not tamper with any safety guards
- Learn how to stop any energy supply in an emergency

Operating Guides

- No operations should be carried out on any equipment which you have not been trained to use

Figure 2 below illustrates a standard workstation set-up, as per HSE Guidance.



Figure 2 Seating and posture for typical office tasks

- Seat back adjustable
- Good lumbar support
- Seat height adjustable
- No excess pressure on underside of thighs and backs of knees
- Foot support if needed
- Space for postural change, no obstacles under desk
- Forearms approximately horizontal
- Wrists not excessively bent (up, down or sideways)
- Screen height and angle to allow comfortable head position
- Space in front of keyboard to support hands/wrists during pauses in keying

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