Guidance Document

Title	Display Screen Equipment		
Ref	NHSF:039:04:G2	**Version**	4
Department	National Health & Safety Function	**Approved by**	National Health & Safety Manager – Policy Team
Issue Date	September 2018	**Revised Date**	September 2026
Legislation	Under Section 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, it is the duty of the employer to identify the hazards and assess the associated risks in the workplace. All risk assessments must be in writing and the necessary control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks documented and implemented. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, (General Application) Regulations 2007, Chapter 5 of Part 2 –Display Screen Equipment (DSE) it is the duty of the employer to perform an analysis (risk assessment) of each DSE user's workstation in order to evaluate the safety and health conditions of work. A DSE user is an employee who: • Has no choice but to use DSE to carry out their work. • Normally uses DSE for continuous periods of more than one hour per day. • Generally uses DSE on a daily basis.		
Note	When conducting a DSE workstation risk assessment consideration should be paid to the risk presented and the means of avoiding and mitigating any such risk so far as is reasonably practicable. *The management of any occupational safety and health issue(s) remains the responsibility of local management.*		

VERSION CONTROL UPDATE		
Version No.	**Date reviewed**	**Comments**
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1. Introduction

The Healthcare Sector employs in excess of 100,000 people and a significant number of these employees regularly (habitually) work with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) e.g. Desktop PC, high resolution monitors as those in radiology or ambulance control room.

Chapter 5 of Part 2 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 (also known as the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 2007) addresses the minimum safety requirements for working at a DSE workstation to include:

- **DSE equipment** to include the chair, screen/dual screens, keyboard, mouse and desk/work surface.
- **The DSE user's work environment** to include space, lighting, reflection and glare, noise, heat and humidity.
- **The DSE user/Computer interface** to include appropriate software and training and the organisation and planning of work tasks.

The risks associated with working with a poorly designed DSE workstation include musculoskeletal disorders, such as back pain or upper limb disorders, visual fatigue, and mental stress. While the risks of injury are often low, they can still occur if good practice is not followed to include ergonomic design of equipment, a suitable working environment and careful planning of tasks. In this regard, the HSE is committed to protecting employees from the potential hazards and risks presented by poorly designed/setup of DSE workstations.

2. Legislative Requirement

2.1 The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

2.2 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 (S.I. 299/2007); Chapter 5 of Part 2; Display Screen Equipment.

3. Purpose

This document sets out the HSE's approach to the management of risks associated with the use of DSE by:

3.1 Raising awareness of the risks associated with DSE and providing evidence based guidance on minimising the risks associated with DSE.

3.2 Outlining the legislation governing the need to conduct a risk assessment for each DSE user's workstation.

3.3 Outlining the roles and responsibilities of Line Managers and Employees in relation to DSE.

3.4 Describing the procedures to be followed when conducting:

- Overarching Risk Assessment for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Use.
- DSE Workstation Risk Assessments.
- Remote Working Risk Assessments.

3.5 Setting out the training requirement for managers, DSE Assessors and DSE users.

4. Scope

4.1 In Scope

This guidance applies to all:

- Managers (Clerical Admin Grade V and above & Clinical CNM 1/CMM1 and above) who manage employees who fall within the definition of a DSE user.
- Employees who meet the definition of a DSE user.

4.2 Out of Scope

- Drivers' cabs or control cabs for vehicles or machinery.
- Computer systems on board a means of transport.
- Computer systems mainly intended for public use.
- Calculators, cash registers and any equipment having a small data or measurement display required for direct use of the equipment.
- Typewriters of traditional design, of the type known as "typewriter with window".
- Display screens for surveillance purposes.

5. Definitions

Refer to Appendix 1.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of managers and employees are defined in the local Ancillary Safety Statement and hence are not reproduced here (please refer to aforesaid documents for further information).

The following roles and responsibilities are pertinent to this guidance document:

6.1 Line Managers

6.1.1 Ensure an Overarching Risk Assessment for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Use is completed in line with section 7.1.1.

6.1.2 Complete the HSeLanD training module "Managing DSE users: Key Requirements Made Simple".

6.1.3 Identify all DSE users under their remit and ensure they undertake "Using Your DSE Workstation Safely" before commencing work with display screen equipment.

6.1.4 Ensure a DSE Workstation Risk Assessment is carried out for each identified DSE user by a competent DSE Workstation Assessor in line with section 7.1.2. Note: the role of the DSE Workstation Assessor can be delegated to a competent person to undertake the assessments on the manager's behalf.

6.1.5 If undertaking the role of the DSE Workstation Assessor complete the HSeLanD training module "Becoming a Certified HSE DSE Workstation Assessor".

6.1.6 For those approved under the HSE Blended Working Policy for the Public Health Service, ensure a Remote Working Risk Assessment is completed which includes a risk assessment of the DSE users Workstation.

6.1.7 Provide information to DSE users in relation to the risks associated with the use of portable devices e.g. laptops and the necessary control measures.

6.1.8 Plan work activities so as to ensure daily work on DSE is periodically interrupted by task breaks or changes of activity.

6.1.9 Ensure a further DSE Workstation Risk Assessment is completed when:

- An employee transfers to a new workstation or
- Significant new work equipment, change of equipment or new technology is introduced at an individual's workstation if not previously risk assessed or
- If an issue relating to DSE work is raised by a DSE user on your team.

6.1.10 Ensure that the provision of an appropriate eye and eyesight test is made available to every DSE user

- Before commencing DSE work.
- At regular intervals thereafter, and
- If an employee experiences visual difficulties due to DSE work.

6.1.11 Review and monitor control measures implemented to ensure their effectiveness.

6.1.12 In line with HSE Policy and best practice, ensure the Overarching Risk Assessment for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Use, the DSE Workstation Risk Assessment(s) and the Remote Working Risk Assessment(s) are reviewed annually.

6.1.13 Report any incident(s) relating to DSE in line with the HSE Incident Management Framework.

6.2 Employees

6.2.1 Take reasonable care of their own safety, health and welfare and that of others.

6.2.2 Adhere to this Guidance document and any local protocols or guidance.

6.2.3 Complete the HSeLanD module "Using Your DSE Workstation Safely" and adjust your workstation as per training undertaken.

6.2.4 Cooperate/Participate in the carrying out of the DSE Workstation Risk Assessment and make full and correct use of any additional DSE equipment provided.

6.2.5 Cooperate in the review of the risk assessment and control measures to ensure that they are valid, effectively implemented and/or updated as required.

6.2.6 Report any concerns relating to DSE to your line manager to include:

- Signs and symptoms of discomfort associated with the workstation

- Changes to your work activities, workstation or environment that may affect working safely with DSE.
- Any defects in work equipment.

6.3 Competent Advice

In circumstances where advice and support is required (e.g. where sensitive or medical information or physical characteristics are highlighted that may impact the assessment e.g. previous injury, variations in height) the line Manager may seek advice from the National Health & Safety Function (NHSF) Helpdesk at 1800 420 420. Based on advice received, the line manager may:

- Consider requesting an Ergonomic Assessment, and include the completed DSE assessment

  and/or
- Refer to the Occupational Health Service, and include the completed DSE assessment.

7. Procedure

7.1 Risk Assessment

In line with legislative requirements and safety management practice, it is the responsibility of managers to identify hazards at the place of work and to assess the risks presented by those hazards. Employees have a reciprocal duty to adhere to the risk assessment and report any DSE concerns to their line manager.

In the context of DSE these risk assessments include:

- Overarching Risk Assessment for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Use
- DSE Workstation Risk Assessment
- Remote Working Risk Assessment

7.1.1 Overarching Risk Assessment for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Use

This is an assessment of the hazards and risks associated with DSE use, existing controls in place and/or additional controls required. This risk assessment includes details on the physical work environment, types of display screens in use (e.g. Desktop PC, high resolution monitors, Laptop, mobile devices e.g. tablets, computers on wheels (COWs)), the overall equipment needs, number of DSE users, number of DSE Workstation Risk Assessments completed, access to DSE assessors and training requirements.

Supporting Resources
Generic Risk Assessment Form
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

Overarching Risk Assessment for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Use (Worked Example)
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

Occupational Safety and Health Risk Assessment Training Programme
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

HSE Guideline Document re: Completion of OSH Risk Assessments
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

DSE User Questionnaire
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/display-screen-equipment-and-office-safety/

Workplace DSE User and Assessors Register
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/display-screen-equipment-and-office-safety/

7.1.2 DSE Workstation Risk Assessment

A DSE Workstation Risk Assessment must be completed for each workstation assigned to a DSE user which addresses the minimum safety requirements for working at a DSE Workstation i.e.

- **DSE** to include the chair, screen/dual screens, keyboard, mouse and desk/work surface.
- **The DSE user's work environment** to include space, lighting, reflection, glare, noise, heat and humidity.
- **The DSE user/Computer interface** to include appropriate software and training and the organisation and planning of work tasks.

Where adjustments made during the assessment are not adequate to support a DSE user, record clearly on the DSE Workstation Risk Assessment Form with the recommendation to seek further advice (refer to Section 6.3).

When the DSE user is hot-desking (i.e. a flexible workplace arrangement where workstations are used by different employees at different times, eliminating assigned workstations) a written DSE workstation risk assessment is not required to be completed. However, the DSE user is required to carry out a dynamic risk assessment of the workstation making the necessary adjustments to improve their safety by applying the learning from training received and knowledge gained from their involvement in previous DSE workstation risk assessment(s),

Note: Mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and Computers on Wheels (COWs) are increasingly used in the workplace. Because these devices are often used while standing, walking, or away from a fixed workstation, the user may not meet the definition of a DSE user. In these situations, a DSE workstation risk assessment is not required.

Supporting Resources
DSE user – Risk Assessment Process- Flowchart
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/display-screen-equipment-and-office-safety/

DSE Workstation Risk Assessment Form
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

DSE Workstation Risk Assessment Fillable Form
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

Fast Fact "Managing DSE user's – Key requirements made simple"
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/display-screen-equipment-and-office-safety/

Appendix 2 DSE Workstation Assessor Guidance

7.1.3 Remote Working Risk Assessment

For DSE users approved under the HSE Blended Working Policy for the Public Health Service a Remote Working Risk Assessment must be carried out which takes account of the **DSE Workstation Risk Assessment.**

Supporting Resources
Remote Working Risk Assessment
Refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/health-and-safety/risk-assessment/

HSE Blended Working Policy for the Public Health Service
Refer to: https://www2.healthservice.hse.ie/organisation/national-pppgs/hse-blended-working-policy-for-the-public-health-service/

7.2 Undertaking a DSE Workstation Risk Assessment

Figure 1 below outlines the stages in the DSE workstation risk assessment cycle.

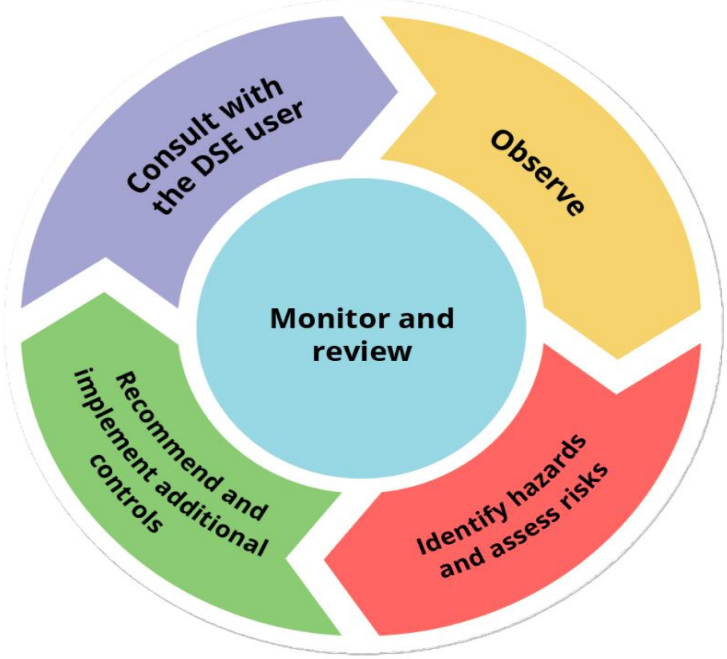


Figure 1 DSE workstation risk assessment cycle.

Consult with the DSE user

As a Manager/DSE Workstation Assessor commence the assessment by:

- Explaining the risk assessment process so the DSE user understands how they can contribute.
- Listen to the DSE user in order to understand the nature of their work, to enable issues to be raised regarding their work activities, workstation and work environment allowing practical solutions to be identified.
- Consider any psychosocial risk factors that may be present, e.g.
  - How long they are using the same equipment or interfaces and do they take breaks?
  - How much control do they have over pace and nature of tasks?
  - Do they need to apply high levels of attention and concentration?
  - Do they frequently need to meet tight deadlines?

Observe

Observe the DSE user at the workstation noticing the:

- Set-up of equipment
- Space
- Lighting
- Potential sources of glare
- Frequency and repetition of movement
- Force applied e.g. pushing keys with some effort
- Forcing items e.g. use of mouse
- Awkward postures adopted

Identify hazards and assess risks
Look for anything in the workstation or working habits that could cause discomfort, strain or injury. Consider: • **DSE** to include the chair, screen/monitor/dual monitors, keyboard, mouse and desk/work surface. • **The DSE user's work environment** to include space, lighting, reflection and glare, noise, heat and humidity. • **The DSE user/Computer interface** to include appropriate software and training and the organisation and planning of work tasks. Make adjustments to the DSE user's workstation during the risk assessment and record the adjustments on Part B of the HSE DSE Workstation Risk Assessment form. Document hazards that cannot be resolved on Part C and assess and rate the associated risk. Refer to: HSE Risk Assessment Tool.
Recommend and implement additional controls
Complete Part C by recording the actions (additional control measures), assigning an "Action Owner" (i.e. name person responsible) and specifying timeframes for implementation.
Monitor and Review
Once control measures have been introduced, the line manager is required to implement a process for assessing their effectiveness to ensure they are achieving the desired result. The line manager is required to ensure a further DSE Workstation Risk Assessment is completed when: • An employee transfers to a new workstation or • Significant new work equipment, change of equipment or new technology is introduced at an individual's workstation if not previously risk assessed or • If an issue relating to DSE work is raised by a DSE user on your team. It is best practice and HSE policy, to review all risk assessments at least annually. Note: Where the risk cannot be controlled locally, the line manager must escalate them to the appropriate service risk register. In the interim, the risk must be managed and monitored, so far as is reasonably practicable, at local level in line with Enterprise Risk Management Policy.

8. Use of Laptops

Laptops do not fall under the scope of the Regulations due to the fact that the keyboard should be tiltable and separate from the screen so as to allow the user to find a comfortable working position which avoids fatigue in the arms or hands. As a laptop's keyboard and screen are fixed together, it is not suitable for prolonged use.

If a laptop is the primary computer or used for long periods of time, it must be connected to separate peripherals i.e. an adjustable monitor/laptop riser with an external keyboard and mouse enabling the workstation to meet the minimum safety requirements for DSE.

9. Information, Instruction and Training

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (Section 9 and Section 10), requires employers to ensure that employees receive appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision relevant to the risks associated with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and workstation.

Training forms part of the overall strategy to reduce the risks associated with DSE activities. It must be supported by adequate supervision arrangements to ensure the skills and knowledge gained as part of the training module are transferred into practice in the workplace.

Training must be refreshed every 3 years. However, in some cases refresher training may be required more frequently and this requirement will be identified through the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) process.

9.1 Training for Managers

Managers are responsible for managing DSE risks for their team. Managing DSE users: Key Requirements Made Simple is a mandatory module for Managers to complete,

Managers undertaking the role of DSE Workstation Assessor must also complete the module *"Becoming a Certified HSE DSE Workstation Assessor"* on HSeLanD (see section 9.2).

Managers are responsible for ensuring training is completed in accordance with their Training Needs Assessment (TNA).

9.2 Training DSE Workstation Assessors

Training is required for those becoming a HSE DSE Workstation Assessor, including line managers undertaking this role. Delegated assessors must be Grade V or above, CNM 1/CMM 1 or above (or equivalent).

To become a HSE certified DSE Workstation Assessor, the following modules are mandatory and must be completed on HSeLanD

- *"Occupational Health and Safety Risk Assessment".* *
- *"Becoming a Certified HSE DSE Workstation Assessor".*

*Learners can only enrol for "*Becoming a Certified HSE DSE Workstation Assessor*" module after they have successfully completed "*Occupational Health and Safety Risk Assessment"* module. Training for DSE users

Managers must ensure those identified as DSE users complete the module "Using Your DSE Workstation Safely" which includes the following content:

- Potential risks to health in relation to the unsafe use of DSE.
- Instruction on the proper adjustment of the work equipment (chair, screen, computer, peripherals and accessories (keyboard and mouse)), and the environment which includes space, lighting, noise and humidity so as to suit the individual employee.

"Using Your DSE Workstation Safely" must be repeated under the following circumstances:

- In the event of a transfer between departments/facilities, or relocation to new work location of any employee or change of task assigned to an employee.
- When significant new work equipment, change of equipment is introduced at an individual's workstation if not previously risk assessed
- On the introduction of new technology/software which may affect the DSE users work demands
- If an issue relating to DSE work is raised by a DSE user on your team.

10. Eye and Eyesight Testing

Appropriate eye and eyesight testing must be made available to DSE users:

- Before commencing display screen work.
- At regular intervals thereafter and
- If an employee experiences visual difficulties which may be due to display screen work.

For further guidance refer to: https://healthservice.hse.ie/staff/benefits-and-services/eye-tests-for-display-screen-users/

11. Implementation

Implementation of this Guidance document forms an integral part of the Organisation's Safety Management System and is underpinned by effective consultation, communication, supervision, monitoring, audit and review.

Managers at all levels are responsible for implementing this Guidance within their area.

12. Monitoring, Audit and Review

- Managers are required to monitor the implementation of this Guidance and maintain evidence of same.
- Implementation of this Guidance shall be audited periodically at national level.
- This Guidance document shall be reviewed at national level every three years or earlier if circumstances require it.

13. Appendices

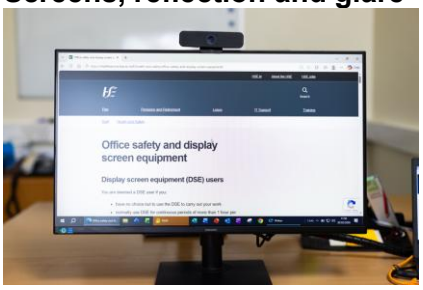
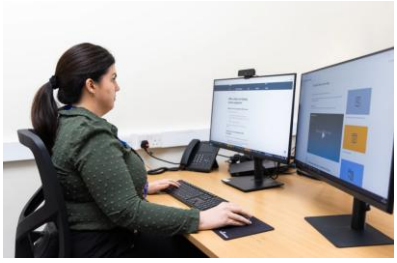
Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms/Definitions

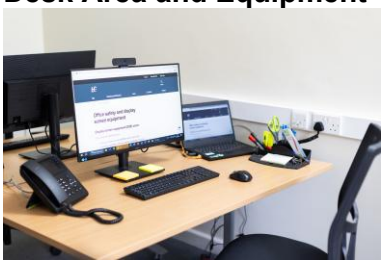
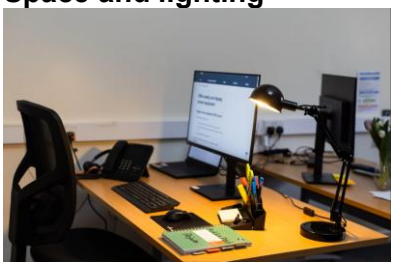
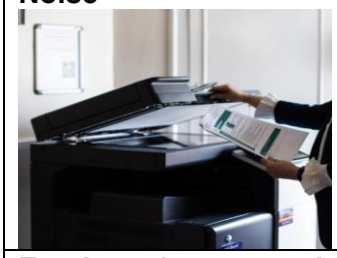
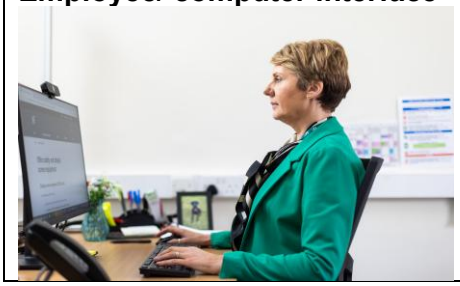
Control Measure	A mechanism, process, procedure or action which can be verified which seeks to reduce the likelihood and/or consequence of a risk. Controls include any process, policy, device, practice or other actions which modify risk. They can be required as additional in order to further mitigate the risk. A measure that is in place, is working effectively and operating to reduce either the likelihood or impact of a risk. Controls include but are not limited to, any process, policy, device, practice, or other conditions and/or actions that are in place and maintain and/or modify risk. (Ref: HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023) (Ref: HSE Integrated Risk Management Policy, 2017)
DSE Workstation Assessor	A DSE (Display Screen Equipment) Assessor is a trained individual who evaluates employee workstations—including chairs, monitors, keyboards, and environment—to ensure compliance with Chapter 5 of Part 2 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007. A HSE certified DSE Workstation Assessor, has completed the following mandatory training: • "Occupational Health and Safety Risk Assessment". • "Becoming a Certified HSE DSE Workstation Assessor".
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)	DSE means any alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved. *(Ref: Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 (S.I. 299/2007); Chapter 5 of Part 2; Display Screen Equipment*
Dynamic Risk Assessment	Dynamic risk assessment is the continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risk in real-time while working and taking action to eliminate or reduce risk. This Risk Assessment is undocumented. (Ref: Guideline on Completion of Occupational Safety and Health Risk Assessments)
Hazard	A potential source of harm or adverse health effect on a person or persons. (Ref: HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023)
Impact	The outcome or consequence of an event affecting objectives. (Ref: HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023)
Likelihood	Chance of something happening (also described as the probability or frequency of an event occurring). (Ref: HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023)
Risk	Risk is the uncertainty of objectives. In terms of occupational health and safety risk it is the combination of the likelihood of occurrence of a work related hazardous event or exposure(s) and the impact of the injury or ill-health that can be caused by the event or exposure. (Ref: adapted from HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023)
Risk Assessment	The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation. (Ref: HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023)

Risk Register	A risk register is a database of assessed risks that face any organisation at any one time. Always changing to reflect the dynamic nature of risks and the organisations management of them, its purpose is to help managers prioritise available resources to minimise risk and target improvements to best effect. (Ref: HSE Enterprise Risk Management Policy, 2023)
Shared Workstation	The practice in an office of allocating desks to workers when they are required or on a rota system, rather than giving each worker their own desk. (*Ref: Oxford dictionary*)
Workstation	Means an assembly comprising display screen equipment, which may be provided with a keyboard or input device or software, or a combination of the foregoing, determining the operator and machine interface, and includes: (a) a work chair and work desk or work surface, (b) any optional accessories and peripherals, and (c) the immediate work environment of the display screen equipment. *(Ref: Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 (S.I. 299/2007); Chapter 5 of Part 2; Display Screen Equipment)*

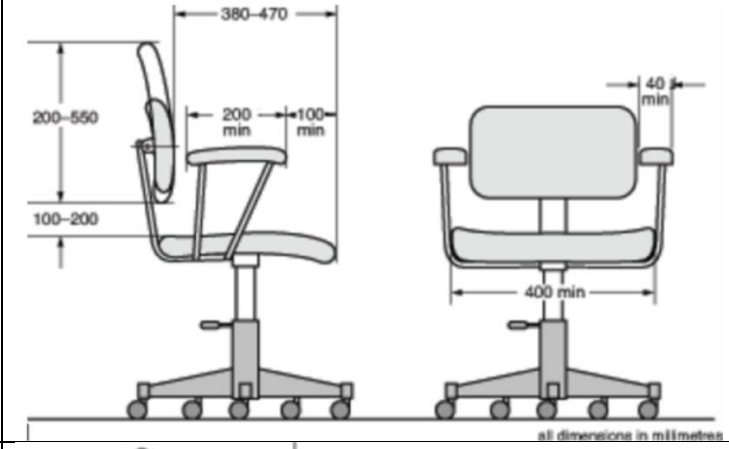
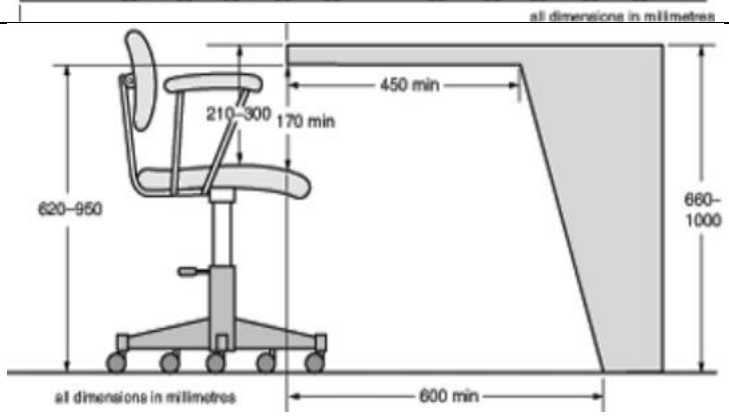
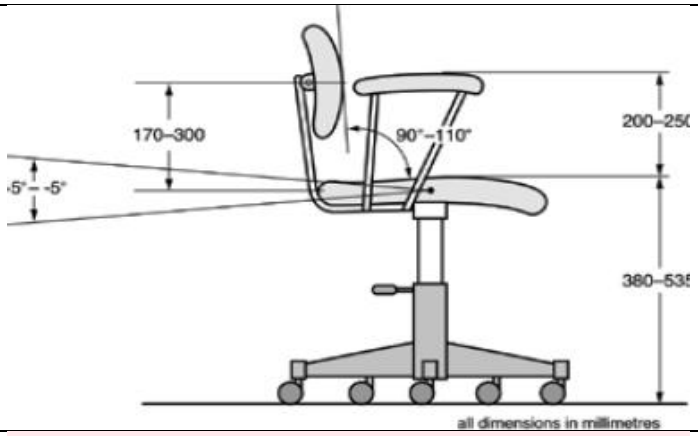
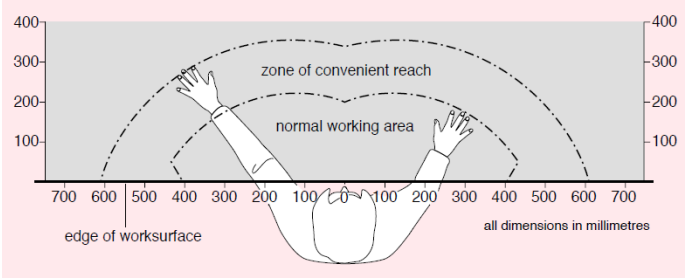
Appendix 2 DSE Workstation Assessor Guidance

The following adjustment can be made during the assessment if required:

Workstation setup *Ref:posturite.co.uk*	• Make space on the desk between the keyboard and the desk edge for the User to support their hands and arms. • Move the phone so that the User doesn't have to overstretch to reach it. • Adjust the document holder if present so that it is at the same height and angle as the screen.
Keyboard and mouse 	• Move the mouse so that it is within easy reach distance of the user. • Move the keyboard so that it is in front of you and adjust the tilt of the keyboard if you experience discomfort while typing. • A mouse matt may be required to provide a surface for the mouse to grip. • Ensure there is space in front on the keyboard to support the hands and arms.
Screens, reflection and glare  	• Move the screen so that it is at approximately arm's length to the user. • Adjust the height of the screen so the top of screen is level with, or a little below your eye level. • Clean the screen if it is dirty using screen wipes. • Adjust the contract and brightness of the screen if the user cannot read the screen easily. • Adjust the colours to reduce the flicker – use a darker background and lighter text. • Reposition the workstation to reduce the glare. • Place adjustable blinds on the windows. • Replace the keyboard and desk to one with a low reflective surface.
Dual Screens 	• Position the top of each screen at your eye height to help maintain a good head, neck, and upper back posture. • Keep both screens close together, side by side, and swivel in your chair when looking between the screens, rather than twisting. • If you use both screens equally, sit central to them both. Tilt the screens so the outside edge of each screen is angled toward you (a slight V shape). This will help minimise head and neck twisting when looking between them.

	• If you use one (primary) screen more than the other (secondary), position the primary screen directly in front of you, with the secondary screen, positioned to the side, angled inwards slightly. • Have both screens around an arm's length away. This is typically the most comfortable viewing distance for most people. For more information on general DSE awareness go to HSeLanD where you can complete the online DSE user Awareness training.
Desk Area and Equipment 	• A footrest for the user if their feet are not on a flat surface for support. • A wrist rest if the user expresses discomfort while typing. • Remove clutter so that the user can move their chair in and out of the workstation space easily while seated and can turn from side to side on the chair. • Using technology such as headsets to prevent cradling of the phone or Bluetooth equipment to allow freedom of movement • Using a document holder to minimise head and neck movement while typing. • Repairing or replacing the chair as appropriate if it is not stable, if the adjustment mechanism is not working or the user is not comfortable.
Space and lighting 	• Ask the user to remove any clutter that is around their desk area and to store items appropriately so as not to present a trip hazard. • Adjust the light settings or introduce task lighting if there are any concerns, lighting levels can be measured using a special device called a LUX meter.
Noise 	• Reposition equipment to reduce noise levels or introduce sound proofing measures e.g. acoustic partitions
Employee/ computer interface 	• The user should have training and instruction on the software they are using to be able to carry out the tasks assigned. • Work is planned to allow for task breaks or changes of tasks away from the DSE to allow the user to change posture and avoid fatigue. • Consult with your line manager regarding eye and eyesight testing for DSE use.

Appendix 3 Anthropometrics Measurements for DSE Assessors (Ref: Health & Safety Executive (HSE), UK, Health & Safety Guidance HSG57)

Recommended Chair Dimensions	
Seating at Work – Chair Floor to desktop surface = 660 – 1000mm Floor to underside of desktop = 620 – 950mm Clearance under desktop = 450mm or greater Clearance under desk at floor level = 600mm or greater Seat to desktop surface 210 – 300mm Seat to underside of desktop = 170mm	
Recommended Chair Adjustability	
Reach in horizontal plane (the distances shown can be reached by 95% of women)