What is a DSE Assessment?

A DSE (Display Screen Equipment) assessment is an assessment of the risks associated with using display screens and computer workstations.

Individuals who use computers for extended periods of time may not only experience eye strain but also pain or discomfort within the body. Whilst eye fatigue and headaches are common, incorrect use of poorly designed workstations can result in desk users experiencing pain in the following areas:

- Neck
- Shoulders
- Arms
- Back
- Wrists and hands

This is usually temporary but can lead to chronic soft tissue disorders. Symptoms can include:

- Discomfort
- Soreness/swelling
- Pain
- Numbness/tingling
- Functional disability

The term for this whole group of conditions is **‘upper limb disorders**’. These disorders are usually caused by poor work habits, poor workstation layout or improper use of workstation components. These symptoms can be avoided by making simple adjustments to either your workstation or your working patterns.

Why do we need a DSE assessment?

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 apply to workers who use DSE daily, for an hour or more at a time. Employers have a legal responsibility to ensure that workstations in their business are assessed. This not only applies to a business’ personal office but also should be carried out for temporary workplaces, remote working, and ‘hot-desking’.



What does a DSE assessment cover?

Working with display equipment does not just pose a risk to your eyes, but it can also lead to physical body pain such as back ache if used incorrectly. As well as the display screen being assessed the following equipment must also be considered:

- Keyboard
- Mouse
- Chair
- Desk
- Lighting
- Clutter

Anything related to your workstation must be included in a DSE assessment. The assessment must also incorporate the user's surroundings such as lighting, temperature, noise, and glare. Basically, anything that poses a risk to a user's workstation should always be considered.

What can you do?

1. Assess your workplace – complete a workstation assessment on your work area
2. Move your screen – is your screen too far away? You should not be leaning forward to read the screen
3. Adjust your chair – make sure your back is supported by the chair and that you are sitting at a comfortable height
4. Control your screen – adjust the brightness setting to reduce flicker
5. Sit up straight – move your screen and chair to the correct height and position to

allow your feet to be flat on the floor. Your back should be straight and your eyes level with the top of the screen

6. Take a break – take a 5-10 minute break every hour that you work
7. Test your eyes – DSE can increase the risk of eye strain and headaches; ensure that you have regular eye tests
8. Loosen your grip – avoid clicking the mouse or hitting the keyboard too hard as this excess force could lead to strains
9. Close the blind – this helps to minimise the glare from your screen which will reduce eye strain and headaches
10. Practice posture – try not to sit for long periods of time. Try simple stretching exercises to stretch your arms and neck

If you are concerned about your current DSE set – up, speak to C2 Safety and we will carry out a DSE assessment for you. For businesses that are remotely working we are now offering a **Work Safely from Home Pack** which includes a DSE assessment, homeworking first aid kit, fire extinguisher(s) and a PAT test service.

