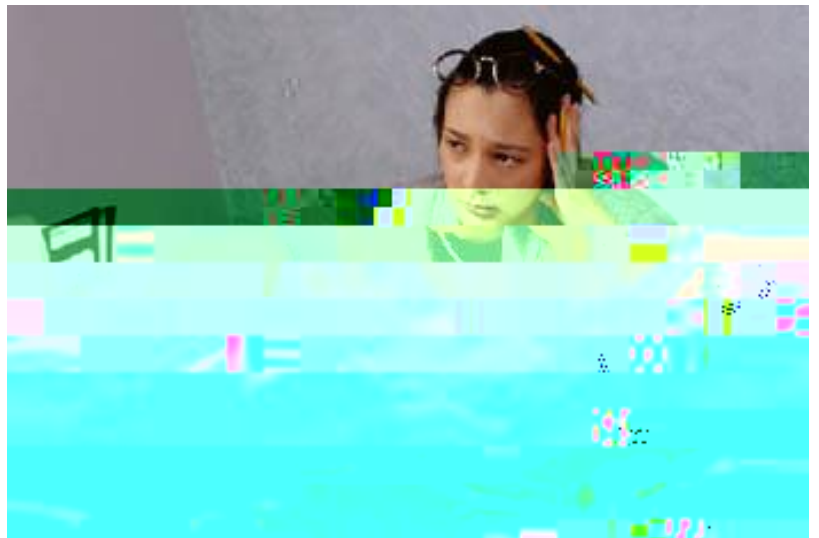




This Information Sheet should help to alleviate any health concerns you may have regarding the use of display screen equipment. It forms part of a series of Information Sheets which supports the Safe Use of Computers (DSE) Policy Standard.



Q. Am I at risk?

A. Display Screen Equipment (DSE) has been blamed - often wrongly - for a range of health

DSE users must be able to see the screen without having to raise or lower their head. People with an optician or doctor as you may need different glasses.

Q. Can DSE work cause headaches?

A. Headaches may result from several potential DSE issues:

Screen glare

Poor image quality

A need for different spectacles

Stress from the pace of work

Anxiety about new technology

Reading the screen for long periods without a break

Poor posture

A combination of these

Many of these things can easily be put right once the cause of the problem has been found.

Q. How long should I work with a DSE?

A. There is no legal limit, but you need to break up long spells of DSE work. How long you should work without a break depends on the type of work you are doing.

Q. Does DSE give out harmful radiation?

A. No. DSE gives out visible light, which enables us to see the screen, and other forms of electromagnetic radiation which is only harmful above certain levels. The levels of radiation emitted from DSE are well below the safe levels set out in international recommendations so DSE radiation level checks are not required. You also do not need special devices such as spectacles, screens or aprons when using it.

Q. What should I do if I'm pregnant?

A. Concerns about reports of miscarriages and birth defects among some groups of DSE workers, has not been borne out by recent research. Many scientific studies have now been carried out and, taken as a whole, do not show any link between miscarriages or birth defects and working with DSE.

If you are anxious about your DSE or about work generally during pregnancy, you should talk to your doctor or Health and Safety Services.

Q. Can working with DSE cause skin disorders?

A. This is rare with only a few people experiencing irritation e.g. rashes or other skin problems when working with DSE. The exact cause is not known, but it seems possible a combination of dry air, static electricity and individual susceptibility may be involved. If this is the case, increase the humidity or allow more fresh air into the room.

