Joseph Swan Academy

Health and Safety Policy

2018 - 2019

To be reviewed September 2018

Health and Safety Policy

1. Rationale

The Governing Body is committed to, and carries overall strategic responsibility for, the provision and promotion of a safe and healthy environment for all users of the Academy including staff, students, visitors and contractors.

The Governing Body will ensure that the Academy has a written Health and Safety Policy, consistent with LA and national policies, which is clearly understood and readily available to all members of staff and those working in the Academy.

The Governing Body has statutory responsibility for health and safety The Head Teacher will, in practice, be responsible for the day to day enforcement of the health and safety policy on behalf of the Governing Body.

2. Aims

2.1 Joseph Swan Academy recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing and promoting a safe and healthy environment for all users of the Academy including staff, students, visitors and contractors. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for Health and Safety, but everyone has a responsibility to co-operate with the Governing Body in the interests of Health and Safety.

2.2 The Academy will, so far as is reasonably practicable within its powers, continue to take steps to meet this responsibility, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:

(i) plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;
(ii) safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
(iii) information, instruction, training and supervision to enable everyone to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work, to include the use of risk assessments;
(iv) a safe place of work, and safe access to, and exit from it;
(v) a healthy and clean working environment
(vi) adequate welfare facilities.

2.3 In order to meet these requirements the Academy has the following procedures in place:

Appendix 1	Risk Assessment
Appendix 2	Emergency Evacuation Procedures
Appendix 3	Fire Prevention, Testing of Equipment
Appendix 4	Procedures for First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
Appendix 5	Reporting Procedures
Appendix 6	Personal Safety policy
Appendix 7	Health and Safety training
Appendix 8	Work Equipment
Appendix 9	COSHH Policy
Appendix 10	Manual Handling of Loads
Appendix 11	Health and Safety Inspections
Appendix 12	Asbestos
Appendix 13	Pregnant Workers
Appendix 14	Display Screen Equipment – Code of Practice

2.4 The Academy will also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that its work activities do not endanger the health and safety of the general public, and contractors working on the site.

2.5 The Academy may co-operate with safety representatives such as the Health and Safety Team at Gateshead Council, or an alternative, and buy into their service each year through a SLA. Every termly union Liaison Meeting has Health and Safety as standing item on the agenda.

2.6 A copy of this statement will be made available to employees and all those working in the Academy. It will be reviewed every year by the Governors Premises and Health and Safety Committee, added to and modified as appropriate to sustain its effectiveness, and such changes will be brought to the notice of employees. It may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements relating to the work of particular departments or groups of workers.

3. Responsibilities & Procedures

3.1 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for Health and Safety.

3.2 The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for the day to day implementation of the Health and Safety policy and procedures, but everyone also carries some responsibility.

3.3 The Academy Leadership Team (ALT) arranges the day-to-day running of the Academy to ensure a safe working environment for students and staff. Specific examples include:

i) emergency evacuation procedure, fire notices and fire drills.
ii) duty lists for the supervision of danger points outside lesson times.
iii) staffed duty points at the end of the Academy day.

- The Site Manager has specific Health and Safety duties. Incoming safety directives from HSE are passed on to the appropriate staff for information/implementation. Health and Safety concerns reported by staff/safety representatives are dealt with by contacting appropriate agencies. Reports are filed by the Site Manager. The duties of the Site Manager are contained within the general set shown below:-

- Supervisory and managerial staff have day-to-day duties
  i) to ensure that safe methods of work exist and are implemented;
  ii) to ensure that health and safety regulations rules and procedures are being applied effectively;
  iii) to give personal leadership and to integrate safety with the work activities being carried out in the general working environment;
  iv) to impart to all employees an understanding that accidents can be prevented;
  v) to instruct all new employees in safe working practice;
  vi) to make safety inspection in their areas of responsibility and take prompt corrective action where necessary;
  vii) to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, information, instruction and training to employees to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe

manner. Where training is required by statute or considered necessary for safety, it will be given before an employee commences any relevant work.

viii) to produce, where appropriate, a code of conduct incorporating safety precautions/risk assessments and communicate them to staff and students.

ix) report all violent/threatening behaviour to the DHT Pastoral and keep records.

x) to keep minor accident records in Student Reception. A record is also kept of more serious accidents which are then passed to the LA by the DHT Pastoral.

xi) to keep a site book recording details of visiting contractors and officials on site business.

- The Academy first aiders deal with accidents and illnesses requiring treatment. He/she records chronic medical conditions needing medication and keeps/issues prescribed medicines. He/she deals with accident report forms. A document has been produced detailing the Procedures for First Aid and the Administration of Medicines and is reviewed every two years by the Premises and Health and Safety Committee (see Appendix 4)

3.3.1 Specific staff have been trained to administer first aid and will deputise for the Academy first aider as necessary or in her absence. A list of these is available in the Academy office.

3.3.2 The Site Manager has been trained in the management of asbestos arrangements and procedures. The log is kept in the Site Manager's office (see appendix 12).

3.4 **All staff** have a personal responsibility:

- to take reasonable care, whilst at work, to ensure that they do not endanger either themselves or anyone else who might be affected by their activities or inactivity;
- to make full and proper use of any clothing and equipment provided for personal protection;
- to inform their immediate superior if the working conditions are considered to be unsafe;
- to use machinery, equipment etc in a correct and safe manner;
- to report to their immediate superior any hazards or defects in plant, equipment, machinery
- or buildings;
- to make themselves fully conversant with the Safe Working Instructions and Codes of Practice applicable to the tasks they are required to undertake and to comply with their contents;
- to set a good example.

3.5 All staff and visitors will wear security badges.

4. Monitoring of Health & Safety

The Finance and Resources Committee which includes members of the Academy Leadership Team, and the Site Manager will be responsible for the preparation, up-dating and monitoring of the detailed Health and Safety Procedures which will be reviewed annually or when new legislation comes into force on behalf of the Governing Body.

APPENDIX 1

Risk Assessment

Health and safety legislation requires every employer to adequately assess the risks to the health and safety of his/her employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work. The risks to the health and safety of persons not in his/her employment arising out of or in connection with any work activity must also be assessed. These assessments should also identify and record any group of employees particularly at risk; and be formally recorded.

What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is a careful examination of how people may be harmed from a particular activity or situation. The assessment will help you to identify the likelihood of harm and whether you can reduce the risk to a reasonable level, through the introduction of control measures.

Hazard: A hazard is defined as something with the potential to cause harm.

Risk: A risk is the likelihood of potential harm from the hazard being realised. This is usually evaluated by considering the likelihood of the harm occurring and the potential severity of the harm.

Generic Risk Assessments

Generic risk assessments are available through the LA to assist establishments with risk assessment, and provide a basis for individual sites to consider their specific circumstances.

The assessments require the risk to be evaluated before and after the suggested controls are in place. This will help identify the urgency of control measures and whether, following the introduction of controls, the risk can be reduced sufficiently. The following matrix may help to determine your risk rating.

Risk Matrix

Severity / **Likelihood**	**Slightly harmful** (e.g. Superficial injury or temporary discomfort or distress)	**Harmful** (e.g. Sprains, minor fractures, ill health leading to disability)	**Extremely harmful** (e.g. major fractures, amputations, fatality, life shortening illnesses)
Highly unlikely	LOW (L)	LOW (L)	MEDIUM (M)
Unlikely	LOW (L)	MEDIUM (M)	HIGH (H)
Likely	MEDIUM (M)	HIGH (H)	VERY HIGH (VH)

It is unlikely that all risks can be reduced to low levels. Table 1 will help you to determine action that needs to be taken.

Table 1:

Risk Rating	Action required	
	Initial risk rating	**Residual risk rating**
Very High (VH)	May only take place if good control measures can be implemented.	Must not take place. You will need to identify further controls to reduce the risk rating.
High (H)	May only take place if good control measures can be implemented.	Seek further advice
Medium (M)	If it is not possible to lower risk further, you will need to consider the risk against the benefit.	
Low (L)	No further action required.	

The completed generic assessments will need to be signed off by the person completing the assessment and the establishment manager. They will then need to be reviewed and if necessary updated, at least annually. A review will be required sooner if an incident or accident occurs, or there are significant changes to the premises, staff or procedures.

Further Guidance

If you require any further assistance with completing these generic risk assessments contact the Health and Safety Team at Gateshead Council or the Site Manager at the Academy.

For guidance on carrying out risk assessments for curriculum activities please check the information available from the following sources:

- CLEAPSS Academy Science Service Laboratory Handbook
- Gateshead Academies Offsite Visits Manual / Handbook
- Gateshead Council Academy Visits Officer at the Civic Centre Gateshead.

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT	*Activity or location being assessed*	
Establishment:	**Assessment by:** *Who carried out this assessment*	**Date:**
Review Date: *Record proposed date of review*	**Approved by:** e.g. *Manager, Technical Adviser*	**Date:**

Hazard / Risk	**Who is at Risk?**	***Initial Risk Rating***	**Normal Control Measures** *(Brief description and/or reference to source of information).*	**Are Control Measures** *Y/N/NA*		**Additional Control Measures** *(to take account of local/individual circumstances).*	**Residual Risk Rating**
				In Place	**Adequate**		
Consider the generic hazards and risks listed in this column. Add any site-specific hazards you have identified.	*Students, staff, the public etc. Consid-er those with special needs.*	**Before controls are applied.** *Use the risk matrix to help you rate the risk*	• *Consider the control measures listed here.* • *If you identify any other control measure you have on your site, add them to the list.*	*Are the control measures in place?*	*Are they adequate?*	*Record additional controls you have identified and the date they were implemented. Ensure that you address anything highlighted under normal controls as needing action.*	*With all controls in place. Use the risk matrix to help you. Rate the risk. Look at Table 1 to see if further action is required.*

REVIEWS:		
DATE OF *Record* **REVIEW:** *actual date of review*	**REVIEWED BY:** *Who carried out the review?*	**COMMENTS:** *Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews.*
DATE OF REVIEW:	**REVIEWED BY:**	**COMMENTS:**

APPENDIX 2

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

(Leadership Team responsibility lies with the Deputy Head Teacher)

In any emergency where there is a risk within the main Academy building **safe and quick evacuation is the primary concern**. The signal for emergency evacuation is the fire alarm sounding. It is the duty of ANYONE discovering a fire, potential bomb, etc. to operate the nearest alarm point. In a situation where the main fire alarm cannot be rung (e.g. a large amount of gas in Academy), the Academy will be evacuated by the Fire Marshalls who are in radio contact. In the case of a bomb threat received by the reception office the receptionist should immediately inform a member of the Academy Leadership Team and the Site Manager who will take responsibility for dialling 999 for the police.

In the event of the fire alarm sounding

- The Admin Team are responsible for ensuring that the registers and a set of current form lists, visitor's lists, are taken out of the building.
- Persons in charge of classes will order silence, close windows and marshal the class in an orderly manner to the assembly point on the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) by the exit route away from fire etc.
- Students line up in forms, in register order, in straight rows on the designated spaces on the MUGA, Signs on the MUGA fencing show where year groups will line up.
- Form tutors should stand at the front of their forms and all staff without forms (including all non teaching staff) should stand behind the forms.
- Non-teaching staff, canteen staff, etc. will immediately make their way to the assembly point (after making equipment safe).

All teaching assistants will go to the SEN Office and find out from the student timetables where students with mobility difficulties are at that time. They will then go to these rooms and assist with the evacuation of these students. It is the responsibility of the SENCO to ensure that the list of students with mobility difficulties is up to date and passed to the Site Manager and that timetables are readily available for each of them.

Students with mobility difficulties and staff who have assisted them should proceed to the assembly point.

As soon as classes and groups are assembled each teacher and Year Leaders will take a roll call and report to the Deputy Head Teacher if anyone is missing.

No person must leave the assembly point until permission has been given either by the head, or the Site Manager. If on site, the most senior Fire Officer is the person in charge.

As soon as the alarm is sounded all Fire Marshalls will check listed areas of the building **only if it is considered safe to do so** and if any of them should not be available their deputy Fire Marshall will stand in for them. Once each zone is clear the Site Manager is informed. The Site Manager will view the alarm board and go to the problem area and if necessary dial 999.

If any of the above is not available a nominated deputy will take his/her place.

A test of emergency evacuation procedures should be held at least once a term and a record kept. All fire equipment should be tested annually.

There are specific procedures for public examinations.

Evacuation in the case of flooding

In the event that flood water enters the Academy buildings the agreed evacuation procedure will, as far as is practicable, be identical to the fire evacuation procedure. When it is apparent that floodwater is entering the Academy buildings a member of the ALT, or site staff, will activate the fire alarm. This will trigger a normal fire evacuation and roll call on the MUGA. In the case of modest levels of floodwater and the early stages of more serious floods, this response should be appropriate, as all designated fire exits should be safely passable. Should the flood water entering the building rise so quickly that a safe exit is not possible, all staff and students should find the quickest access to the first floor level of the building and congregate on the balcony area, awaiting instruction from a member of the ALT or emergency services as to what to do next. Students and staff in the main Science classrooms (Block A) would be expected to be able to exit safely to the MUGA. Should this not be a safe option then they too should congregate on the first floor of the Science block and await instructions.

In the event that staff and /or students are trapped in the building by floodwater UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY ELECTRICAL DEVICES OR ACADEMY TELEPHONES BE USED.

APPENDIX 3

Fire Prevention and the testing of equipment

The arrangements for fire prevention inspections, testing of equipment are given below.

Testing of the fire alarm

The fire alarm will be tested weekly, (using a different call-point each time) normally on a Monday morning by the Site Manager or a member of his team**.**

Defects on the system must be reported immediately.

Inspection of fire fighting equipment

The Academy`s designated contractor undertakes an annual maintenance service of all fire extinguishers in the Academy. The Site Manager will check that this has been done.

Defective equipment or extinguishers that need recharging should be reported direct to **ADT** by the Site Manager. Test records are located in the Site Manager's office.

APPENDIX 4

Procedures for first aid and the administration of medicines

A. First Aid

1. An up-to-date list of staff with First Aid qualifications is held in reception, and the medical room.

2. Emergency addresses and telephone numbers are maintained on the Academy's ICT network.

3. First aid boxes are kept, and properly maintained, in the medical room, the PE, science, technology, art areas, and the Academy mini-bus.

4. If an accident occurs during Academy hours, parents/carers are informed by the Academy first aider (Welfare Officer); if out of Academy hours, by the member of staff supervising the pupil.

5. All treated accident cases are recorded and details of serious accidents are also recorded in the Incident Reports submitted to the LA.

6. Travelling first aid kits, supplied by the Academy first aider, will be taken on journeys out of Academy. In cases of accident, teachers act "in loco parentis" and inform the parents/carers concerned and the Senior Leadership Team contact as soon as possible.

7. Any member of staff seeking advice on first aid for offsite trips, residential or trips abroad should speak to a member of the Academy's Leadership Team.

8. A list of Students with disabilities, medical conditions and allergies which require special attention in cases of accident or emergency, is kept by the Central Admin Team and held on the SIMS database. Trip Leaders must clearly demonstrate their awareness and understanding of the student details held in this way when planning trips.

9. Whenever blood or other body fluids have to be mopped up, disposable plastic gloves and an apron will always be worn and paper towels used; these items will then be placed in plastic bags and safely disposed of, preferably by burning. Clothing may be cleaned in an ordinary washing machine using its hot cycle

   If direct contact with another person's blood or other body fluids occurs the area must be washed as soon as possible with ordinary soap and water. Clean cold tap water must be used if the lips, mouth, tongue, eyes or broken skin are affected and medical advice sought. Particular care must be taken when treating sporting injuries and the "bucket and sponge" method of treatment must not be used.

B. Administration of Medicines / Treatments

Medication will not be administered to students by a member of the Academy staff. Students who might require emergency medication will be actively encouraged to bring spare medication into the Academy. This will be catalogued and stored in a locked cabinet in the medical room. A register is kept of the medication dispensed.

The following arrangements are made for those students who self-administer medication:

- Asthma sufferers are encouraged to keep an inhaler with them at all times for use when necessary.
- Epi-pens are kept in the First Aid Room.
- Facilities are made available in the medical room for diabetics to self-administer the appropriate medication in private.
- Parents are responsible for checking that the expiry date of inhalers and epi-pens held in Academy and sending in replacements as necessary.

APPENDIX 5

Reporting Procedures

Employees must report all accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences, incidence of violence, verbal abuse and near misses in accordance with the Academy Incident Reporting Procedure.

- All accidents, dangerous occurrences, and near misses must be reported on the standard Local Authority Incident Report Form. Violent incidents and verbal abuse must be reported on the same form. Copies of both forms are available from the M drive on the Academy network (VLE)

- “Near Misses” must also be reported to the Site Manager. These are incidents that occur but where no injury or damage is sustained but could, potentially, have been serious incidents. Remedial action taken promptly after a near miss can prevent a serious accident occurring later.

- The Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher must countersign the report form before the original copy is sent to the Local Authority Hall. A copy should be kept at the Academy and either centrally filed or held on the personal file of a staff member or student. NB Faulty systems of work, plant, equipment, fittings, must be reported and attended to as soon as possible.

- The Head Teacher must investigate accidents and take remedial steps to avoid similar instances recurring. Faulty equipment must be taken out of use when necessary and will be clearly labelled to that effect.

- All serious incidents and any major injuries must be reported immediately to the Health and Safety Team at Gateshead Council. The Academy operates a Service Level Agreement with this team and works closely with them on all H&S matters.

APPENDIX 6

Personal Safety

1.0 Working Alone on the Academy Site

Wherever possible staff should be discouraged from remaining alone on the premises. However, from time to time, we may find that we are working alone in the building. It is important that we all do our best to consider the implications of this in order to decide whether it is appropriate, and what measures we need to have in place to ensure that we are safe. Wherever possible, these judgements should be made in advance when planning the activity or work programme. There will be times when this is not possible, and it is still important to consider the basic issues.

When undertaking a Risk Assessment, here are some of the things you might want to take into account:

- how secure is the building?
- who knows you are there?
- how would you summon help if you needed it?
- are the tasks you are undertaking hazardous?
- how will you leave the building safely?

Some control measures that you might want to consider would be:

- letting the Site Team or your manager know when you plan to leave and when they should expect you;
- ensuring that you know the appropriate emergency numbers, particularly after switchboards have closed;
- assessing if it is appropriate for you to carry out the tasks on your own;
- making sure you have a well lit route out of your workplace and in the car park.

All individuals will need to:

- try to anticipate situations where they will be alone in the building;
- co-operate with their manager in undertaking a risk assessment;
- ensure that they comply with the requirements identified by the risk assessment.

All Managers should:

- anticipate the circumstances under which any of their staff will be working alone in a building and consider if there are suitable alternatives;
- undertake an assessment of the risks involved;
- identify measures which will ensure a low level of risk;
- take the necessary action required by the risk assessment;
- ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the requirements identified by the risk assessment;
- monitor to ensure that the arrangements are being complied with;
- review the risk assessments regularly or sooner if the circumstances change.

2.0 Travelling Alone

Many of us travel as part of our work, often alone, in the evenings as well as during the day. You need to be confident that you can stay safe in your vehicle and know how to deal with an emergency.

Here are some things you should take into account:

- Are you healthy and fit to drive today?
- Is your vehicle regularly serviced and in a roadworthy condition?
- Do you know how to deal with a breakdown?
- What should you do if involved in an accident?
- What should you do if others are involved?
- What do you do about aggressive drivers?

Things you should do:

- Ensure that someone knows when and where you are going, the route you expect to take if possible, and when you expect to arrive;
- Take precautions to protect your own safety, for example by:
  - planning your journey;
  - having a personal alarm;
  - having a blanket, in case of prolonged breakdown in cold weather;
  - keeping a basic tool kit;
  - having a mobile telephone;
  - having a road atlas to hand;
  - checking driving conditions before you set out;
  - ensure you have sufficient fuel for your journey.

All managers should:

- include reference to this guide if appropriate, when inducting new staff;
- know where all their staff are at any one time (recorded in an office ‘diary’);
- do a risk assessment of the risks involved;
- identify measures which make sure the level of risk is as low as is reasonably practicable;
- take the necessary action required by the risk assessment;
- ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the requirements identified by the risk assessment;
- monitor to ensure that the arrangements are being complied with;
- review the risk assessments regularly or sooner if the circumstances change.

Staff will need to:

- co-operate with their manager in undertaking a risk assessments of lone driving;
- ensure that they comply with the requirements identified by the risk assessment.

3.0 Carrying passengers in your car

Some staff may well find themselves transporting students and young people on a regular basis in their own car. In order to ensure that there is no undue risk to the member of staff or to the young person it is important to carry out a risk assessment to determine the circumstances under which it can be done safely. Managers should complete a risk assessment to ensure that child protection issues are given serious consideration.

When undertaking your risk assessment, here are some of the questions you might want to consider:

- who knows that you are making the journey?
- what do you know about any previous history of violence or inappropriate behaviour of the young person?
- have you considered the route and destination?
- what will you do if there is an incident? For example if you are assaulted or the young person absconds?

Some control measures that you might want to introduce if the situation allows would be:

- ensure you are accompanied by another member of staff if you are travelling with a student on their own.
- ensure the journey is necessary and there is no suitable alternative;
- confirm the arrangements have been authorised;
- ensure colleagues know that you have arranged the journey and ask them to note the departure time;
- if you are carrying more than one young person, ensure pick up and drop off points are in the same location wherever possible;
- ensure that you have the appropriate insurance;
- make sure that the seatbelts are in good order and that the young person is wearing one.

4.0 Home visits

As part of their official duties it may be necessary for some members of staff to visit families in their homes. Normally there will be no significant risk when making a home visit, as in a very high percentage of violent incidents the person has a history of aggression. However, unknown family members or visitors lend an unpredictable factor to the visit. It is therefore essential that members of staff take precautions to ensure their safety at all times. This can best be achieved by undertaking a Risk Assessment.

Here are some factors which would need to be taken into account:

- is a home visit the most appropriate way of dealing with the issue?
- have you checked the records to see if any previous violent incidents have been recorded?

- do you know the family history and/or of likely visitors who may be present?
- if you have concerns about your personal safety, have you worked out a clear strategy for dealing with the visit?

NB if there is any doubt you should not be making this visit on your own without further investigation.

Some control measures that you might want to consider would be:

- making an appointment prior to the visit;
- ensuring that details of the appointment are recorded in the main admin office on the white board so that the whereabouts of individuals are known and concerns raised if they do not return or contact the office at the expected time;
- the appropriateness of clothing and taking sensible precautions such as removing long earrings, scarves or ties, or tying back long hair;
- parking your car as near as possible to your destination, but be aware of possibility of being traced through number plate;
- being aware of local trouble spots and tensions;
- taking a mobile phone/torch/personal alarm where appropriate;
- to take in only what is necessary, i.e. not handbag/wallet/briefcase etc;
- have a plan in place for getting out safely.

NB if in doubt at the doorstep – do not go in!

APPENDIX 7

Health & Safety Training

The Head Teacher, Academy Leadership Team and the Site Manager are responsible for identifying the health and safety training needs of staff. This would include the following areas:

- Induction procedures
- Emergency evacuation, e.g. fire drills and routines
- Use of emergency fire fighting equipment
- First Aid
- Accident, incident reporting (including violent incidents and verbal abuse)
- Safety inspections
- Good housekeeping including defect reporting
- Lifting and Handling procedures
- Asbestos safety and Log
- Safe use of work equipment (tools, machinery and other equipment)
- Personal safety and security including lone working policy
- Handling of chemicals, safe systems of work
- Offsite visits and journeys and working off site with Students/students/young people etc.
- Use of Display Screens
- Provision of training
- Use of personal protective equipment
- Occupational Health Issues (e.g. recommended vaccinations, stress, manual handling, asthma etc.)

The Academy has nominated the Site Manager and an Assistant Head Teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating health and safety training needs, and for including details in the training and development plan.

APPENDIX 8

Work Equipment

The following equipment has been identified as likely to involve a specific health and safety risk and details are given below on inspection, use and repair.

EQUIPMENT	RESPONSIBLE PERSON (WHO CAN ASSESS RISK)	AUTHORISED USERS OF THE EQUIPMENT	AUTHORISED PERSON FOR INSPECTION AND REPAIR	INSPECTION PERIOD (E.G. TERMLY, ANNUALLY, OTHER)
Access equipment e.g. ladders, mobile access platform	Site Manager	Site Manager	Site Manager	Termly
Caretaking/cleaning equipment including hand tools	Site Manager/ LES Cleaning Services	Site Manager	Site Manager/ LES Cleaning Services	Annually
PE and play equipment	Current Contractor	PE staff	Current Contractor	Annually
Lab Apparatus	Lab Technicians	Lab Technicians Science staff	Lab Technicians	Termly
Technology Equipment	Technology Technician	Technology staff	Durham County Council via SLA	Annually
Art/Design Equipment	Art Technician	Art staff	Art Technician	Annually
Stage Lighting	Head of Music and Performing Arts	Music and PA staff	Site Manager	Annually
Portable electrical equipment	Site Manager	All staff and students	NLP via SLA	Annually

APPENDIX 9

Control of Hazardous Substances

1 Legal Framework

These Regulations came into force on 1 October 1989 and require all employers to:

a) assess the health risks which arise from hazardous substances in their work activities and;

b) where necessary, have in place the controls that this assessment concludes will be most effective to protect people's health.

c) ensure that local exhaust ventilation (e.g. fume cupboards, fume extractors, dust extractors) is adequately maintained at specified intervals (every fourteen months) and that maintenance is carried out be suitably trained personnel.

2 Substances hazardous to health

Substances hazardous to health most likely to be found in educational establishments include:

a) any chemical which comes from a supplier labelled very toxic, toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant

b) micro-organisms

c) dust of any kind when present as a substantial concentration in the air

Substances may be hazardous through inhalation, ingestion, absorption through the skin or skin contact.

In Academies and colleges, such substances will be found usually in laboratories, practical workshops, cleaners' cupboards and (in the case of pesticides) sometimes in the Academy playing fields.

However, substances hazardous to health can also be created by practical work (e.g. wood dust, products of chemical experiments, work with micro-organisms). In such situations, prevention or effective controls may be required to minimise the risks to health.

3 Risk Assessments

The primary requirement for Academies and colleges is to have Risk Assessments carried out before the use or generation of any substances hazardous to health.

Any process which is liable to expose staff, Students, students or visitors to substances hazardous to health should not be carried out unless a "suitable and

sufficient" assessment has been made of the risks to health and about the measures necessary to control exposure to such substance.

Science staff should be able to carry out these risk assessments, but see paragraph 4 below.

Guidance for science staff is based upon standard risk assessments contained in the following publications which should be in every Academy or college with Students above the age of eleven;

a) CLEAPSS/HCC
Hazards

b) Association for Science Education's
"Topics in Safety"

For all Academys with children below the age of eleven, guidance is contained in:

Association for Science Education's "Be Safe".

Again, this publication should be in all such Academies.

A risk assessment is carried out by comparing the standard risk assessment to the particular circumstances in which the substance is to be used.

Where no standard risk assessment can be found, CLEAPSS will carry out a risk assessment for Academys or colleges.

5 **Prevention or control?**

Exposure to substances hazardous to health should either be prevented or (where it is not reasonably practicable) adequately controlled.

If a substance is hazardous be inhalation it is likely to have been assigned "maximum exposure limits" and "occupational exposure standards". This will be used to assess the level of control. In all cases control should be achieved by means other than personal protective equipment to the greatest reasonably practicable.

It is important that control measures, personal protective equipment are properly used and all employees, have a duty to make full and proper use of them.

6 Maintenance, examination and testing

Where control systems are provided (e.g. fume cupboards, fume extractors) it is necessary to ensure that they are properly maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair. In addition a thorough examination and tests of engineering controls need to be carried out.

In the case of local exhaust ventilation tests should be carried out annually or at least every fourteen months. A record of the results of all examinations must be kept.

Advice in respect of the implementation of these measures can be obtained from any member of the LA Health and Safety Team. Contact number is 0191 433 2272

7 Health Surveillance

Where the assessment shows that health surveillance is appropriate for the protection of employees these should be carried out. Health surveillance will be appropriate where the employee is exposed to any of the substances in Schedule 5 of the Regulation, and where the exposure of the employee is such that an identifiable disease or adverse health effect may be related to the exposure. However, it is anticipated that such surveillance will not normally be necessary in a Academy environment.

8 Information, instruction and training

Information, instruction and training must be given to those who may be exposed, about the risks to health and precautions. Furthermore, information must be provided about the results of monitoring and collective results of any health surveillance that may be necessary.

APPENDIX 10

Lifting & Handling

All manual handling activities which present a significant risk to the health and safety of staff whether they involve the manual handling of people or objects will be identified by the Site Manager.

These activities must be eliminated where it is reasonably practical to do so. Where it is not reasonably practicable to do so a risk assessment should be made and the risk reduced as far as is reasonably practicable.

Staff should be provided with appropriate equipment to reach items that are stored at height. Note - heavy items should never be stored at height.

All work activities that involve the manual handling of loads which present a significant risk to the health and safety of any persons must be reported to the Site Manager who will arrange for a risk assessment to be carried out.

Note: This includes activities where the load is quite small but the activity is of a highly repetitive nature.

The written risk assessment will be provided to employees who must follow the instruction given when carrying out the task.

The written risk assessment will take into account the task, load, environment and individual and other factors that might affect the risk to the health and safety of employers or other persons.

Staff should ensure they are not lifting heavy items and equipment unless they have received training and/or equipment in order to do so safely.

APPENDIX 11

Health & Safety Inspections

Health and Safety inspections will take place at least once each term. They will be initiated by the Site Manager and supported by the AHT (Site)

Heads of Department and managerial staff are required to carry out a safety audit in their areas during each term. This work is organised by the Site Manager. Remedial action is taken where necessary. Each term the Governors Premises Health and Safety Committee receives a report from the Site Manager on H&S issues. Copies are retained by the Head Teacher's PA.

This Committee also considers:-

i) safety audit reports
ii) accident/hazard reports and report the results to management with recommendations for remedial action;
iii) reports from inspectors and safety representatives;
iv) safe systems of work and rules;
v) safety training of employees;
vi) the publicity and communication on health and safety matters in the establishment.

Responsibility for following up items detailed in the safety inspection report will rest with the Site Manager.

APPENDIX 12

Asbestos Management

The Academy's Authorising Officer is the Site Manager.

The premises asbestos log is kept in the Site Manager's office.

Any damage to materials known or suspected to contain asbestos should be reported to the Site Manager who will contact the Asbestos Helpline on 0845 6030369

Any contractor who is suspected to be carrying out unauthorised work on the fabric of the building should be reported to the Site Manager.

Under **no circumstances** must staff carry out work however minor to the fabric of the building unless it has been authorised by the Site Manager

Please note that even drilling a hole or pushing a drawing pin into asbestos containing materials may result in the release of fibres into the air.

Where known or suspected asbestos containing material is accidentally damaged, vandalised or disturbed, the room or area in question should be evacuated immediately and secured (where possible) and further access denied to non-authorised personnel. (Such persons permitted entry would be the emergency services acting under the advice of the Site Manager and or specialist maintenance personnel / contractor.

Notify the Site Manager or responsible person of the incident and seek further instructions.

Warning notices should be posted in the affected area(s) indicating "keep out - possible asbestos contamination", ventilation systems should be turned off or isolated and the room should be locked if possible.

Complete a formal incident report form (HS 20) in accordance with current incident reporting policy.

The room/area must not be re-occupied until the Site Manager confirms that it is safe to do so – this will not be before a certificate of re-occupation has been issued by the analyst.

APPENDIX 13

Pregnant Workers and new mothers

Any risk assessment undertaken on pregnant workers should be completed using the standard Risk Assessment available from the Business Manager or Personnel Officer in the Central Admin team

The definition of 'new or expectant mother' means a worker who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months, or who is breastfeeding. 'Given birth' is defined in the regulations as 'delivered a living child or, after 24 weeks of pregnancy, a stillborn child'.

It is the responsibility of staff to inform their line manager as soon as they know they are (or are no longer) pregnant.

A risk assessment will be carried out to ensure that there are no risks to the expectant mother or baby from the employee's duties or environment. (It is important that the pregnant worker is involved in the risk assessment process to ensure all the relevant facts and issues are covered.)

The risk assessment will be reviewed on a regular basis, and this may have to be increased as the pregnancy progresses.

If the risk assessment identifies hazards that cannot be eliminated or reduced sufficiently the pregnant worker's duties will be adjusted appropriately to ensure they are. If that cannot be achieved locally, the pregnant worker may be re-deployed for the duration of the pregnancy to a safer environment. If this cannot be achieved the legislation requires the pregnant worker to be suspended from work on maternity grounds.

NB A further risk assessment must be undertaken for nursing mothers when returning to work

APPENDIX 14

Display screen equipment users

Introduction

1. The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 set out minimum health and safety requirements for employees who habitually use VDUs for a significant part of their normal work. They require that workstations put into use after 31 December 1992 meet the minimum requirements and that workstations in use before that date should be `evaluated` and if necessary adapted to meet the requirements by 31 December 1996. Copies of the checklist at Appendix 14A should be used to carry out both the assessments required by the Regulations and general checks on all VDU usages. Compliance with the appropriate elements of this code should fulfil the requirements of the Regulations.

2. This code replaces the one which appears as Appendix 2 in `The introduction of new technology by the Local Authority. It is based on the information and advice currently available and represents the standards to be provided, so far as is reasonably practicable.

3. The contents of the code may be amended as a result of new information or changes in circumstances.

4. There will be circumstances in which VDUs are used infrequently or intermittently where some aspects of this code would not apply. In any event, the relative importance of some of the standards depends upon the task for which the equipment is used and the frequency and intensity of its use, therefore care should be taken in applying them.

5. The risk of visual and postural fatigue is greater where intensive use of a VDU is made over long periods. In such circumstances, the importance of adhering to good ergonomic and environmental standards, coupled with careful attention to job design and work organisation, cannot be over emphasised.

6. The criteria concerning screen luminance, character size and spacing and character generation, relate specifically to VDUs based upon cathode ray tubes. If VDUs based upon liquid crystal displays introduced, these factors may need to be reviewed.

6a. Laptops and other portable computers have to be compact enough to be easy to carry. This results in design compromises, such as smaller keyboards and screens which make laptops less comfortable in prolonged use than desktop PC’s. The use of a portable for long periods should therefore be avoided, particularly when a full-size PC is available. Guidance on when laptops could and should not be used appears at Appendix 14C.

7. Where newly appointed staff are required to use VDU Equipment or work requirements are changed by the introduction of such equipment, appropriate training and/or instruction should be provided.

8. In particular, so that the benefits of this code are attained, departments should ensure that users are properly instructed in the use and positioning of their VDU equipment.

Job design and work organisation

9. The application of ergonomics, attention to the working environment, job design and work organisation are the means of avoiding stress and fatigue among VDU operators. Primarily, emphasis should be placed upon job design and work organisation to minimise monotony, tedium and strain.

10. In most tasks, natural breaks or pauses occur as a consequence of inherent organisation of the work. Wherever possible, jobs at display screens 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 the job unavoidably contains spells of intensive display screen work (whether using the keyboard or input device, reading the screen, or a mixture of the two), these should be broken up by periods of non-intensive, non-display screen work. Where work cannot be so organised, e.g. in jobs requiring only data or text entry requiring sustained attention and concentration, deliberate breaks or

11. Where the display screen work involves intensive use of the keyboard, any activity that would demand broadly similar use of the arms or hands should be avoided during breaks. Similarly, if the display screen work is visually demanding any activities during breaks should be of a different visual character. Breaks must also allow users to vary their posture. Exercise routines which include blinking, stretching and focusing eyes on distant objects can be helpful.

12. It is not appropriate to lay down requirements for breaks which apply to all types of work; it is the nature and mix of demands made by the job which determine the length of break necessary to prevent fatigue. But some general guidance can be given:

    12.1 Breaks should be taken before the onset of fatigue, not in order to recuperate and when performance is at a maximum, before productivity

    12.2 Breaks or changes of activity should be included in working time. They should reduce the workload at the screen, i.e. should not result in a higher pace or intensity of work on account of their introduction;

    12.3 Short, frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional, longer breaks: e.g., a 14-10 minute break after 15-60 minutes continuous screen and/or keyboard work is likely to be better than a 15 minute break every 2 hours;

    12.4 If possible, breaks should be taken away from the screen;

12.5 Informal breaks, that is time spent not viewing the screen (e.g. on other tasks), appear to be more effective in relieving visual fatigue than formal rest breaks;

12.6 Wherever practicable, users should be allowed some discretion as to how they carry out tasks; individual control over the nature and pace of work allows optimal distribution of effort over the working day.

13. Good job design can be as important as the correct choice of equipment, furniture and working environment. It is advantageous to:

13.1 Design jobs in a way that offers users variety, opportunities to exercise discretion, opportunities for learning, and appropriate feedback, in preference to simple repetitive tasks whenever possible. (For example

element of clerical work is added);

13.2 Match staffing levels to volumes of work, so that individual users are not subject to stress through being either overworked or underworked;

13.3 Allow users to participate in the planning, design and implementation of

14. As indicated above, where staff use VDUs for more than short periods, breaks away from VDU work should be encouraged. Whenever possible they should be encouraged to choose for themselves when to take such a break before the onset of visual/postural fatigue. However such discretion should not allow such breaks to be missed in favour of a shorter working day, this would be self-defeating.

VDU users

15. The introduction of VDUs has been associated with a range of symptoms related to the visual system and working posture. These often reflect bodily fatigue. They can readily be prevented by applying ergonomic principles to the design, selection and installation of display screen equipment, the design of the workplace, and the organisation of the task.

Eye and Eyesight Effects

16. Medical evidence shows that using display screen equipment is not associated with damage to eyes or eyesight; nor does it make existing defects worse. But some workers may experience temporary visual fatigue, leading to a range of symptoms such as impaired visual performance, red or sore eyes and headaches, or the adoption of awkward posture which can cause further discomfort in the limbs. These may be caused by:

16.1 Staying in the same position and concentrating for a long time;

16.2 Poor positioning of the display screen equipment;

16.3 Poor legibility of the screen or source documents;

16.4 Poor lighting, including glare and reflections;

16.5 A drifting, flickering or jittering image on the screen.

17. Like other visually demanding tasks, VDU work does not cause eye damage but it may make staff with pre-existing vision defects more aware of them. Such uncorrected defects can make work with a display screen more tiring or stressful than would otherwise be the case.

Eye Tests

18. All employees, whether or not they use a VDU, should have their eyes tested regularly to ensure that their eyesight, corrected if necessary, is adequate for the task they perform.

19. Although more stringent visual standards are not required for VDU operation, all employees (including new appointments) who it is intended should use VDUs for at least 15 hours per working week should be encouraged to have eye tests before working on a VDU. Such tests would ensure that a user's vision, corrected if necessary, was up to the normal standards prior to the use of the equipment.

20. Subsequent eye tests should be carried out as advised by the optician.

21. Such tests should be carried out by an optician. Time-off with pay will be approved if the appointment is during working hours. Those working under the Flexible Working Hours Scheme will be credited with the time when such appointments are during normal working hours. A letter of introduction will be provided by the curriculum area explaining the purpose and background of the test. The cost of any examination fee which results will be met by the employing department.

22. Where special glasses are required by a user who qualifies for an eye test (see para 4), solely for the purpose of operating a VDU, the approved cost of such additional spectacles (which should be agreed before purchase) will be borne by the employing department. The 'approved cost' would be the cost of the lenses and the most economical frames compatible with them, and if a user prefers more expensive frames they should pay the difference. 'Special glasses' are normally special bi-focals for VDU use - if claims are made for other types the Local Authority Health and Safety Adviser should be consulted. It should be noted that the cost of glasses intended for normal purposes or contact lenses should not be met.

23. There may be staff who do not meet the 15 hour requirement who nevertheless are unable to use a VDU without special glasses solely for that purpose. In these circumstances, provided that an optician has certified that such special glasses are required the employing department will meet the approved cost (see paragraph 4.8) of the provision and re-imburse the cost of the eye test.

24. Departments may obtain a second opinion on the need for special glasses if this is felt appropriate.

Epilepsy

25. Display screen equipment has not been known to induce epileptic seizures. People suffering from the very rare (1 in 10 000 population) photosensitive epilepsy who react adversely to flickering lights and patterns also find they can safely work with display screens. People with epilepsy who are concerned about display screen work can seek further advice from local office of the Employment Medical Advisory Service.

Facial Dermatitis

26. Some VDU users have reported facial skin complaints such as occasional itching or reddened skin on the face and/or neck. These complaints are relatively rare and the limited evidence available suggests they may be associated with environmental factors, such as low relative humidity or static electricity near the VDU.

Migraine Sufferers

27. Known migraine sufferers should be monitored in their work with VDUs and any increase in migraine should be reported to the Local Authority Medical Adviser and their G.P.

28. A local record should be kept of the incidence of any headaches during or immediately following the use of VDUs. Employees are reminded that they have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to co-operate with their employer and this includes the reporting of such occurrences.

Effect of Drugs

29. There are no drugs which cannot be safely combined with VDU work. A few tranquillisers, other psychoactive drugs and certain eyedrops prescribed for glaucoma can temporarily affect the way eyes change focus, but this is not harmful.

Upper Limb Pains and Discomfort

30. A range of conditions of the arm, hand and shoulder areas linked to work activities are now described as work related upper limb disorders. These range from temporary fatigue or soreness in the limb to chronic soft tissue disorders like peri tendinitis, tenosynovitis, or carpal tunnel syndrome. Some keyboard operators have suffered occupational cramp.

31. The contribution to the onset of any disorder of individual risk factors (e.g. keying rates) is not clear. It is likely that a combination of factors is concerned. Prolonged static posture of the back, neck and head are known to cause musculoskeletal problems. Awkward positioning the hands and wrist (e.g. as a result of poor working technique or inappropriate work height) are further likely

factors. Outbreaks of soft tissue disorders among keyboard workers have often been associated with high workloads combined with tight deadlines.

32. The symptoms of these conditions include:

- Aching or painful fingers, wrists or arms.
- Numbness, pain or tingling in fingers, wrist or arm.
- Pain in the elbow when moved in a particular way.
- Difficulty in gripping objects.

33. At the first sign of a sore wrist or forearm this should be reported to the Line Manager and medical advice sought.

34. The factors contributing to these conditions can be avoided by:

- Implementing the ergonomic factors contained in this code relating to

- Job design which provides movement, preferably away from the machine.
- Avoiding fixed postures.
- Work planning and training.

35. It should be noted that similar conditions can also arise from domestic and leisure activities requiring forceful, continuous, repetitive movement involving the hands, wrists or arms (e.g. sport, playing a musical instrument, knitting). A user experiencing any of the above symptoms as a result of a domestic or leisure activity should consult their doctor and notify their manager of the outcome where appropriate.

Fatigue and Stress

36. Many symptoms described by VDU users reflect stresses arising from their task. They may be secondary to upper limb or visual problems but they are more likely to be caused by poor job design or work organisation, particularly lack of sufficient control of the work by the user under-utilisation of skills, high-speed repetitive working or social isolation. All these have been linked with stress in VDU work, although clearly they are not unique to it; but attributing individual symptoms to particular aspects of a job or workplace can experiencing physical fatigue and stress
can be minimised, however, by careful design, selection and disposition of display screen equipment; good design of the user's workplace, environment and task; and training, consultation and involvement of the user.

Pregnant VDU Users

37. There has been public concern that pregnant VDU users have had more miscarriages than would have been expected. The latest research studies have established no link between VDU usage and increased risk of miscarriage or birth defect.

38. In the light of the scientific evidence pregnant women do not need to stop work with VDUs. However, to avoid problems caused by stress and anxiety,

managers should respond sympathetically and women who are pregnant or planning children and worried about working with VDUs should be given the opportunity to discuss their concerns with someone adequately informed of current authoritative scientific information and advice, e.g. the Employment Medical Advisory Service.

39. However if a pregnant woman using a VDU who has received appropriate counselling continues to request the provision of alternative VDU work during her pregnancy, this should be sympathetically considered by the local Manager and/or the department concerned. She would be expected to return to her normal duties at the completion of her Maternity Leave. Should such a case arise and difficulty is experienced providing alternative work, the department should seek the advice of the Personnel Officer immediately.

HSE Booklet

40. The Health and Safety Executive has produced a free booklet entitled `Working with VDUs`. It is a guide for people who work with VDUs and answers the questions that are most commonly asked about VDUs, e.g. radiation emission, eye strain, ergonomics. A copy of the booklet should be available at every VDU workplace and should be brought to the attention of all who use VDUs, however infrequently.

Software Ergonomics

Introduction

41. In most VDU work the software controls both the presentation of information on the screen and the ways in which the user can manipulate the information.

badly designed or inappropriate for the task will impede the efficient completion of the work and in some cases may cause sufficient stress to affect the health of a user. Involving a sample of users in the purchase or design of software can help to avoid problems.

42. The requirements of the organisation and of users should be established as the basis for designing, selecting, and modifying software. The following general principles should be taken into account.

Suitability for the Task

43. Software should enable users to complete the task efficiently, without presenting unnecessary problems or obstacles.

Ease of Use and Adaptability

44. Users should be able to feel that they can master the system and use it effectively following appropriate training.

45. The dialogue between the system and the user should be appropriate for the user's ability.

46. Where appropriate, software should enable users to adapt the user interface to suit their ability level and preferences.

47. The software should protect users from the consequences of errors, for example by providing appropriate warnings and information and by enabling "lost" data to be recovered wherever practicable.

Feedback on System Performance

48. The system should provide appropriate feedback which may include error messages; suitable assistance ("help") to users on request; and messages about changes in the system such as malfunctions or overloading.

49. Feedback messages should be presented at the right time and in an appropriate style and format. They should not contain unnecessary information.

Format and Pace

50. Speed of response to commands and instructions should be appropriate to the task and to users' abilities;

51. Characters, cursor movements and position changes should where possible be shown on the screen as soon as they are input.

Performance Monitoring Facilities

52. Quantitative or qualitative checking facilities built into the software can lead to stress if they have adverse results such as an over-emphasis on output speed.

53. It is possible to design monitoring systems that avoid these drawbacks and provide information that is helpful to users as well as managers. However, in all cases users should be kept informed about the introduction and operation of such systems.

VDU Equipment

54. To comply with British Standard 7179 (Ergonomics of design and use of VDUs in offices) VDUs should meet the specification of BS 7179 Part 3 Clause 4 (summarised at Appendix 5B) or fulfil the User Performance Assessment carried out in accordance with the testing methods specified.

55. The positioning of VDUs should not be determined by the position of power sockets. These can be moved, new ones provided or cables lengthened.

Work Surface Height

56. Where the height of the work surface is not adjustable, it should be between 660 mm and 730 mm but a fixed work surface height of 720 mm is recommended; with a fixed work surface users may need to adjust the chair height and use a footrest to achieve the most comfortable and efficient posture.

57. An adjustable work surface should have a height adjustment range from 660 mm to 770 mm.

Keyboard Height

58. Keyboards should be at a convenient working height, which is normally between 660 mm and 730 mm above the floor.

Palm Rests

59. A palm rest, located in front of the keyboard, can offer support to user's hands and preferred posture.

60. If the keyboard height (work surface to home row - i.e. 'A' to 'L' row) exceeds 30mm, a palm rest should be made available to users who prefer this type of support. With low-profile keyboards it may be sufficient to provide a 50 mm to 100 mm of space immediately in front of the keyboard on which the hands can rest.

61. Where a palm rest is provided, it should not restrict the user's keying action or preferred working posture. Its width should be about the same as that of the keyboard, its depth should be between 50 mm and 100 mm and its angle and height should match that of the keyboard.

Mice

61a. A mouse should be positioned within easy reach, so that it can be used with the wrist straight. The user should sit upright and close to the desk so the arm is not stretched; support their forearm on the desk; not grip the mouse too tightly; rest their fingers lightly on the buttons and not press then too hard; and take breaks from intensive mouse work (see paragraph 12).

Size of Work Surface

62. The size of the work surface provided should be governed by the total requirements of the user's task. However, to accommodate a display, keyboard and documents/document holder a work surface should be a minimum of 1200 mm x 600 mm, but 1600 mm x 800 mm is preferred.

Work Surface Finish

63. The finish of work surfaces should be matt.

Positioning of Work Surface

64. Where VDUs are used for prolonged periods on a regular basis, there should be sufficient space behind the VDUs for the users to be able, occasionally, to relax the eyes by focusing beyond the VDUs.

Positioning of Screen, Keyboard and Paperwork

65. The positions of these should suit the comfort of the user and if necessary a document holder should be provided to achieve this. Both the document holder and the screen should be adjustable.

66. It is recommended that the screen be angled from the vertical plane so that as far as is practical it is at right angles to the line of the user's sight which should be approximately 20° below the upright eye height.

67. The document holder and screen should be in the same plane and the distance from the eye to both should be approximately the same; between 350 mm and 700 mm is recommended. However, for certain applications, e.g. soft key labels or touch screens, the minimum screen distance may be reduced to 300mm.

Posture

68. The overall objective is that the user should achieve a comfortable working position. Fatigue and tension in the musculoskeletal system typically arise where fixed or poor postures are maintained for extended periods. Such effects can be minimised by attention to the relevant workplace recommendations set out above and to the following postural guidance:

    68.1 Chair seats should be adjustable for height and back supports for height and angle. Back supports should be positioned to provide adequate support to the lumbar region of the back.

    68.2 With the body upright and the hands on the keyboard's `home` row, the angle between the upper arm and the forearm should be approximately 90°.

    68.3 With the feet flat on the floor or supported by a foot rest, the angle at the back of the knee should be approximately 90°.

    68.4 Foot rests should be provided where appropriate. They are beneficial, particularly to intensive users, in reducing pressure on the thighs and calves, and in helping to prevent backache.

Paperwork

69. All paperwork should be clear, legible and easy to read. The use of highly reflective paper should be avoided.

Cable Management

70. Ideally, cables should be trunked along walls and/or under the floor, but where be used where appropriate.

Electricity

71. General guidance on the safe use of electricity and electrical equipment is contained in the Code of Safe Working Practice 'Use of Electricity at Work', a copy of which is included in this manual. Particular reference should be made to the sections dealing with the use of flexible extension cables and the situations where surge diverters are required.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

72. Even when it is possible to control the working environment within strict limits, individuals' views on its acceptability will vary. This is partly due to the range of personal preferences and partly because different working environments may be required by different jobs. As an example, those using VDUs for prolonged periods may be more sensitive to draughts than intermittent users who move around more. Similar personal differences may also apply to other factors such as the visual and acoustic environment. Every effort should be made to provide as comfortable a working environment as possible.

Noise

73. BS7179 Part 6 recommends that the noise level in a VDU workplace should not exceed 55dB(A) for tasks requiring a high degree of concentration and 60dB(A) for other VDU tasks.

Temperature

74. An ambient room temperature of between 19°C and 23°C is recommended in BS7179 Part 6, and that heat build up in areas around equipment should not exceed 3°C above the ambient temperature.

Relative Humidity

75. The relative humidity should be between 40% and 60%.

Lighting and Glare

76. Ambient lighting in areas where predominant use is the operation of VDUs should be between 300 - 500 cd/m^2. The colour of lamps should be in the CIE class range of cool to warm.

77. Artificial light should be `controlled` or indirect.

78. Where VDUs are in continuous use, category 1 or 2 luminaries (fluorescent

light fittings or controllers) normally should be used if the lighting is not recessed. These fittings direct most of the light emitted downwards with very little emerging sideways, thus appearing far less bright when viewed from the side. More detailed advise is available from the Lighting Engineers in the Property Department.

79. Fluorescent lamps should be changed at the end of the replacement period recommended by the manufacturers or as soon as flicker becomes noticeable.

80. Arrange desk and screen so that bright lights are not reflected in the screen.

81. All windows should be kept clean and all windows causing glare should be fitted with adjustable blinds or curtains. (Venetian blinds are less favoured than vertical blinds).

82. If required, local task lighting giving a total of up to 500 cd/m^2 should be fitted with dimmer switches and be adjustable by the operator. Such lighting should be protected to prevent glare.

83. Colour and surfaces of surrounding equipment and furniture should be such as to avoid reflections and contrasts.

84. Steps should be taken in all cases, to balance the light intensity on all 3 factors: the display screen, the keyboard, and the written material. This will, for example, avoid the reflection of the hands at the keyboard onto the screen.

85. If anti-glare treatment is not designed into the screen and it proves impossible to reduce the glare and reflections on the screen to acceptable levels by the above methods, a proprietary anti-glare screen may be appropriate. However, such screens may reduce image legibility. Details of commercially available screens can be obtained from the Local Authority Health & Safety Adviser.

Radiation

86. Radiation emitted from VDUs is well below the internationally accepted standards and very much less than that from natural environmental sources such as the sun. The radiation emitted from a VDU does not pose a hazard to users either in the long or short term.

Static Electricity

87. If static electricity persists despite the appropriate use of anti-static sprays (see Appendix 5B paragraph 14), the relative humidity level should be checked (see paragraph 75), if it still persists the Local Authority Health & Safety Adviser should be consulted.

APPENDIX 14A

VDU Equipment standards

1. To comply with British Standard 7179 (Ergonomics of design and use of VDUs in offices) VDUs should meet the specification of BS 7179 Part 3 Clause 4 (summarised below) or fulfil the User Performance Assessment carried out in accordance with the testing methods specified.

Display Luminance

2. When measured in accordance with BS7179: Part 3 the display should be capable of a luminance of at least 314cd/m^2 and minimum luminance contrast of character details of 3:1.

3. VDUs for continuous work should have both contrast and brightness adjustment controls.

Display

4. Either dark symbols on a lighter background or light symbols on a darker background is acceptable.

Character Size and Spacing

14. Minimum dot matrix: 7 x 9 - for tasks which require continuous reading for content.
    5 x 7 - for numeric and upper case only presentations.
    4 x 5 - for fractions that are to be displayed in single character position.

    Minimum character height = 3.1-4.2 mm (approx. 9 pts. - 12 pts.).
    Maximum height for 14 by 7 dot matrix 4.5 mm (13 pts.).
    Width to upper case height ratio 3:4 to 4:5.
    Stroke width 1/6 - 1/12 of character height.
    Minimum character and line spacing:
    - Character 1 stroke width.
    - Between Words - One character width (Capital N for proportional spacing).
    - Line 1 stroke width.

6. Screens where the edges are used for display should be avoided.

7. Type of letters should be upper and lower case for long texts.

8. If glare reduction or contrast enhancements are used BS7179; Part 3 should be complied with.

Character Generation

9. A refresh rate (frequency of image regeneration) should be a minimum of 50 hertz.

10. Noise levels of the VDUs should be kept as low as possible (see paragraph 73).

11. There should be no high frequency noise, this can be eliminated at source by the design of the machine.

General Machine Design

12. The front frame of the display should have a matt finish.

Maintenance of Machines

13. VDUs should be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specification.

Cleaning

14. VDU screens should be kept clean and instructions and the appropriate materials issued to the users (including the use of anti-static sprays).

114. Where there is a separate glare or implosion screen there may be a build-up of dust on the face of the Cathode Ray Tube inside the screen. This cleaning must be done by service engineers or properly trained staff.

APPENDIX 14B

Keyboard Equipment

16. To comply with BS7179, which covers keyboards used in an office environment for typical office tasks but not specialist keyboards such as those in control rooms or technical environments, VDU keyboards should meet the specification of BS7179 Part 4 Clause 4 (summarised below) or fulfil the User Performance Assessment specified.

17. Keyboards should be detachable for intensive usage.

18. Keyboard Design Recommendations

    18.1 Keyforce 0.25N - 1.5N (between 0.5N and 0.6N is preferred).

    18.2 Key travel 1.5 - 6 mm (between 2 mm and 4 mm is preferred).

    18.3 Key tops should be concave.

    18.4 Key size 12 - 15 mm (non-square key tops should have an area of at least 113 mm).

    18.5 Key top characters - 2.6 mm minimum height with minimum contrast ration of 3:1.

18.6 Centre spacing between keys 18 - 20 mm horizontally and vertically.

18.7 Angle of inclination 0 - 25° to horizontal, slope should be adjustable.

18.8 A QWERTY layout should be used. However, other designs of keyboard may be more appropriate for disabled persons.

18.9 Keyboard height (work surface to home row - i.e. 'A' to 'L' row): normally less than 50 mm.

18.10 Keyboard housing and key tops should have a matt finish in a neutral colour which should be the same as the display housing. Dark colours should be avoided.

18.11 Tactile indication of key activation should accompany each key stroke.

APPENDIX 14C

Guidance on the Use of Laptop Computers

The main statutory requirements related to the use of both Laptops and Desktop PCs are contained in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992. Full compliance with these Regulations is required for designated ‘users’, defined in the Regulations as ‘an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his/her normal work’. Within HCC it has been agreed with the Trade Unions that a designated ‘user’ would be an employee who uses a VDU for at least 15 hours per week.

Regulation 3 says that any workstation operated by a ‘user’ must meet the requirements of the Schedule to the Regulations. This Schedule sets out minimum requirements related to equipment, environment and the interface between the operator and the computer related to software and task design. The following elements of the Schedule would not normally be met by a Laptop:

1. The screen must swivel and tilt easily and freely to suit the needs of the ‘user’.

2. It shall be possible to use a separate base for the screen.

3. The keyboard shall be tiltable and separate from the screen so as to allow the ‘user’ to find a comfortable working position avoiding fatigue in the arms or hands.

4. The space in front of the keyboard shall be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the ‘user’.

As a consequence, an employee designated as a ‘user’ should not normally be allocated a Laptop as their main equipment, since Regulation 3 and the Schedule must normally be complied with in respect of all equipment that may be operated by a ‘user’. This would include homeworkers. Where there is equipment which does not

comply with Regulation 3 and the Schedule, arrangements must ensure that such equipment is not operated by ‘users’ as their main equipment.

However, Regulation 1 says that nothing in the Regulations applies to portable systems ‘not in prolonged use’. Laptops come under this exclusion provided they are ‘not in prolonged use’. ***That is being used by an employee who is not a designated ‘user’ or being used by designated ‘users’ but not as their main equipment.***

In addition, the requirements of the Schedule need to be complied with only where the ‘inherent characteristics of a task make compliance appropriate’. Therefore, where a task could not be carried out successfully if all the requirements in the Schedule were complied with, then in such circumstances the elements of the Schedule concerned would not apply, i.e. a laptop may be used when the nature of the task and the circumstances of usage dictate. But in such circumstances it is the demands of the task, ***not*** the capabilities of any particular equipment, that must be the deciding factor. ***This means that if a task can be ‘successfully’ carried out on a desktop PC then a laptop should not be used.***

If the use of Laptops is appropriate because either the task warrants it or they are not in ‘prolonged use’, the use should still be assessed and appropriate measures taken to control any risks identified by the assessment. Such assessments should include:

1. The nature of the work. Where this could involve prolonged use of the keyboard, the control measures should include frequent breaks because the use of Laptops is more likely to result in back, neck and hand discomfort when used for long periods.

2. Considering how much the equipment has to be moved around and whether any other aids are necessary to assist in this.

3. Whether it is possible to provide mobile workers with a firm, level surface for their laptop at the correct height.

4. Making sure the pointing device (e.g. mouse) is comfortable to use.

5. Considering whether it is appropriate to provide a desktop monitor/docking station and keyboard to which mobile workers could connect their laptop.

6. The identification of any extra or special training that is required to operate the equipment.

In any event, as far as possible the job design, work organisation, workplace ergonomics and working environment standards contained in the Code of Practice on the Use of VDUs should be complied with.