

HEALTH AND SAFETY Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Procedure

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 This Procedure sets out the arrangements the University will implement to protect users from any risks associated with display screen equipment (DSE), and to ensure compliance with the Display Screen Equipment regulations.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This procedure applies to all University staff using DSE for work both on campus and at another place such as home. This procedure is effective from 12/05/2023

2.2 Post Graduate Students who have an employment contract with the University are also covered by the regulations and this procedure, in the same way as other members of staff.

2.3 Whilst the DSE Regulations do not apply to students, as users of DSE equipment provided by the University, it is good practice for students to be provided with practical guidance on set up and use of DSE and workstations in a way that minimises the risk to their health.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 With advances in technology, regular use of electronic devices such as laptops, both at work and recreationally has undoubtedly increased in the world we live in.

3.2 These changes have also created greater choice and flexibility to use display screen equipment in different locations and settings in the workplace and outside including at home where hybrid working is possible.

3.3 Whilst working with DSE could be considered as one of the lower risk activities in the workplace, if it is not effectively managed it may result in ill-health.

3.4 Incorrect use of DSE or poorly designed workstations or work environments can lead to a range of symptoms such as pains in neck, shoulders, backs, arms, wrists, and hands as well as fatigue, eye strain and mental stress. The causes may not always be obvious and may develop over time.

3.5 The DSE regulations are in place to protect users from effects of prolonged use. Prevention is better than cure and in applying the simple principles set out in the regulations the University endeavours to eliminate these risks and promote the wellbeing of all using DSE.

4. DEFINITIONS

Display screen equipment	Devices or equipment that have an alphanumeric or graphic display screen such as display screens (sometimes referred to as VDUs), laptops, touch screens and other similar devices.
DSE workstation	This is the assembly including the screen, keyboard, other parts of the computer and its accessories (such as the mouse or other input device), the desk, the chair, and the immediate work environment.
DSE User	Staff who regularly use DSE as a significant part of their normal work. This means they: ✓ normally use DSE for a continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time; and ✓ uses DSE in this way more or less daily. Part-time workers should be assessed using the same criteria. If they work, for example, 2 days a week but spends most of that time on DSE work, that person should be considered a user.

5. KEY LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 provide useful definitions of what is considered DSE, a workstation and user (See Section 4 above).

5.2 The main requirements of the regulations can be summarised as -

- All workstations must be analysed to assess and reduce risks.
- Workstations must meet specified requirements with respect to:
 - Lighting, glare, and noise
 - Legroom and clearance to allow postural change
 - Appropriate software
 - Screen and keyboard
 - Work surface
 - Chair and footrest (if needed).
- Regular breaks or changes in activity.
- Provision of eye and eyesight tests and special corrective appliances, if required for DSE work
- Provision of training and information

5.3 The regulations apply where staff regularly use DSE as a significant part of their normal working day in the workplace, at home or hot-desking (staff should carry out a dynamic risk assessment * if they change workstations regularly)

*A dynamic risk assessment means applying the training and information to set up the workstation without the need to record it

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Vice-Chancellor

- 6.1 On behalf of the Council the Vice-Chancellor has executive responsibility to ensure, that the requirements of the health and safety legislation and the University health, safety and wellbeing policy are complied with. The Vice-Chancellor will ensure that responsibility for health and safety is properly assigned and accepted at all levels within the University.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC), Pro Vice Chancellors (PVC), Provost, Chief People Officer (CPO), Chief Finance and Strategy Officer (CFSO) Deans, Directors, Heads of Schools, and Departments.

- 6.2 Are responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place in accordance with this procedure to effectively manage any risks from DSE use including: -
- Appropriate resource allocated to DSE safety.
 - Ensure adequate number of Local trained DSE assessors are appointed.
 - Monitoring of compliance with mandatory DSE- Awareness training and assessments.
 - Provide support to managers and staff implementing this procedure.

Managers

- 6.3 Managers have a key role implementing this procedure including:
- Make arrangement for provision of appropriate DSE equipment for new staff.
 - Plan work as far as possible to mitigate prolonged DSE use.
 - Ensure staff in your area of responsibility comply with the mandatory DSE Awareness e-learning training and assessment.
 - Review with staff DSE assessments where issues are identified.
 - Where DSE assessments by staff identify a requirement for additional accessories to procure them promptly.
 - Consult with local DSE assessor and/or OHS promptly where DSE assessment requires it.
 - Implement appropriate recommendations made by the local DSE Assessor and or Occupational Health Team.
 - Support the local DSE Assessors in performing their duties.
 - Stay connected with home working staff regularly.
 - Retain records of assessments and actions for individuals securely in line with UU retention policy.
 - Authorise applications for eye care vouchers promptly.

Local DSE(LDSE) Assessors

6.4 LDSE appointed by Faculties/Schools/Departments to: -

- Undertake additional training required to fulfil the role.
- On request, assist DSE users in completing their self- assessment.
- Provide on request from users/managers guidance and information about setting up their workstation.
- Where issues are identified in self-assessments, assist individuals and managers to identify practical resolutions.
- Promote safe use of DSE through observations and provision of information to staff.

Display Screen Equipment Users

6.5 All staff using DSE are required to: -

- Complete the University's mandatory DSE Awareness training course via the LMS learn portal on induction and then 3 yearly as a minimum.
- Complete the mandatory DSE assessment on LMS learn portal following this training and subsequently if there are any changes e.g. to equipment, workstation or health. (See Section 7)
- Follow the advice in the training when setting up workstation and using DSE.
- Take regular short breaks from working with display screen equipment.
- Regularly check and maintain DSE e.g., keep display screens clean.
- Where a problem arises in the use of DSE, inform their supervisor / line manager without delay.

Occupation health Team

6.6 In exceptional circumstances OH may have a role where issues are of a health nature and cannot be resolved by the DSE Assessor/Manager.

- Undertake a specialist DSE assessment when considered appropriate which may include an assessment with the user at their workstation.
- Provide recommendations to managers on such assessments.
- Provide specialist advice/guidance to individuals.
- In certain circumstances recommend specialist equipment/accessories or adjustments.
- Support local DSE Assessors with additional training and information

Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW)

6.7 HSW will: -

- Ensure DSE Awareness e-learning modules are up to date.
- Assist with enquiries relating to DSE
- Support local DSE Assessors with additional training and information.
- Support Faculties/Schools and Departments implemented this procedure.

7. DSE USERS

7.1 DSE users are staff who habitually use DSE as a significant part of their normal work. This means they: -

- normally use DSE for continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more at a time and
- use DSE in this way more or less daily

7.2 The same criteria should be applied to part-time workers. For example, if an employee works only two days a week but spends most of that time on DSE work, that person should be considered a user.

7.3 Working with DSE often requires high levels of concentration and/or frequent use which can be detrimental to health. The principal health risks associated with display screen equipment work include.

- Upper limb disorders, such as pain in the neck, hands, and wrists
- back ache
- fatigue and stress
- headaches and temporary eye strain.

None of these are unique to DSE work nor are they an inevitable consequence of it. However, it is recognised the likelihood of experiencing these symptoms is related mainly to increase frequency, duration, intensity, and pace of spells of continuous use of DSE

7.4 Risks to typical users should be low if the DSE Regulations are complied with and ergonomic principles are considered in the design, selection, installation, and use of the equipment; the design of the workplace and the organisation of the task.

7.5 Laptops, on their own, whether in the workplace or at another location should only be used for short term work. For prolonged work it is recommended they are connected to a separate keyboard, mouse and screen riser or monitor.

7.6 The Health and Safety Executive advise that homeworkers may not necessarily need office-type furniture or equipment at home to achieve a good posture. More information on this is provided in the mandatory DSE Awareness training.

7.7 Devices such as I-Pads and Mobile phones are designed for brief infrequent use when mobile or away from the normal workstation. They are not a substitute for a laptop or PC when reading or typing longer e-mails, documents, or data input.

7.8 Any user who is suffering any symptoms which they suspect may be due to use of DSE should seek appropriate medical advice where required and report this as soon as possible to their line manager who will discuss appropriate action.

8. TRAINING AND INFORMATION

8.1 All University staff using DSE (regardless of frequency) are required to complete mandatory DSE Awareness e-learning at induction and three yearly thereafter. The DSE Awareness training must be completed prior to the user self-assessment. This training is accessed via the Employee Dashboard Learn Portal. Staff will be prompted by e-mail when the training is due and line managers will be prompted if it is not completed by their staff.

8.2 The training includes: -

- the risks from DSE work and recognising potential symptoms;
- Setting up the workstation to promote good posture;
- Active working and taking breaks from DSE work;
- Completion of the DSE self-assessment checklist;
- who to contact for help and to report problems or symptoms;
- Provision of eye tests and spectacles for DSE use.

8.3 Local DSE Assessors will be provided with additional training to complement the DSE Awareness training. This will be provided at regular intervals by Safety & OH team.

8.4 HSW Team will promote and support good practice using DSE regularly using a range of communications to staff and students.

9.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR DSE RISK ASSESSMENT

9.0 The purpose of DSE Risk Assessment is to identify risks associated with DSE and consider reasonable control measures. The process for DSE risk assessment is detailed in **Appendix 1**.

9.1 The information provided by users is a core part of the assessment, so the University's approach requires staff using DSE, suitably trained, in the first instance to complete a DSE self-assessment.

9.2 Staff are required to follow the DSE pathway on their LMS learn portal to complete the DSE workstation self-assessment checklist. This will allow the user to assess a workstation in the workplace, at home or both.

This will be prompted at induction or 3 yearly along with the DSE Awareness e-learning. Once completed the assessment form will be retained in the users learning activities section. It will not be available to view to the manager on LMS

so where issues are identified the users should save pdf version on completion and share with their manager to initiate discussion on resolution.

- 9.3 Whilst there will be a mandatory requirement to complete the DSE workstation self-assessments 3 yearly it will remain available on the learn portal to all staff to repeat the assessment sooner if required.
- 9.4 Where issues are identified in a DSE self-assessment and communicated to the manager, they must seek a resolution. In most cases where an issue is identified it may be resolved with provision of additional basic equipment such as monitor or laptop risers. **Appendix 2** contains guidance for managers on obtaining additional equipment.
- 9.5 The line manager may request assistance from the local DSE Assessor who can review any outstanding issues in the self-assessment with the user and provide recommendation to both user and manager.
- 9.6 In exceptional circumstances, the line manager may need to complete a referral to Occupational Health Team (with agreement of staff member) where there is a significant/complex related health issue or potential requirement for more specialist equipment beyond that considered standard or additional.
- 9.7 It is recommended a DSE self-assessment is repeated by the user: -
- If they have a change in individual ability such as a new or deteriorating medical condition which could be affected by DSE work;
 - If they begin to experience symptoms which could be due to or exacerbated by DSE use;
 - If there is a change to any of the equipment (screen, keyboard, input devices, etc); or workstation furniture
 - a substantial increase in the amount of time required to be spent on tasks using DSE;
 - If they have not worked with DSE for a prolonged period. E.g. due to sick absence.
- 9.8 It should be noted that where trained local DSE Risk Assessors make recommendations through the process, it is the responsibility of line management to decide what is appropriate and ensure that the controls are fully implemented and monitored.

10.0 Breaks and changes in activity from use of DSE

- 10.1 Working with DSE should be periodically interrupted by changes of activity or breaks. If possible, breaks should be taken away from the DSE workstation, and allow the user to stand up, move about and/or change posture. E.g. Printing, visit to restroom or having a meeting offline.
- 10.2 When it is not possible to mix screen-based and non-screen-based work, for example in jobs requiring only data/text entry or screen monitoring requiring

sustained attention and concentration, deliberate breaks or pauses must be introduced.

- 10.3 Breaks from DSE work of 5-10 minutes after 50 - 60 minutes of continuous screen or keyboard work is recommended. Shorter more frequent breaks are better than longer less frequent. This includes comfort breaks during online meetings.

11.0 Eyes and Eyesight Testing

- 11.1 The University will provide a full eye and eyesight test by an optometrist, including a vision test and an eye examination at no cost for the User. The user will be provided with an appropriate voucher that meets the cost of both the eye test and provision of basic glasses as advised by the optician for DSE use. More details on these arrangements and including the arrangements for Coleraine Campus are detailed in Appendix 3 and 4.
- 11.2 Multifocal lenses may be appropriate in some cases for those DSE users whose tasks require them to change glasses regularly. However, this will be based on the prescription the Optician has deemed necessary to dispense corrective lenses appropriate to the member of staff. Since using multifocal lenses when working with DSE has the potential to introduce other risks such neck pain, the 'Optician' can advise on such risks or reduction of risks on balance as part of the appointment and the staff member may then choose, or not choose, to avail of multifocal lenses where prescribed.

Whilst varifocal or bi-focal lens prescription is not a requirement of the legislation, where prescribed by the Optician due to work with DSE a voucher will be provided to cover the cost. Details for the required vouchers are also detailed in Appendix 3 and 4.

12.0 Useful links

Work with display screen equipment, L26 Guidance on Regulations

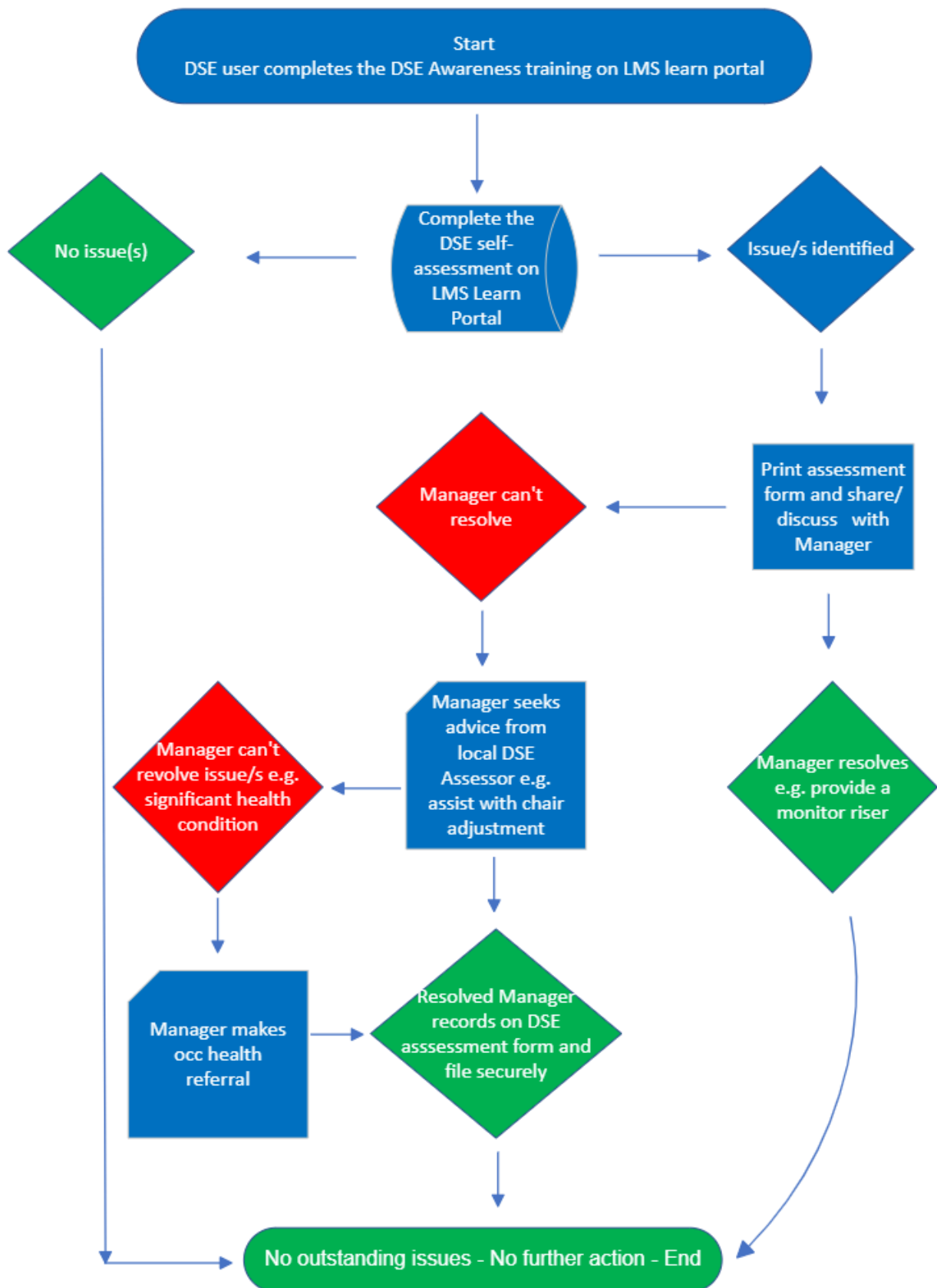
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l26.pdf>

Working with Display Screen Equipment – A brief Guide

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.htm>


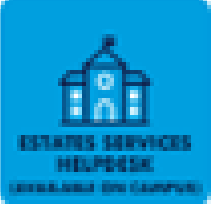

Working from Home-CIEHF

<https://ergonomics.org.uk/resource/working-from-home-infographic.html>



The table below has contacts which managers may need where an individual’s DSE self-assessment identifies issues in line with the flow chart in Appendix 1.

<p>Requests for Faculty staff equipment should be approved by Head of School and/or Director of Faculty Operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement advice and guidance on contracts can be found at https://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/staff/staff-login/procurement/buying/contracts • Advice can be requested from Digital Services by emailing servicedesk@ulster.ac.uk or click on UniDesk IT Service Desk tile in portal to self-log a call • Once approvals obtained, go to Digital Equipment Procurement tile at https://ulster.unidesk.ac.uk/tas/public/ssp/ to proceed to order <p>Requests for Professional Services staff equipment should be addressed with Head of Department and/or Director.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Services can help check equipment already in use and discuss replacement. • Advice can be requested from Digital Services by contacting servicedesk@ulster.ac.uk or click on UniDesk IT Service Desk tile in portal 	<p>Provision of Standard DSE and accessories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor Screen/s • Laptop • Laptop bag • Docking station • Mouse • Associated cables • Keyboard
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<p>Click on Estates helpdesk tab or email Estateservices@ulster.ac.uk</p> 	<p>Workstation furniture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk • Chair • Storage unit/s
<p>Local DSE assessor – Should be communicated to staff by relevant Faculty/School/Department</p>	<p>Can review DSE assessment with user and recommend set up of equipment or posture.</p>
<p>Occupational Health https://www.ulster.ac.uk/peopleandculture/employee-benefits/health-and-safety/occupational-health</p> 	<p>Make a referral or enquiry E.g. where Local assessor can't resolve, or the user has a health-related condition potentially requiring specialist assessment or equipment</p>

<p>Purchase additional basic accessories based on self-assessment or recommendation of local DSE Assessor or OH IT and Related accessories (ITRAP) https://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/staff/procurement/buying/contracts/it-and-telecoms/it-related-accessories-and-parts-itrap</p> <p>Office, computer and library Supplies https://www.ulster.ac.uk/finance/staff/procurement/buying/contracts/office-supplies (purchase cards are used for the procurement via banner)</p> <p>General procurement enquiries procurement_enquiries@ulster.ac.uk</p>	<p>Additional basic accessories</p> <p>Footrest</p> <p>Document holder</p> <p>Monitor riser</p> <p>Laptop stands</p>
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Arrangements for Eyesight tests and Corrective Glasses Appendix 3

For staff based at Coleraine the University has arranged that these examinations will be carried out in the university's Optometry Clinic. For staff based at other campuses the University has nominated Specsavers Opticians to provide this service via their Corporate Eyecare Voucher Scheme.

These arrangements are co-ordinated by Health, Safety and Wellbeing team. To request an application form or for any queries DSE users should contact healthandsafety@ulster.ac.uk

New members of staff should be offered eye tests prior to commencing work with display screen equipment.

Unless otherwise determined by the Optometrist, the DSE users are entitled to request an eye examination and sight test once every two years.

In addition to the optometrist's recommendation above, users experiencing visual difficulties, which may reasonably be considered to be related to the display, screen work may request a further test before the scheduled date.

The University will meet the cost of any basic 'special' corrective appliances (normally spectacles) where the Optometrist deems that these are needed solely for display screen work i.e. glasses specifically worn for display screen work when their normal/everyday glasses cannot be used for that purpose.

Coleraine Staff

Users are required to make their own appointment with the Optometry Clinic, Coleraine ext. 23047

For staff attending the Optometry Clinic there will be no charge to the individual for an eye test or any special corrective appliance required within the specified cost range.

It should be noted that if users wish to choose more costly spectacles (for example with designer frames, or lenses with optional treatments not necessary for the work) the University will contribute a portion of the total cost equal to the cost of a basic appliance.

Belfast, Jordanstown and Magee Staff

Under a university agreement, the cost of both the sight test and DSE glasses where required, will be met by university funding through an agreement with Specsavers Opticians under their corporate eyecare voucher scheme.

Staff at Belfast, Jordanstown and Magee may not use any other optician if they wish their eye test or glasses to be funded by the University under the DSE Regulations.

Ulster University – Eyecare Voucher Application

Please note: To receive a voucher, you must complete this form in full and your Head of School/Department or Head of Faculty Administration/Manager must confirm you are a DSE user as defined in the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Regulations (NI) 1992 – and send it to healthandsafety@ulster.ac.uk before your optician’s appointment. HSW will email you to your work address. You will need to give this voucher to your Specsavers Optician at the time of your appointment prior to the eye test commencing.

Part A – Details of Applicant

Employee’s Name:		Staff Number:	
email address:		Extension Number:	
School/Department:			
Work Address: (Where vouchers will be sent)			

I consider that I habitually use Display Screen Equipment as a significant part of my normal work, and I request an eye examination and sight test to be conducted at a branch of Specsavers Opticians.

Employee’s Signature:		Date:	
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Part B – Authorisation (to be completed by Head of School/Department or Head of Faculty Administration)

I confirm that the above named is a member of staff employed in the school/department stated and is regarded as a ‘user¹’ as defined in the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (NI) 1992. S/he has expressed a desire to have an eyesight test under the terms of the above regulations.

Payment

The Voucher should be charged against Cost Code

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Name: (Please print)			
Signature:		Date:	

Part C – For HSW use only

Specsavers Voucher No:			
Issued by:		Date issued:	

¹ A ‘user’ is defined as someone who regularly or habitually uses DSE where it forms an essential part of the work undertaken or where it is a specific requirement of the post, and where normal daily use of the DSE is on average more than 1 hour/day in extended sessions.