

Display screen equipment (DSE)

All council staff that are DSE users can request a free eye test, normally every two years.

DSE users are at risk of developing upper limb pain or headaches if the equipment is not correctly positioned for the user or if the immediate environment is not compatible with DSE use.

The law

The [Health and Safety \(Display Screen Equipment\) Regulations 1992](#) are intended to identify hazards and reduce risks to DSE users.

The law requires employers to:

- perform a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of every workstation being used by a 'DSE user'
- reduce the risks identified to the lowest extent reasonably practicable
- plan the activities of 'users' to provide them with regular breaks from using DSE or give the user some discretion over taking breaks
- provide 'users' with an eyesight test when they first become a user
- check users are provided with adequate health and safety training and information relating to the use of DSE

DSE self assessment form

Please note this form has been updated to make it easier to complete. The contents list is clickable if you wish to use it - press ctrl + click to skip to a particular section.

In addition, the assessment form now has editable areas, Click or tap to:

- select yes or no
- enter text
- select a date
- choose an item from a list

Once the document is complete, sign and date the form electronically - adding your name is considered as your signature. Then save it to your device and pass to your manager for them to review and sign.

Download the DSE self assessment form [here](#).

Claiming for your eye test

The [Display Screen Regulations 1999 amended 2002](#) entitles employees deemed to be a DSE user to regular, free (to the employee) eye tests upon request.

Who can claim?

We recognise a DSE user as any employee who uses a display screen regularly, for at least an hour a day in the course of their work.

Regular refers to two yearly tests, unless advised by the user they're experiencing visual difficulties which may reasonably be considered to be related to the display screen work.

This can include, for example, visual symptoms such as eyestrain or focusing difficulties where an annual test maybe authorised.

The purpose of repeat tests under regulation 5 is to check the need for special corrective appliances. You should be guided by the clinical judgement of the optometrist on the frequency of repeat testing.

The [Sight Testing \(Examination and Prescription\)\(No 2\) Regulations 1989](#) say that a basic eye examination will include:

- an external examination
- intra-ocular examination
- whatever additional examinations as appear clinically necessary

Under the Opticians Act, sight tests may only be performed by registered ophthalmic opticians (optometrists).

How to claim a free DSE eye sight test

You must request and obtain authorisation from your manager prior to arranging a DSE eye sight test. The cost of any eye sight test undertaken by the employee prior to obtaining management approval will not be covered by the council.

- The authorising cost centre manager will confirm the employee meets the above criteria.
- Manager to email authorisation confirming we'll cover the cost of an appropriate eye test up to £25.
- On completion of the test the employee should submit the receipt via expenses on iTrent to recuperate the costs up to £25.

How to claim a contribution towards the cost of glasses

We'll make a contribution towards the cost of your glasses, if needed.

You can make this claim via expenses on iTrent. Attach the following to your claim:

- email from your manager
- receipt from the opticians

You can claim up to £50 towards the cost of basic single use spectacles.

This may be increased to up to £80 if the optician stipulates that a more complex prescription is required for DSE purposes.

If you decide to opt for example for designer frames, or lenses with optional treatments not necessary for the DSE work, we aren't obliged to pay for these.

In these circumstances, we'll contribute a portion of the total cost of a luxury appliance equal to the cost of a basic appliance.

Frequent Q&A

What should I do if the employee has had the test prior to seeking approval?

Under the regulations, we're required to provide an eye and eyesight test after it has been requested by a user, but we don't have to pay for tests users have already had.

Approval can be given to arrange another test instead if the employee is a DSE user and qualifies for an eye test.

However, in practice, reimbursement for a test already performed might be satisfactory from the employer's point of view and is clearly preferable for the user.

Agency workers

Where temporary workers employed by an agency do qualify and claim their entitlements for tests and corrective appliances these will be at the expense of their own employer ie the agency rather than the agency's clients.

What's the process for employees who qualify for safety glasses?

They currently undergo an eye test and provision of safety glasses in line with regulations and the total cost is covered by the employer.