

Task 17 – Health & Safety

Whilst computers and working in offices are very important these days, it is still essential to be aware of the dangers and risks that constantly using a computer could bring. There are many ways that will ensure that people can work safely without imposing illnesses on themselves.

To start with, the way that you are seated whilst working in the office is very important. Office chairs with the adjustable height and backrest tool are the most recommended as this can make sure everyone is comfortable. The lower arms and thighs should be in a horizontal position to the computer when working.

The desk or worktop that is holding the computer has a guideline. A fixed height of 660 – 730mm is the required measurement and the depth of the workspace must be from 760 – 840mm. This is because the user of the computer needs to be a fair distance away to avoid problems with the eyes. The colours of the desk are also essential. A light colour such as cream are the most sufficient as glare does not come off these colours.

All old computer screens tend to have just a swivel fixed onto them but all new kinds of screens now have a tilt mechanism fixed onto them also. This is so that the screen can be altered to match the users preferences. The top of the screen should be approximately at eye level.

The surroundings in the rooms are also included on the European Safety Regulations. Blinds should be fitted on the windows and they should be non – reflective.

All computer rooms these days should be fitted with a basic fire extinguisher. Being electrical equipment there could be a chance of the computers ‘blowing up’ therefore this would be the main source to put the fire out. The nearest fire exits should also be shown near the exit of the room.

Even the power supply is used on the Health and Safety Regulations. Before all this, the mains lugs for the power supply must be checked at least once a year. The leads and cables should be located in trunking at the back of the machine or be safely tied.

An illness that is common within office workers and computer users is repetitive strain injury. Repetitive finger movements on the keyboard and mouse cause this. It takes a long period of typing to cause any problems but it can be very serious for people who need the use of their hands such as keyboard operators. To avoid this people should regularly take breaks from typing and using the mouse at frequent intervals.

Another form of strain is eyestrain. This is just as common and this occurs from prolonged viewing of the computer screen. Wearing glasses can help in this as it reduces the strain to the eyes and protects the eyes from dust particles from the computer. Users should look away from the screen regularly.

The work place is the main target for these regulations although I still need to be aware of the dangers of using computers and the problems it can cause.