PROCEDURE TITLE: Policy for the Provision of Eye and Eyesight Tests to PC/VDU users

REVISION NO.: 8

NUMBER OF PAGES: 8

REFERENCE: Procedure for Display Screen Equipment Assessments
DSE Guideline Document
Association of Optometrists Ireland Guidelines
Parent Health and Safety Statement

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PROCEDURE

Definitions

“Eye Test” means an examination of the eye itself using an ophthalmoscope normally carried out by a doctor or optometrist.

“Eyesight Test” means a test of a person’s ability to see (visual ability), to focus at various distances and to keep the two eyes co-ordinated. This can be carried out by a Doctor or optometrist. It can also be carried out by a person (including a nurse) trained to use a vision screening machine. The person operating the machine must know when to refer employees who do not pass the eyesight tests at the screening level to a doctor or optometrist. Problems with visual ability which arise at any stage during life may give need to wear spectacles.

“Combined Eye and Eyesight Test” is performed by an optometrist or doctor and should include the following tests:

- Ability to read N6 print between 30cm to 60cm
- Either monocular vision with good binocular vision. In the latter case, heterophoria should be well compensated, with prisms if necessary. Diplopia is not admissible.
- No obvious central (+/- 20 degrees) visual field defects in the dominant eye.
- Normal near points of convergence and accommodation for the user’s age. Clear ocular media. Absence of ocular disease.
- Normal colour vision is only required if the Visual Display Unit (VDU) work is unusually colour dependent.
- Measurement and assessment of refractive error.
Introduction

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Part 2, Chapter 5, no. 73, specifies that every employee who habitually uses a Visual Display Unit (VDU) as a significant part of normal work has a right to opt for an eye test and an eyesight test, which must be made available by the employer at his/her cost.

Objective of Policy

To ensure that DIT meets its obligations as an employer in the provision of eye examinations and eyesight test for employees whose work involves VDU use.

Eligibility

All DIT employees whose work involves habitual use of a VDU (i.e. one continuous hour or more a day) have the right to an eye and eyesight test before taking up work, at regular intervals and if an employee experiences visual difficulties which may be due to Display Screen Work. Arrangements have been made for DIT employees to undergo such eye and eyesight tests at the National Optometry Centre (NOC) at DIT Kevin Street, Dublin 8.

The Health & Safety Office will advise all new employees of the policy at induction and Human Resources will supply a list of new employees to the National Optometry Centre (NOC).

In determining the intervals and the frequency of repeat tests, factors such as the age of the employees and the intensity of the VDU work should be taken into account. Employees aged 40 years and over who operate a VDU will be offered an eye examination at annual intervals; Employees under 40 years of age operating a VDU will be offered an eye examination at a minimum of two yearly intervals.

Where eye tests carried out by the optometrist reveal that particular lenses are required for VDU work, the cost of providing basic spectacles (or special corrective appliances) must be borne by the employer.

In the case of an employee who already wears spectacles to correct a visual defect (or other normal corrective appliances) and these spectacles are adequate also for VDU work, should a routine change of lenses arise, the employer is not liable to meet the cost.

Please note that eye and eyesight tests and the purchase of spectacles must be conducted with the National Optometry Centre in order for employees to be eligible for associated costs.

Procedure for Health & Safety Office/ NOC

The Health & Safety Office in conjunction with the NOC will arrange an appointment and forward the appropriate documentation directly to the employee via internal mail or e-mail i.e. ‘VDU Eye Examination Appointment Letter’ (see appendix A).

Any enquiries regarding scheduled appointments should be referred directly to the National Optometry Centre Receptionist.
Eye examinations may be carried out in the student clinics. This will be pointed out to the employee in the letter provided. The employee has the option to request an appointment in the professional clinics without a student present. Note: professional clinics may have restricted time slots and may not necessarily run concurrently on the same days as student clinics.

The ‘Report Form’ and the ‘VDU Operator’s Record’ are to be completed by the Optometrist at The National Optometry Centre and the ‘Report Form’ returned to the Health & Safety Office while the ‘VDU Operators Record’ is to be retained in the “Patient Record File “ by the National Optometry Centre. A list of employees who were contacted will be forwarded by the NOC receptionist to the Health & Safety Office on a monthly basis. Employees who fail to turn up for their appointment will be notified; employees will not be contacted if they fail to turn up for two consecutive appointments.

Where complex problems are detected, the optometrist will refer the employee to a specialist ophthalmologist for attention. The cost of dealing with more general eye problems which are revealed as a result of the tests and which are not directly related to working with a VDU is a matter for the employee as part of his or her general health care, taking account of health care entitlements.

If after an eye test has been carried out, a defect in eyesight is discovered and the optometrist certifies that having regard to the nature of the defect, the operation of VDUs would not be advisable in this case, then that employee will not be asked to operate a Visual Display Unit.

When an optometrist certifies that an employee needs to use a spectacle prescription solely for the purpose of working on a VDU, DIT shall cover the cost of basic spectacles from a range of standard spectacles from the National Optometry Centre. If the employee chooses more expensive or multifocal spectacles, DIT’s contribution will be €60 for standard spectacles or €100 towards multifocal spectacles, and the employee will contribute the balance themselves. All such spectacles are provided through the National Optometry Centre.

Once the Health & Safety Office receives the completed ‘Report Form’ it shall clearly show if an employee qualified for a VDU allowance and if that allowance was availed of and the amount (€60 or €100). An eye examination fee (€20) will be charged per employee. A total of fees and allowances given will be kept by the National Optometry Centre.

The minimum period (see eligibility section above) must have elapsed before an employee is entitled to a repeat VDU allowance.

Employees who are given eye examinations will be advised of the results of such tests.

**Exceptions**

Note: Employees engaged in certain work activities may need safety spectacles appropriate to the task/activity. Please refer to the DIT Policy for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for further details.

**Queries in relation to Policy**

Contact: Edel Niland, Health & Safety Officer
e-mail: edel.niland@dit.ie
Tel: (01) 402 4192/087 2065537
Dear Colleague,

Under the terms of the Safety, Health and Welfare At Work Act 2005 and associated regulations, certain employees who habitually use a visual display unit (e.g. computer) for a significant part of the normal working day are entitled to an eye and eyesight test, funded by the employer. Accordingly, arrangements have been made for employees to undergo an eye examination at The National Optometry Centre, DIT Kevin St. campus (see attached letter).

If you do not fall into the above category (i.e. if you do not use the computer for a significant part of the working day), please inform the Health & Safety Officer. Please disregard this appointment and contact the National Optometry Centre to cancel this appointment.

Signed: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

Edel Niland,
Health & Safety Officer
APPENDIX A – VDU EYE EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT LETTER TO EMPLOYEE

To:

Name:

Department:

Your appointment is scheduled for:

_______________________________________

The enclosed V.D.U. Eye Examination Forms, together with this letter should be presented when attending for the eye examination. If you are unable to attend at the scheduled time, please inform the clinic receptionist at least 48 hours prior to the appointment.

Please note: under the strict supervision of qualified optometrists, optometry students may be involved in the eye examinations. If you wish to undergo an examination without a student present, please inform the clinic receptionist on (01) 402 4900 and an alternative appointment can be arranged.

If you have a disability please notify the Clinic receptionist in advance so that all measures can be taken to accommodate you and your needs.

Signed

_____________________

Clinic Manager
APPENDIX B – HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT FORM

DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

REPORT FORM

NATIONAL OPTOMETRY CENTRE
DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
KEVIN STREET, DUBLIN 8. TEL: 4024900

RE: Patient: _____________________________________

Staff No: ___________________________

Department: ___________________________

I am conversant with the standards recommended by the Association of Optometrists, Ireland for V.D.U. operators and in my opinion the above named patient:

☐ satisfies the standards

☐ satisfies the standards with corrective lenses

☐ fails to satisfy the standards

☐ requires VDU specific correction to satisfy the standards.

VDU allowance availed / not availed of. Amount: €

My additional comments are as follows:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Optometrist name: ____________________________

Optometrist signature _________________________

Date: ____________________________

This report form should be forwarded by the NOC to:
Ms. Edel Niland, Health & Safety Officer,
Dublin Institute of Technology, 40-45 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1.
Please ensure the envelope is marked PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL
# APPENDIX B – HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT FORM

**V.D.U. Users Examination Record**
To be retained in patient file in NOC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Right Eye</th>
<th>Left Eye</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ophthalmology and</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acuity</td>
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<td>Base.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refractive Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrected Distance</td>
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<td>Amp. of Acc. (with</td>
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<td>Rx.)</td>
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<td>Intermediate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addition &amp; V/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Near Addition and</td>
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<tr>
<td>V/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suppression</td>
<td>YES/NO.</td>
<td>YES/NO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Horizontal</td>
<td>Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Distance)</td>
<td>Vertical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle Balance</td>
<td>Horizontal</td>
<td>Method</td>
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<tr>
<td>(33cms)</td>
<td>Vertical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Near Point of</td>
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<tr>
<td>convergence</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommendation.** (Tick **either** point 1, point 2, point 3 or point 4)

1. Satisfies the standards
2. Satisfies the standards with corrective lenses
3. Fails to satisfy the standards
4. Requires VDU specific correction to satisfy the standards

Corrective lenses currently used: Distance: _____ Close: _____ Work Only: _____
Corrective lenses required for: Distance: _____ Close: _____ Work Only: _____

Comments: ____________________________________________________________

Optometrist Name: ________________________ Signature: ________________
Date: ___________________________
Recommended standard of the ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS, IRELAND for VDU Operators

1. The ability to read N6 at both 2/3m and 1/3m.
2. Monocular vision or good binocular vision. Phorias at either distance or 1/3 metre should be corrected unless well compensated or deep suppression is present.
3. No obvious central (20 degrees) field defect in the dominant eye.
4. Normal near points of convergence and accommodation for the patient’s age.
5. Clear ocular media.