WHS self-assessment

This self-assessment guide is provided to assist you in monitoring your work area for health and safety risks.

Note: Any response to the following questions should be discussed with your supervisor in the first instance. Additional advice and assistance is available by contacting the WHS team (email: whs@scu.edu.au).

Name: ....

Position: ....

Work Unit: ....

Location: ....

OFFICE CHAIR

1.	Is the chair height adjustable?	☐ Yes	☐ No
2.	Is the chair back adjustable?	☐ Yes	☐ No
3.	Does the chair have a five star base?	☐ Yes	☐ No
4.	Ensure chair arms do not restrict access to the desk (you should be able to sit close to the desk)	☐ Yes	☐ No
5.	Are you able to sit with your feet flat on the floor or on a footstool?	☐ Yes	☐ No

DESK AND COMPUTER SET UP

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1.	Is the desk height, from floor to top of desk, between 680 mm and 720 mm?	☐ Yes	☐ No
2.	Is the monitor directly in front and approximately an arm's length away?	☐ Yes	☐ No
3.	Is the monitor/s adjustable?	☐ Yes	☐ No
4.	Is the screen free from glare or reflections from light sources?	☐ Yes	☐ No
5.	Is the computer workstation level and stable?	☐ Yes	☐ No
6.	Is the keyboard positioned directly in front of you?	☐ Yes	☐ No
7.	Are you high enough to have your hands hover over keyboard with elbows higher than your desk and wrists level with forearm?	☐ Yes	☐ No
8.	Ensure the computer mouse is positioned in close to keyboard and your arm remains close to the side of the body while in use	☐ Yes	☐ No
9.	Have you made yourself familiar with short cut keys and use them to reduce keyboard and mouse use?	☐ Yes	☐ No
10.	Ensure you have breaks to stretch and that you rotate tasks regularly	☐ Yes	☐ No

WORK SPACE GENERAL

1.	Are exits and walkways free of obstructions and trip hazards?	☐ Yes	☐ No
2.	Are phone lines and electrical cords secured and out of the way?	☐ Yes	☐ No
3.	Are electrical cords in good condition i.e. free from cuts or fraying?	☐ Yes	☐ No
4.	Is the use of power boards and extension cords minimised?	☐ Yes	☐ No

SEATED POSTURE

When you are seated at the workstation with your hands on the keyboard can you achieve the following posture?

- Shoulders relaxed and symmetrical
- Head not arched backwards or chin not extended forwards
- Head in mid line and not required to turn to view screen
- Elbows close to side of body
- Feet flat on floor or foot rest
- Wrists in a straight line and not lifted or flexed
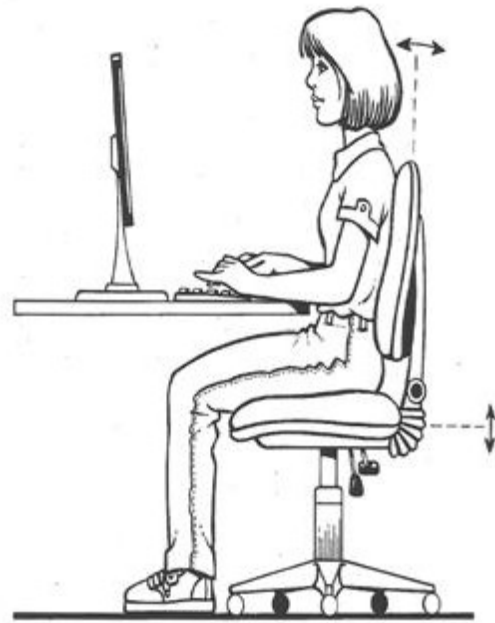
COMMENTS:

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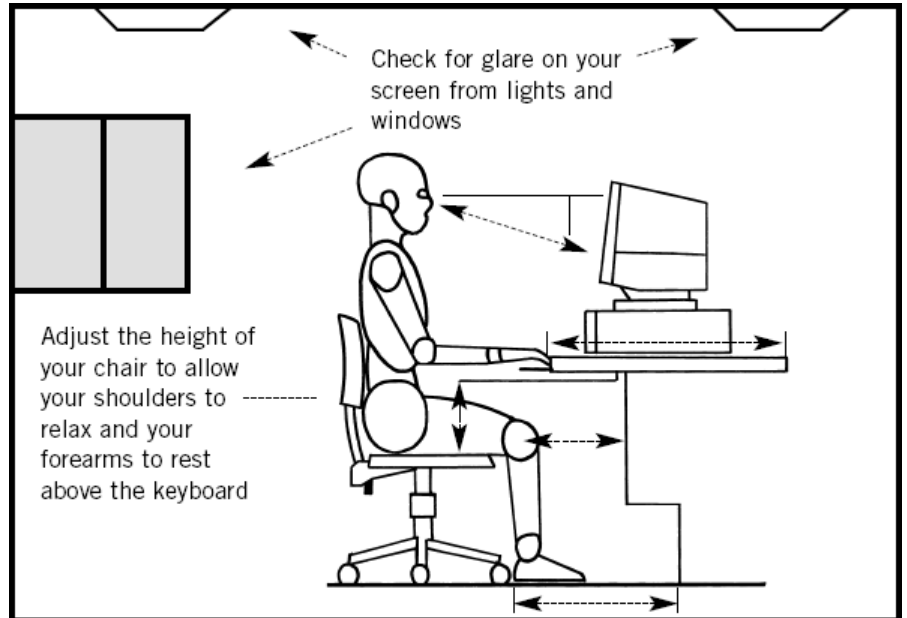
Workstation Set-up

Working at a computer may be hazardous to your health. Sore necks, shoulders and backs are common complaints when keying for long periods.

Think about your office set-up and ensure that your work posture is upright, symmetrical and relaxed.

Use the workstation diagram as a guide to help you achieve a comfortable work posture.
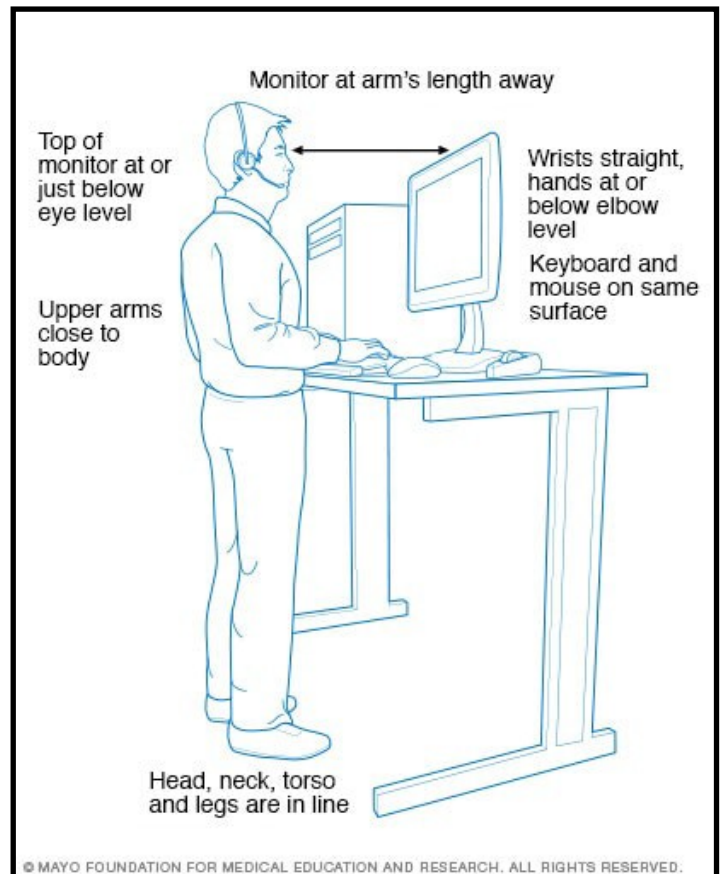
Start with your desk

- ➢ Check the height of the desk. You should be able to sit at your desk with your feet flat on the floor.

- ➢ Check the depth of your desk. Your desk must have sufficient depth so that you are not sitting too close to your screen.

Check for glare on your screen from lights and windows

Adjust the height of your chair to allow your shoulders to relax and your forearms to rest above the keyboard

Workstation set-up for working on a computer

Standing desk option:

- ➢ Check the height of the desk. Your desk should allow you to keep your arms close to your body with your wrists straight or slightly below your elbows.

- ➢ Check the depth of your desk. Your desk should allow for your monitor to fit directly in front of you at arm's length away.

Monitor at arm's length away

Top of monitor at or just below eye level

Wrists straight, hands at or below elbow level

Keyboard and mouse on same surface

Upper arms close to body

Head, neck, torso and legs are in line

Consider office chair basics

- ➢ Adjustable seat height. Adjust the height of the chair so that your forearms are parallel to the table when your elbows are 90-110 degrees or greater. This will ensure that your shoulders are relaxed when typing.
- ➢ Adjustable back support height. The backrest should support the small of your back, which is the main weight-bearing part of your body.
- ➢ Avoid armrests if you spend most of your time keying at your desk. Armrests do not allow you to get close to the desk and cause you to raise your shoulders when keying.

Adjust your screen

- ➢ Your screen should be positioned at eye level. Avoid inclining your head to read the screen as this will contribute to neck and shoulder discomfort.
- ➢ Position your screen at an arm reach distance. Too far away and you will tend to lean forward and away from the back support of your chair.
- ➢ Tilt the screen to avoid glare of overhead lights on your screen.
- ➢ Give your eyes a break by gazing into the distance.

Position your keyboard and mouse

- ➢ Place your keyboard and mouse directly in front of you to avoid over-stretching.
- ➢ Rest your hands in your lap when not keying. This relaxes your shoulders and forearms.
- ➢ Avoid hovering over keys of the mouse. This increases muscle tension.
- ➢ Learn the function short cut keys.
- ➢ Position documents in relation to the screen.
- ➢ Avoid working from documents that are flat on your desk. Consider a document holder that places the document beside the screen. If you need to look at the keyboard when typing, choose a document holder that sits between the screen and the keyboard.

What else is on your desk?

- ➢ Think about removing clutter from your desk. Ask yourself whether you need all that stuff and whether it is better to store it off your desk and take a walk when you need it.
- ➢ Place frequently used items within reach and avoid over-stretching or twisting.
- ➢ Check your workstation.

Remember, even with the best furniture and office equipment, your body needs to take regular breaks away from the desk. Stand, stretch and walk.