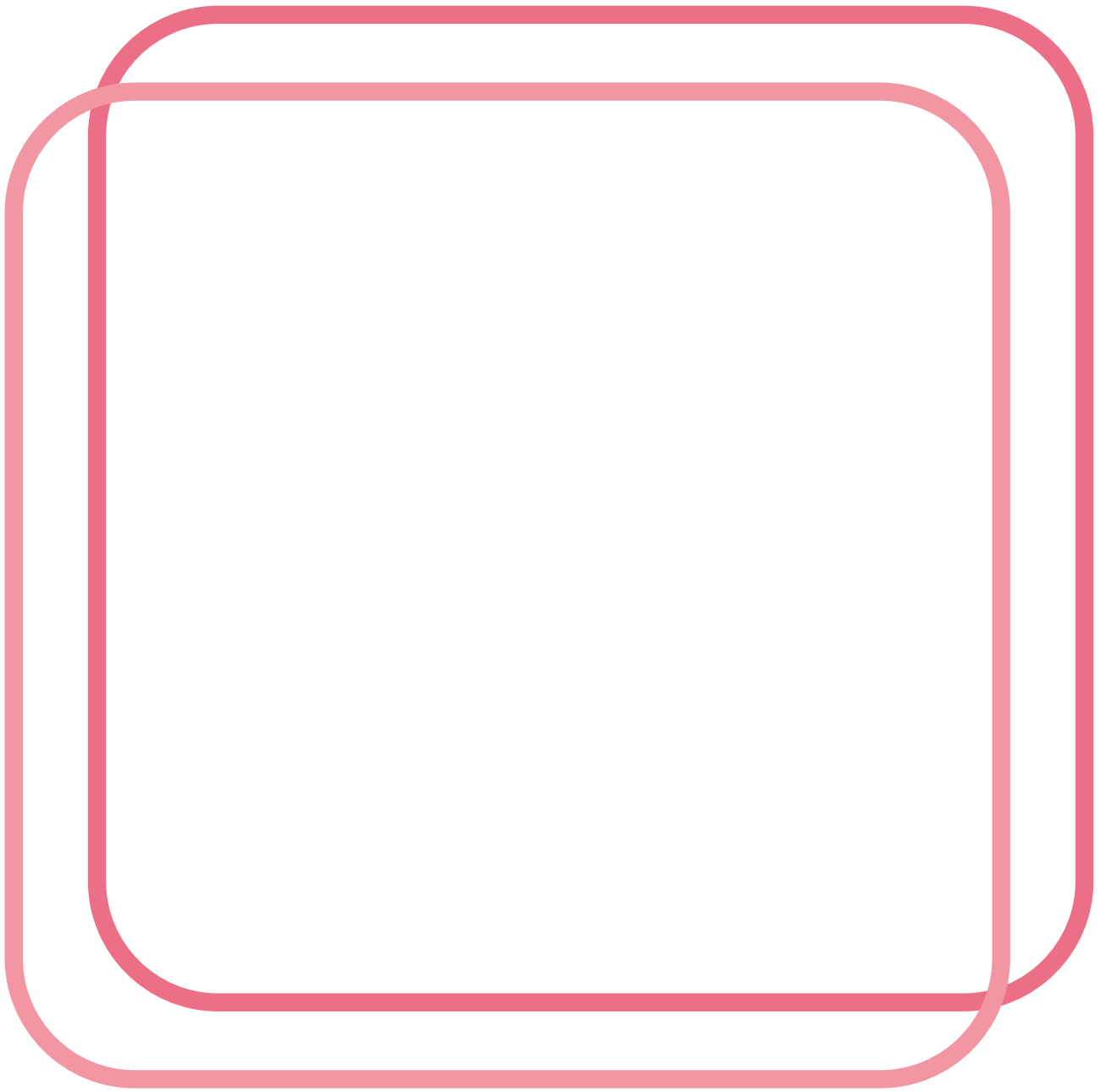


# Health & Safety Policy



# Health & Safety in Offices



Safer Business - Better Health

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## Introduction

Offices don't contain health and safety risks - do they?

Yes they do. In 2004/2005 54 major accidents took place per 100,000 people employed in the office sector.

Accidents do happen in offices but health and safety control measures need to be matched to the levels of risk

Whatever the size of your business it is essential that you understand the legal framework and as an employer you have duties to:

- your employees (including trainees), wherever they are working;

- visitors to your office;
- those affected by your work (neighbours or the public);
- people who use products you supply;
- users of your services, for example if you design equipment;
- those who use your equipment or work at a workplace you provide (for example contractors and agency staff).

Why does the law say?

**The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974** states that employers have duties to ensure the health and safety of all employees and anyone who may be affected by their work. This includes taking steps to control manual handling risks.

**The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations** place duties on employers to

assess risks at work (including manual handling) and where necessary take action to safeguard health and safety.

**The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations**, places specific duties on employers with regards to display screen equipment.

The following check sheet has been produced to aid you in assessing hazards within your office

# Office Safety Checklist

This checklist has been designed as an aid to help you in assessing the office hazards within your business. This can be used in conjunction with the risk assessment sheet to help identify possible hazards.

Name of business:	
Nature of business:	
Address:	
Name of person completing:	Date:

	<b>Electricity</b>	Yes	No
1	Are there a sufficient number of socket outlets - are you avoiding using adapters?		
2	If there is a residual current device (RCD) do you test it is working? (This only involves pushing a test button and can help to maintain the effectiveness of the device).		
3	Are there any taped joints to connect cables (there should not be as they do not have the mechanical strength needed, do not provide sufficient insulation nor protection from liquids).		
4	Are visual inspections of plugs and leads carried out? If damage is seen does the equipment get removed from use until it is repaired?		
5	Is portable appliance testing carried out at your premise?		
6	Do you switch off equipment before unplugging and before cleaning?		
7	Do you have systems in place for staff to report electrical equipment which is not working?		

	<b>Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)</b>	Yes	No
1	Have you got COSHH assessments for all hazardous substances? (see COSHH section).		

	<b>Slips &amp; Trips</b>	Yes	No
1	Are staff aware of the need to clean up spillages straight away?		
2	Are there any trailing leads around the office?		
3	Are entrance mats etc. securely fixed and do not have curled edges?		
4	Are floors dried after they have been wet cleaned?		
5	Are there any torn or lifting floor coverings?		
6	Are handrails provided on stairways and are they adequately lit?		
7	Are passageways or corridors kept clear from obstructions?		

	<b>The Workplace</b>	Yes	No
1	Are there enough toilets for employees and are they kept clean and in good working order? (see welfare section for further details).		
2	Is there hot and cold (or warm) running water, soap, towels (or other means of drying)?		
3	Do you provide a supply of wholesome drinking water?		
4	Is the temperature of the office at least 16°C?		
5	Is the lighting adequate in the office (preferably natural light).		
6	Does each person in the office have a minimum of 11 cubic metres of space in which to work?		
7	Does the office have a source of ventilation e.g. an open window		
8	If you have a lift for people to use, do you have it thoroughly examined every six months by a competent person. (NB if it is a goods lift it should be examined every 12 months)		

**The Workstation - Under the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations you should ask all 'users' the following questions, if they answer NO you are required to carry out an investigation.**

	<b>The Display Screen</b>	Yes	No
1	Are the characters clear and readable?		
2	Is the text size comfortable to read?		
3	Is the image stable, i.e. free from flicker and jitter?		
4	Is the screen's specification suitable for its intended use?		
5	Are the brightness and/or contrast adjustable?		
6	Does the screen swivel and tilt?		
7	Is the screen free from glare and reflections?		
8	If blinds/curtains are provided are they in good condition?		

	<b>The Keyboard</b>	Yes	No
1	Is the keyboard separate from the screen? (NB this is an actual requirement, unless the task makes it impracticable e.g. where there is a need to use a portable).		
2	Does the keyboard tilt?		
3	Is it possible to find a comfortable keying position - users may need a wrist rest.		
4	Does the user have a good keyboard technique?		
5	Are the characters on the keys easily readable?		

	<b>The Mouse</b>	Yes	No
1	Is the device suitable for the tasks it is used for?		
2	Is the device positioned close to the user?		
3	Is there support for the device user's wrist and forearm?		
4	Does the device work smoothly at a speed that suits the user?		
5	Can the user easily adjust software settings for speed and accuracy of the pointer?		

	<b>Furniture</b>	Yes	No
1	Is the work surface large enough for all necessary equipment, papers etc?		
2	Can the user comfortably reach all the equipment and papers they need to use?		
3	Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?		
4	Is the chair suitable?		
5	Does the chair have working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seat back height and tilt adjustment?</li> <li>• seat height adjustment?</li> <li>• swivel mechanism?</li> <li>• castors or glides?</li> </ul>		
6	Is the chair adjusted correctly?		
7	Is the small of the back supported by the chair's backrest?		
8	Are forearms horizontal and eyes at roughly the same height as the top of the VDU?		
9	Are feet flat on the floor, without too much pressure from the seat on the backs of the legs?		

	<b>The Environment</b>	Yes	No
1	Is there enough room to change position and vary movement?		
2	Is the lighting suitable, e.g. not too bright or too dim to work comfortably?		
3	Does the air feel comfortable?		
4	Are levels of heat comfortable?		
5	Are levels of noise comfortable?		

1	<b>Finally</b> :- ask if the checklist has covered all the problems the user may have with their VDU	Yes	No
2	Ask if they have experienced any discomfort or other symptoms which attribute to working with their VDU		
3	Ask if they are aware of their entitlement to eye and eyesight testing		
4	Ask if they are aware about taking regular breaks working away from their VDU		