

Health and Safety Policy

1. General Health and Safety Policy Statement

S3TAX ("The Company") recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy workplace and work environment for its employees and others who may be affected by its work.

The Company undertakes to comply with all statutory health and safety requirements.

The Company wishes to adopt all other reasonably practicable means to eliminate hazards and reduce the risk of injury to its employees and others, and the risk of damage to its property.

The Company will ensure that resources are made available to provide:-

- equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- a safe place of work with safe access to it and safe egress from it;
- a healthy working environment; and
- sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure all employees are aware of the hazards at their workplace together with the necessary measures to be taken to protect against these hazards.

2. Accidents and First Aid

All Company sites, irrespective of whether there is a trained First Aider on site, will have an appropriate number of First Aid Boxes. These will be under the supervision of the First Aiders or Appointed Person and will be maintained to comply with the statutory requirements.

Materials other than those specified in the First Aid at Work Regulations, may not be kept in the First Aid Box.

If an injury, or illness at work, is considered sufficiently serious to require medical attention, or some other form of external assistance, the immediate supervisor of the person concerned should seek assistance by dialling 9-999 from the nearest available telephone.

The following information should be given:

- Type and seriousness of injury or illness
- Location and directions for vehicle access
- Brief description of accident and any special rescue equipment needed
- Do not ring off until you are sure that the emergency services have all the information they need.

It is important to ensure that the injured person, and others, are protected from further danger by shutting off any equipment if this can be done safely, cordoning off the area and by warning any other persons undertaking similar operations.

Do not use any equipment that has been involved in an accident until it has been checked for safety and any investigation has been completed.

Details of any injury received at work must be entered on to the HSE Accident Report Book located at the first aid station. The record should include accidents to visitors, members of the public or contractors.

3. Guidelines on safe office working

The following do's and don'ts represent some of the most common causes of accidents in the office situation but there are others:

- Do not place obstructions in gangways, on stairs or at points of access to fire fighting equipment or means of escape.
- Do use handrails when ascending or descending stairs.
- Do not run or carry items that are unstable or too heavy for easy carriage.
- Do not allow waste and accumulations of work materials to accumulate unnecessarily on, under, or between desks.
- Do not store heavy or unstable items on top of cupboards where they may fall.
- Ensure that cables for telephone, portable electrical appliances etc are properly in position where they will not present a tripping hazard and where they will not cause the items to which they are attached to be dislodged by people moving about the office.
- Close filing drawers and cabinets after use. Open only one drawer at a time if there is a risk of the cabinet becoming unstable. Put the heaviest items in the bottom drawer.
- Use proper equipment for cutting, punching or binding paper. Do not leave open blades where they may cause injury.
- Keep combustible materials, including clothing, away from portable heaters that might catch fire.
- Waste paper bins must not be used for cigarette ends when entering the no smoking office premises.
- Do not place items on window ledges where they may fall out and injure somebody below. Before opening windows make sure that it is safe to do so.
- Keep a check on electrical equipment to detect any signs of damage or discoloration due to overheating. Switch off any equipment that you think might be faulty.
- Switch off inessential equipment at night before leaving the office.
- Do not remove the casing from office equipment except in so far as is necessary to carry out routine operations described in the supplier's handbook. Be aware that parts of office equipment may be hot when first switched off.
- Report anything that you think presents a hazard so that action can be taken to safeguard everyone.

4. Guidelines on safe working with computers

Personal Computers are used by most office workers. They are an efficient means of carrying out many tasks but they can present hazards if not properly used.

The following notes represent simple actions you can take to help yourself.

Setting up your workstation and screen

- Make sure that you have sufficient free space on the desk to locate the equipment properly and to lay out the work you are doing.
- Position the screen to avoid glare and reflection from lights and windows. Close the blinds if necessary.
- Set the screen at a suitable distance for clear and comfortable vision. Ensure that the top of the screen is more or less in line with eyes. It may be necessary to raise the screen to achieve this.
- Set the angle of the screen to give a comfortable (neutral) position for the head and neck, without tension in the neck and shoulder muscles.

Setting up your keyboard and mouse

- The keyboard and mouse should be positioned to give you space for operation of each one without stretching your arms or fingers. There should be room to rest the hands in front.
- Keyboard wrist rests should only be used to rest hands when not typing.
- Adjust the angle of the keyboard to suit (ideally the key board should be placed in the flat rather than raised position) Your forearms should be approximately horizontal and your hands level with your arms – avoid any bending of the wrist.
- The position of the keyboard should be set so that you are working 'square on' to the screen, without a twisted back.
- When using a pointing device, such as, a mouse or trackball, ensure that your elbow and forearm is adequately supported by your desk. Ensure your forearm is in line with your hand and avoid bending of the wrist.

Posture and Position

- Adjust your chair height to give a horizontal arm/wrist position that avoids tension in arm, shoulder and neck muscles.
- Adjust the back of your chair to support the lower back.
- Ensure that there is space to move your legs under the desk with the chair adjusted.
- Use a footstool if it is necessary to do so to get a comfortable and stable position for your feet with the chair height correctly adjusted. There should be no undue pressure from the chair on the back of the thighs.
- Re-adjust your workstation to different tasks e.g. for closer attention to the screen for fine work.
- Ideally when seated your hips should be slightly higher than your knees.

Work Routine

- Ensure that you do not spend too long without a break from keying in, using the mouse, or work requiring close attention to the screen.

- Frequent short breaks are preferable to long periods of work with a longer break at the end. At least 5 minutes in every hour should be spent away from work on the screen and keyboard.
- Change positions periodically to prevent tension building up in any set of muscles.
- Relax your hands and stretch the arms and fingers.
- Give your eyes a break from focusing on the screen – focus on something at a distance.
- Avoiding headaches and eye strain

Lighting needs to be suitable for the task. Avoid excessive lighting or too little lighting. Use task lighting if necessary for work on, or from, documents.

- Use a document holder positioned at the same distance as the screen to avoid excessive re-focusing of the eyes.
- Ensure that you do not have glare and reflections from furniture and objects nearby as well as from lights and windows.
- Adjust the brightness and contrast of your screen image.
- Wear spectacles or lenses if necessary, especially any that are provided specifically for VDU use.
- Avoid sitting near to hot radiators, or in draughts, that may dry the skin and eyes.

Eye tests for computer users

Those who are required to use VDUs at work on a regular basis are entitled to a periodic eye test paid for by the employer. The Company will arrange, at its expense, for employees to obtain their eye test and to be provided with a basic prescription for any spectacles that the optician prescribes specifically for VDU use. Staff who wish to have a more expensive set of frames or lenses may do so provided that they pay the additional cost above a basic prescription. The arrangements for eye tests and spectacles do not extend to free provision to correct eye defects, such as short or long sight, that would need correction irrespective of the use of VDU equipment. This is the employee's own responsibility.

Signed:

Colin Scates
Director

Date: 1 April 2024