If your computer is set up correctly, your productivity and comfort can be enhanced. Discomfort and strain in the arms, neck, shoulders, back and hands may be the result of unsatisfactory work practices.

The guidelines below will assist you to prevent discomfort and strain.

Posture

A correct, relaxed posture can affect how you feel by the end of the day.

For comfort:
- adjust your seat height so your feet rest firmly on the floor;
- thighs should be fully supported except for a two-finger width space behind the knee - adjust the back rest depth to achieve this;
- knees are level with hips - use a footrest if your knees are lower than your hips;
- shoulders are relaxed;
- elbows are relaxed by your sides and not stuck out;
- hands are low, around waist height;
- head is up, with eyes level with top of screen;
- forearms and hands are at 90 angle at the elbow;
- lower back is supported - support your lower back with a cushion if your chair is too deep.

The Keyboard

You should be able to maintain the recommended posture while using the keyboard. An adjustable keyboard table will assist you to achieve the correct posture. If you have a fixed keyboard table, adjust your seat height accordingly and use a footrest to support your feet.

Make sure:
- your keyboard is 6-7cm from the edge of the table to allow the wrist to rest when you are not keying;
- your wrists are not bent when using the keyboard; and
- your mouse is beside the keyboard.

The Screen

The ideal screen should be:

- about 90cm from your eyes;
- adjusted to ensure the top of the screen is about eye level; and
- positioned so your neck is at rest or relaxed.

If your screen is not adjustable, place a wedge under one end to change the angle or place it on a stand if it's too low. Consider using a screen filter if reflections are a problem.

The Document Position

A document holder helps prevent frequent up and down neck movements and frequent changes of focal distance. Use a document holder which places the document:

- the same distance from your eyes
- in a level position beside the screen; or
- directly below the screen just above the keyboard.

Correct Lighting

Proper lighting makes it easier on the eyes.

- position your screen at a 90 angle to windows;
- adjust the angle of the screen to reduce reflections and glare;
- close blinds or curtains if necessary;
- use a screen filter to cut down reflections and glare; and
- turn some lights off if overhead lighting is too bright.

Taking Breaks

The following advice will help prevent strain and fatigue.

- when keying, take short breaks of about one minute to proof read, etc. and relax your hands in your lap or on the desk;
- after extended periods of keying, stand or walk for several minutes;
- avoid writing during breaks; and
- don't remain seated for prolonged periods.

For further information, please contact the USQSafe Team