



South Tyneside Council



# Eye Sight Test – Display Screen Users Policy & Procedures

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## 1 Introduction

The aim of this procedure is to set out how Display Screen Users can request an eyesight test. It has been developed using current internal procedures, the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 1992 and advice from the Health and Safety Executive.

The Health and Safety Executive has reported that extensive research has found no evidence that Display Screen Equipment can cause disease or permanent damage to eyes. But long spells of work with Display Screen Equipment can lead to tired eyes and discomfort. Planning time for other tasks away from the Display Screen Equipment and ensuring the equipment is well positioned can help your eyes. However, if you are a Display Screen User, you can request an eyesight test.

This policy applies to all employees of South Tyneside Council, including school-based employees where the governing bodies of individual schools have adopted the policy, and Agency Workers after the 12-week qualifying period.

## 2 Who is a Display Screen User?

The Health and Safety Executive suggests several factors to help decide who is a defined Display Screen User. Generally, anyone who uses a display screen continuously each day for an hour or more will be a 'defined user'. Your Manager/Head Teacher will confirm if you are a "defined user."

## 3 How often can a Display Screen User have an Eyesight Test?

The Council/School pays for regular eyesight tests; which will come out of your Service area/School budget. Most Opticians recommend retests every 2 years. In certain cases, the Optician may recommend a retest before 2 years. Evidence that this is necessary will be required.

## 4 Which Optician can I use?

Your eyesight test voucher can only be used at Specsavers, but can be used at any Specsavers branch.

## 5 When can I make an appointment?

Employees must make their appointments in their own time. There will not be a credit adjustment if they participate in the Flexible Working Hours Scheme. The appointment **must** be made with a Specsavers branch. **If you undertake an eye examination at any other Optician, the Council/School will not reimburse you for any expenses incurred.**

## 6 What is the procedure?

- You should check with your Manager/Head Teacher, to confirm that you qualify to be a 'defined user.'
- If you are, you should make an appointment at any Specsavers branch.
- Contact the HR Service Centre who will arrange for you to be issued with an eyesight test voucher. Your eyesight test voucher will be emailed to you.
- The eyesight test voucher provided entitles you to a full eye examination. The voucher is only to be used at a Specsavers branch and cannot be used at any other opticians. You can make an appointment at any Specsavers branch subject to section 5 above.
- Your Service area/School will be charged for the voucher; please ensure it is used before the expiry date. If for any reason you no longer require the eye test voucher, return it to the HR Service Centre and your Service area/School will be credited with the cost.

## 7 What if I need spectacles?

If the eye examination shows that you require dedicated glasses for VDU use, then the same voucher will entitle you to a pair of single vision glasses with Pentax lenses from the £45 range in the Specsavers store. If you wish, you can upgrade to a higher price range and use the voucher as a £45 contribution towards a pair of higher priced VDU glasses only. **No assistance will be given to the cost of spectacles purchased in any store other than Specsavers.**

The Council/School will not provide Bifocal, Varifocal or Multifocal glasses for DSE use. If you require glasses other than solely for VDU use, you are entitled to use the premium club aspect of the voucher. This entitles you to £20 off a pair of glasses if chosen from the £99 range or above in store. Please ask in store for further details.

### Choice of frames/lenses

If you wish to purchase frames and lenses of your choice, you should use the voucher as part payment and contribute the difference yourself, However, it should be noted that the use of multi-focal prescriptions (i.e. varifocal lenses) for DSE work can cause additional problems due to the user having to make repeated adjustments to their neck/head position, or adopting an awkward position in order to look through the appropriate part of the lens. For this reason, unless the Optometrist recommends the use of multi-focal prescriptions for DSE work (having first been provided with information relating to the nature of work, workstation and the workplace layout), only dedicated single vision spectacles should be used.

### I am entitled to free eyesight tests, what do I do?

You can make your appointment at any Optician providing them with your proof of exemption.

If the eye examination shows that you require dedicated glasses for VDU use, you will have to obtain an eyesight test voucher and undergo a further examination at Specsavers. You will have to request an eyesight test voucher from the HR Service Centre, this will be emailed to you or your line manager/School. If the eye examination confirms that require dedicated glasses for VDU use, then the same voucher will entitle you to a pair of single vision glasses with Pentax lenses from the £45 range in the Specsavers Ltd store. If you wish you can upgrade to a higher price range and use the voucher as a £45 contribution towards a pair of higher priced VDU glasses only. **No assistance will be given to the cost of spectacles purchased in any store other than Specsavers.**

Policy approved by Governors: Nov 2025

Date of next review by Governors: Nov 2026