
	<h1>Frequently Asked Question</h1>				
<b>Ref: FAQ 011:02</b>	<b>RE: Office Accommodation</b>				
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<b>Note:</b>	<i>This information/advice has been issued in response to frequently asked questions around a specific topic and may not cover all issues arising, should you require more specific advice please contact the Health &amp; Safety Help Desk. The management of any occupational safety and health issue(s) remains the responsibility of local management.</i>				

### ***What is the minimum work space allowed in the Office?***

In offices, for Display Screen Equipment users (DSE), 4.65m<sup>2</sup> is the minimum amount of floor space allowed for every person employed in any room, including the area occupied by the office desk and chair but excluding filing cabinets and other office furniture.

### ***Is there a minimum temperature that I should be expected to work in?***

**Yes**, an Employer shall ensure that for sedentary office work, a minimum temperature of 17.5°C, so far as is reasonably practicable, is achieved & maintained at every workstation after the first hour's work. However for most people an acceptable temperature for office work lies within the range of 18°C to 23°C.

An employer shall ensure that during working hours, the temperature in rooms containing workstations is appropriate for the employees, having regard to the working methods and the physical demands placed on the employees.

There is no limit specified for high temperatures, however a means of cooling may be required based on the conclusions of risk assessments.

When temperatures fluctuate due to temporary weather conditions all reasonable control measures should be considered. It may be necessary to record the temperatures based on risk assessment.

### ***How do I control the temperatures in my office?***

Control measures to be considered include the following (please note that this is a non exhaustive list);

Excessive heat can occur from the sun shining through windows, skylights or glass partitions various methods of controlling emissions include the following:

- Open windows
- Internal Blinds
- External Blinds
- Use of low-emissivity glass, etc.

In cases where it is difficult to maintain an adequate overall temperature, it may be necessary to provide effective:

- Local Heating

N.B. Care needs to be taken with the use of temporary heaters so as to prevent burns from contact with hot surfaces. Should a heating method be introduced then it must be insured that it will not result in the escape of any fumes that may be offensive or affect the health and safety of employees.

### ***What are the lighting requirements for my office?***

There is no absolute requirement; lighting can be delivered through natural, artificial means or a combination of both. An employer shall ensure that as far as possible, places of work receive sufficient natural light and are equipped with artificial lighting adequate for the protection of the safety and health of employees.

The lighting levels should be sufficient to enable persons to detect obvious hazards as well as being able to work without experiencing eyestrain. If you are in doubt, the lighting levels can be measured.

Artificial lighting should be adequate and properly maintained. To maximise the use of natural lighting, windows, skylights and glass partitions used for lighting work areas should be kept clean on both inner and outer surfaces.

### ***What are the ventilation requirements for my office?***

Normally, natural ventilation provided through windows and doors will be adequate. If air-conditioning or mechanical ventilation installations are used, they should be maintained in adequate working order. Any breakdowns should be easily identifiable by staff and reported for repair.

### ***What are the requirements regarding welfare arrangements?***

The employer has a responsibility to ensure that any place of work is maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and that any rubbish, refuse and waste is not allowed to accumulate and is removed on a regular basis. Employers must also ensure that the floor of any work area is kept clean and that a suitable cleaning regime is in place.

An adequate supply of drinking water should be provided and maintained at suitable points conveniently accessible to all employees.

Suitable and adequate facilities for boiling water and taking meals must be provided and maintained for the use of employees.

### ***What are the requirements regarding Sanitary and Washing Facilities?***

Adequate and suitable sanitary and washing facilities for use by employees must be supplied, cleaned and maintained.

**The employer must ensure that the physical environment of the place of work is as safe as is reasonably practicable. If there are issues/concerns regarding any aspect which this FAQ relates, then these should be discussed with your line manager and documented as part of the risk assessment process as appropriate.**

**References:**

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations, 2007 Chapter 1 of Part 2: Workplace.

To download the risk assessments forms click on the link below:

[Safety Statement & Risk assessments](#)