Name: _____ Office/Desk: _____

Date worksheet completed: _____

Manager's Name: _____

Reviewed by Manager: _____ Date: _____
(Signature)

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY | A NEW SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

Computer Workstation Adjustment Worksheet

How to use this Worksheet:

Using a hardcopy of this worksheet, sit at your computer workstation. Start at number 1 below and adjust yourself and your equipment as best you can within the constraints of your workstation. It may be helpful to work with one of your workmates so they can assist with difficult adjustments and look at your posture if necessary. If you are unable to make the desired adjustment, make a note in the "Comments" column. Once you have completed the whole worksheet, review the notes you have made in the comments column with your supervisor or manager. Together, prioritise the actions that should be taken and decide on a course of action. The form should be kept and filed by your manager.

Steps to Adjusting your Computer Workstation	Reasons for Adjustment	Comments
1. SEAT: Adjust the tilt of your seat so it is parallel to the floor.	An upward tilted seat could cause pressure on the backs of your legs and hinder blood flow, potentially resulting in a DVT (Deep Vein Thrombosis or blood clot).	
2. LUMBAR SUPPORT: Adjust the height of the backrest so the low back support (bulge) is in the small of your back. *Note: Ensure your bottom is right back in the seat and then sit up straight to adjust the lumbar support.*	Maintaining the curves in your spine, especially the low back, means that all the structures in your back (bones, muscles, discs, etc) are in their intended position, helping to prevent discomfort and injury.	
3. BACKREST TILT: Adjust the tilt of the backrest to promote comfortable, upright sitting. *Note: The backrest and the seat tilt should be able to be adjusted independently.*	Leaning too far back results in the neck having to stay in a forward bending position, however staying upright puts the neck and the rest of the spine in a better position.	
4. ARMRESTS: Remove the armrests from your chair, or ensure they are back far enough to allow you to get close enough to your desk (your stomach should be right up against the desk). If you have armrests, they should be height adjustable and they should only support your elbows.	Fixed armrests can prevent you from getting close enough to the desk, resulting in sitting on the edge of the chair, leaning forward or reaching to get close enough to the keyboard/mouse.	
5. SEAT HEIGHT: Adjust the height of your seat so that when you sit up straight: • your shoulders are relaxed, • your elbows are in line with the home keys on your keyboard and remain close to the side of your body, • your forearms are parallel to the ground or angled slightly downward. *Note: If your desk is height adjustable, adjust the height of your seat first, and then adjust the desk height so the above is attained.*	In this position, your muscles in your fingers, forearms and shoulders will perform at their peak because they are at their strongest. Performing computing tasks in this position will decrease the likelihood of discomfort and injury.	
6. FOOTREST and LEGROOM: Ensure your feet rest flat on the ground and your thighs are parallel to the ground. If this is not possible, you will need to get an appropriate footrest, adjusted to the correct height. Also ensure that you have enough room under your desk so your knees and feet are not hitting anything.	If your legs are dangling or cramped, this could cause pressure on the back of your leg and hinder blood flow, potentially resulting in a DVT (Deep Vein Thrombosis or blood clot).	

7. Ensure your keyboard and monitor are located directly in front of you. *Note: When typing, centre body between the "G" and "H" keys.*	This will prevent excessive, sustained neck and wrist positions which could result in discomfort and injury.	
8. KEYBOARD: Adjust your keyboard height adjustment pegs so they are flat (touch typists) and so that your wrists are straight. *Note: Hunt-and-peck typists (people who need to look at the keys to type) should have the pegs up, so they do not have to bend their neck as much.*	By keeping your wrists in a neutral position (extended middle finger is in line with forearm and slight backward bending of wrist) you give the muscles a greater mechanical advantage and decrease the risk of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.	
9. MOUSE: Place your mouse as close as possible next to and at the same height as your keyboard. *Note: Ideally, to minimise strain on your wrist, use a cordless, infrared mouse.*	If you have your keyboard on a lower level than your mouse, your mousing shoulder will have to do more work in a poor position, placing it at greater risk of being injured.	
10. Ensure your wrists and forearms are not resting on hard surfaces or sharp edges.	This can cause discomfort and hinder blood flow.	
11. MONITOR: Adjust your monitor so that: • The top of the screen is at eye level or slightly below, • You can reach your arm straight out and your fingertips cannot touch the screen, • The screen is tilted to enable easy viewing and reduce glare *(if glare or reflection is a problem, get a glare-reducing screen or move your workstation).*	If your screen is too low or too high, you will have to either flex or extend your neck which can stress the neck muscles. Having the screen around fingertip length helps decrease eye strain.	
12. Place your document holder so it is between your keyboard and monitor (preferred position) or next to and at the same height as your monitor.	A document holder should be used so that documents you are typing from are not on the desk, causing you to bend and hold your neck forward to read them.	
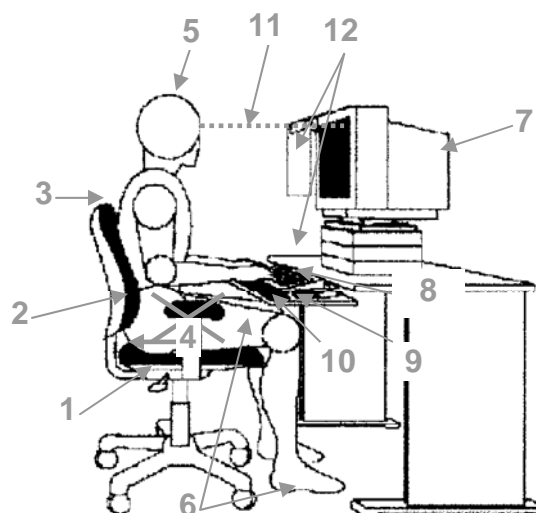
Other Tips for Computer Use

Posture:

- Change your posture regularly – AVOID STAYING IN ONE POSTURE FOR MORE THAN 30 MINUTES.

  → *The body is not meant to be in one position for an extended period of time. Our bodies are designed to move and be flexible; so get out of that chair, take a walk, do some stretches, get moving!*

- If you are going to talk for more than 3 minutes, use a speakerphone or a headset.

  → *Do not cradle the phone between your ear and your shoulder – this is one of the most common causes of neck pain in office workers.*

- Try using the mouse on the left side (and change the mouse settings to "left-handed") to reduce the amount of work and the reaching distance of your right arm.

  → *Did you know that the keyboard was originally designed to have the letter keys in the middle, the number pad on the right and the mouse on the left? (so you don't have to reach across the number pad)*

- Learn to touch-type or use voice recognition software so you do not have to repeatedly bend your neck forward to find the correct keys.

  → *Excessive neck bending can cause muscle pain, shoulder pain and/or headaches; plus you will become more productive if you don't have to spend as much time typing one document or e-mail!*

Eye Strain:

- Use a larger font and/or magnification to avoid eye strain.

  → *You can do this by selecting the "View" tab, then "Zoom" on the drop-down menu (in Word). Either select the percentage you want to zoom in (120% is a good place to start) or select "Page Width" for the document to zoom so it fits the width of the page.*

- Periodically focus on distant objects and blink frequently.

  → *This gives your eyes a rest and helps to prevent premature degeneration of your eyesight.*

- Ensure the lighting is appropriate for your task.

Work Organisation:

- Limit computer use to 1 hour at a time and take breaks every 30 minutes → stand up and do some stretches.
- Arrange your workstation based on your task and vary your tasks throughout the day.
- Place things that you use regularly close to avoid excessive and repetitive reaching and bending.

Lifestyle:

- Maintain your general fitness. Keep yourself strong, flexible and able to cope with the everyday stress of work or study.
- If you sit all day at work, do something active when you get home (walk, run, cycle, swim, yoga/pilates, social sport).

  → *This will re-energise your mind and body and help to prevent muscle wasting and other problems associated with inactivity.*