

Workplace investigation (WPO)

Introduction

A workplace examination (WPO) is an examination to study the set-up of a monitor or production workstation in order to assess the physical strain and related health of that workplace for the employee concerned. All possible risk factors are assessed in this study on the basis of a personal analysis. Secondly, an assessment is made of the safety of the workplace. In addition, various (auxiliary) devices such as a desk or laboratory chair, a desk and so on are assessed and, where necessary, readjusted with the employee. Finally, during the examination, recommendations are given to the employee to improve the physical load and reduce the complaints. A WPO is part of the procedure up to the request for monitor glasses.

Performance of the WPO

The reason for a workplace examination is the report of physical complaints of the back, shoulder or neck or other physical complaints that could possibly be related to the work. A workplace examination can also be carried out in the context of (the prevention of) CANS (RSI) complaints. After all, company doctors work with employees who suffer from CANS complaints in accordance with the NVAB Guideline on Arm, Shoulder or Neck Complaints. In this context, a workplace examination is usually necessary to identify and/or improve the strain in the work situation.

The report is made by the employee himself, or his supervisor. The execution of the WPO will be done by the Armico of the department/division concerned or by an occupational hygienist of the HSB department. If other health complaints occur in the employee besides ergonomic complaints, an occupational hygienist should assess these complaints by, for example, also investigating factors such as indoor climate and chemical factors. If you do not know who your Armico is or the department does not have an Armico, you can request a workplace examination at info-HSB@maastrichtuniversity.nl.

Conducting a WPO takes an average of 30-45 minutes.

Report of the WPO

A report of the WPO is prepared by the ARMICO or occupational hygienist.

A report is composed of the following sections:

1. General data;
2. Findings/bottlenecks;
3. Recommendations.

Form WPO

1. General data

Name	
SAP number	
Date of birth	
Position (faculty/service) - Start of employment - Size of employment (fte)	
Work place	
Initiative taken by	0 employer 0 employee 0 other,.....
Cause	
Complaints (type and period)	
Description of work activities	
Hours of screen work	
Hours of laptop work	
Workplace investigation performed by (name/position/faculty)	
Reporting to	
Date workplace investigation	

Signature of person involved: Date:


2. Findings/Actions.

The table below shows for each risk factor whether there is a bottleneck. It also states whether the bottleneck has already been resolved during the workplace investigation and, if not, who is expected to resolve the problem or to whom the person concerned should possibly be referred.

CHAIR: FINDINGS AND ACTIONS		RESULT
Chair setup correct		
Chair setup incorrect		
Chair setup correct		
No information on adjustment possibilities of chair		
Chair not suitable for employee		

MONITOR: FINDINGS AND ACTIONS		RESULT
Monitor setup correct	-	
Monitor setup too low	-	
Monitor setup too high	-	

Employee sits diagonally in front of monitor	-	
Monitor is too far away	-	
Monitor is too close	-	
Monitor is incorrectly positioned relative to the window, hindrance from backlighting	-	
Reflection on the screen due to daylight	-	
reflection on the screen due to lighting	-	

Viewing distances ¹			
Distance a	(eye – monitor)cm	
Distance b	(eye – document)cm	
Distance c	(eye – keyboard)cm	
Distance d	(eye – other*)cm	
*examples: 2nd monitor, telephone, planning board, etc.			
Is the top of the screen at eye level:			<input type="radio"/> yes <input type="radio"/> no, underneath <input type="radio"/> no, above

DOCUMENT HOLDER: FINDINGS	-	RESULTS
There is no document holder, even though it is useful for the type of work	-	

WORKING HEIGHT: FINDINGS AND ACTIONS		(DESIRED) HEIGHT (IN INCREMENTS OF 1 CM)
Working height sitting	- Cm
Working height standing	- Cm
Working height is good if footrest is used	- Cm

WORKING TECHNIQUE: FINDINGS		RESULTS
Works with relaxed shoulders	-	
Regularly rests elbows on armrests or work surface	-	
Has elbow rests set sufficiently close to body (no more than a fist between body and elbow)	-	
Keyboard is right in front of the employee	-	
Operates keyboard with wrists in neutral position		
Mouse works incorrectly	-	
Operates the mouse with the wrists in a neutral position	-	
Fingers rest relaxed on the mouse	-	
Switches mouse use with left and right hand	-	
Forearm supported when using mouse	-	
Wears reading glasses suitable for screen work	-	
Regularly interrupts screen work with other work or mini breaks	-	
Has regular micro breaks	-	
Uses a headset or hands-free option for simultaneously talking on the phone and "typing/using mouse"	-	

PURCHASE		FOLLOW UP ACTIONS	
Other chair necessary		Creating more room by arranging work place	

Reason: Chair is old/broken		Reorganize cables and cords	
Screen glasses		Place desktop PC on ground	
Screen raiser		Rearrange room; rearrange workstation	
New mouse		Rearrange monitor to corner setup	
Foot rest		Move table 10-15 cm from wall	
New desk folders			
Document holder		Other: climate, temperature, noise,....	
Other necessities:			

WPO completion

The report of the WPO with possible action items to be taken is offered to the employee. In some situations, the report may be forwarded to the supervisor and/or the company physician.

List of abbreviations

ARMICO	Arbo en Milieu Contact person
CANS	Complaints of Arm, Neck or Shoulder
NVAB	Dutch Association for Occupational and Business Medicine
WPO	Workplace Examination