

Using Computers

Spreadsheet Module

Health and Safety Task

The aim of this task is to assess the provision of space, where work is essential in order to adopt good working practices.

Overcrowding can increase health and accident risks and can be a major source of stress. The Schedule of the Management Handling and Safety at Work Regulations says that Safety Reps should be consulted "in good time" about changes at work and this should include the design and layout of workplaces. It is especially important that Safety Reps are involved in planning of new work layouts since many problems connected with working space which could be difficult to remedy later, can be identified at the planning stage.

Laws and Standards on Space

Regulation 10 of the Workplace Regs states that every workroom shall have sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space for purposes of health, safety and welfare. The ACoP says that as a minimum, 11 Cu metres should be allowed per person working in a room (the International Labour Office recommends 75 - 90 sq feet per worker). This assumes that the room is up to 3 metres high. But the Code also says that the number of people who may work in any room at the same time will depend on the size of the room; space taken up by furniture, fittings and equipment; and the layout of the room.

So the minimum allowance of 11 cu metres will not comply with these Regs if the room is crowded with equipment or furniture.

In pairs, calculate the area of this computer room to see how many people can be accommodated.

Task

Copy the health and safety spreadsheet task from the shared drive (you may need to ask the tutor). Measure the computer room to see if there is adequate space for all our class. Put the measurements into the appropriate boxes and then watch the PC do the calculations and give you an answer. Print a copy of your results.

Then suggest what improvements, if any which can be made to further reduce the risk for the computer user. Some questions you may like to ask yourself - Is there too much or too little equipment/furniture in the room? Does the room look safe to work in? Can the layout of the room be improved?