

## Description:

Netbook Safe Usage Guidelines for Teachers & Parents


## Introduction:

As with all laptops and computers of a portable nature, Netbooks are designed to be used in a wide variety of situations and environments. Due to their portability, there are a number of things you can do to use Netbooks safely and effectively. In doing so, you will be improving the learning environment and outcomes for students.

## Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide a resource for teachers and parents supervising students using Netbooks. This information aims to provide guidance on the safe use of Netbooks in a number of different settings.

## General Guidance:

<b>Duration of Usage:</b>	There are no defined time limits with regards to portable computer usage. For the purposes of this guideline however: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Sustained</b> usage may be continuous work periods of 30-60 minutes</li><li>▪ <b>Extended</b> usage may be continuous work periods of &gt;1hour</li></ul>
<b>Posture:</b>	Promoting and encouraging suitable posture during Netbook use is a key factor in preventing injury and promoting a healthy learning environment. It is important to ensure students maintain good posture, with a particular focus on their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Back</li><li>▪ Neck and Shoulders</li><li>▪ Arms and Forearms</li><li>▪ Wrists and Hands</li></ul> 
<b>Awkward Postures</b>	<b>Sustained or Extended</b> use while adopting awkward postures is generally not recommended. For the purposes of this document, awkward postures may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Sitting on the bed</li><li>▪ Sitting cross legged</li><li>▪ Standing, sitting and leaning against a wall with laptop on flexed knees</li><li>▪ Kneeling</li><li>▪ Lying supine</li><li>▪ Side lying</li><li>▪ Slouching whilst seated</li><li>▪ Resting laptop on hand / arm</li><li>▪ Sitting on floor with laptop on a desk or chair</li></ul>
<b>Rest breaks</b>	It is generally recommended that rest breaks are taken for at least 5 minutes for every 30 minutes of Netbook use.
<b>Stretches/ exercises</b>	Regular breaks should be combined with some approved stretches and exercises. Eye exercises and visual rest should be used to assist in preventing eye strain. <i>E.g Look at an object 10 metres away for 20 seconds</i>

**Environment Specific Guide:**

<b>Classroom</b>		
<b>General</b>	Avoid <b>Sustained or Extended</b> usage while adopting awkward postures. Where <b>Extended</b> usage is to be undertaken, a suitable desk and chair setup (as pictured above) should be provided	
<b>Hazards</b>	<b>Ergonomics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where possible, regularly rotate between Netbook, paper and teacher-based activities</li> <li>▪ Where possible, regularly rotate between typing-based and browsing tasks</li> <li>▪ Where Netbook usage exceeds 30 minutes of continual work encourage short rest breaks (5 minutes for every 30 minutes) including stretching and exercises</li> </ul>
	<b>Lighting/ Glare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide sufficient lighting</li> <li>▪ Arrange work areas so that reflections and sun glare do not cause a visual disturbance. Use blinds where available</li> </ul>
	<b>Electrical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that cables are managed appropriately and a sufficient number of power outlets have been provided</li> <li>▪ Ensure that electrical safety tags are current</li> </ul>
	<b>Slips, trips and falls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that cables are not causing a trip hazard. Wall mount or use obtain cable covers where appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Home</b>		
<b>General</b>	Avoid <b>Sustained or Extended</b> usage while adopting awkward postures. Where <b>Extended</b> usage is to be undertaken, a suitable desk and chair setup (as pictured above) should be provided	
<b>Hazards</b>	<b>Ergonomics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where possible, regularly rotate between Netbook and paper-based activities</li> <li>▪ Where possible, regularly rotate between typing-based and browsing tasks</li> <li>▪ Where Netbook usage exceeds 30 minutes of continual work encourage short rest breaks (5 minutes for every 30 minutes) including stretching and exercises</li> </ul>
	<b>Lighting/ Glare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work where lighting is most sufficient, or provide additional lighting.</li> <li>▪ Position work area so that sun glare does not cause a visual disturbance. Use blinds where available</li> </ul>
	<b>Electrical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that cables and power outlets are managed appropriately</li> <li>▪ Make sure that Netbook is turned off when not in use and appropriately stored overnight</li> </ul>
<b>Out-of-class, Free time or Excursion (Includes transit)</b>		
<b>General</b>	Avoid <b>Sustained or Extended</b> use while adopting awkward postures. <b>Extended</b> usage whilst mobile is generally not recommended	
<b>Hazards</b>	<b>Ergonomics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that the Netbook is appropriately stored for carriage</li> <li>▪ Make sure that the designated bag/carry-case is used at all times</li> </ul>
	<b>Electrical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that only permitted power outlets are used</li> </ul>
	<b>Slips, trips and falls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make sure that cables are not causing a trip hazard</li> </ul>