

Sit to Stand Workstations

Why use a Sit to Stand Workstation?

Sit to Stand Workstations provide an opportunity to incorporate positional change into a working environment. They are most commonly used in situations where task rotation away from the computer is not possible, where there is a clinical need (medical diagnosis) requiring regular standing, or as an additional tool for those experiencing discomfort or pain from prolonged sitting. Sit to Stand workstations are not the 'sole solution' to any of the above concerns.

If a Sit to Stand Workstation is in place, it should be used to complement other strategies for increasing movement, outlined in WHS-PRO-GUI-007f Activity Based Work Guideline.



Standing Hot Desk:

If several staff have expressed an interest in Sit to Stand Workstations, it may be helpful to consider the provision of a 'Standing Hot-Desk' which can be used by multiple people for short periods of time throughout the day.

Staff using the Standing Hot Desk are recommended to have read this guideline, in conjunction with the WHS-PRO-GUI-007c Standing Workstation Set Up Guideline, and are expected to understand how to safely use the apparatus. Each staff member using the hot desk will need to reposition the monitor, mouse and keyboard to meet their individual needs.

Personal Request for Sit to Stand Workstation:

In circumstances where an employee requests a Sit to Stand Workstation on the basis of a personal (non-work related) injury, JCU requests that clinical reasoning be provided by a treating practitioner (eg. General Practitioner) prior to approving the purchase. Information that is required to support a clinical need includes:

- What is the clinical reasoning for the sit to stand desk, specific to the employee's musculoskeletal diagnosis;
- What additional recommendations and strategies are in place to promote self-management of the diagnosed condition?
- Doctors name and practice stamp.

The employee is to submit the clinical reasoning to the Injury Prevention & Management Advisor at rehab@jcu.edu.au who will review the information and provide an update to the employee and their line manager. Please note, like other ergonomic equipment, the purchase of Sit to Stand Workstations are to be organised and paid for by the employee's line manager and sourced through JCU's preferred providers.

If an employee requests a Sit to Stand Workstation due to discomfort from prolonged sitting. It is recommended that the employee first complete the WHS-PRO-CHK-007a Ergonomic Workstation Self-Assessment and look to implement strategies from the WHS-PRO-GUI-007f Activity Based Work Guideline, as an attempt to remedy the situation.

Note

When used correctly, a Sit to Stand Workstation can be an effective tool to enable more frequent postural change throughout the work day. However, it does not replace the need for regular movement. The human body is designed to move, not stay still, whether that be sitting or standing. The WHS-PRO-GUI-007f Activity Based Work Guideline helps to provide more information on this area.

Sit to Stand Workstation Information Guideline



WHS-PRO-GUI-007d

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Hazards and Controls

Use of a Sit to Stand Workstation brings with it a number of hazards that should be considered, and the necessary control measures implemented. Should an employee feel at risk when using a Sit to Stand Workstation they should immediately cease and advise their manager.

| Hazard | Control Measure |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Poor standing posture leading to increased musculoskeletal discomfort. | The employee is responsible for being aware of their posture and should endeavour to stand tall with shoulders back, chest lifted, and weight evenly distributed between both lower limbs. |
| Prolonged standing position leading to increased musculoskeletal discomfort, lower limb oedema and varicose veins. | The employee is responsible for regularly alternating between sitting and standing every hour e.g. stand 15 minutes / sit 45 minutes, slowly increasing their tolerance to standing. |
| Discomfort or injury associated with prolonged standing in unsupportive footwear or high heels. | The employee is responsible for choosing an appropriate style of footwear, flat or low heeled. |
| Body stressing associated with manual lifting / lowering mechanism of some workstations. | The employee is to adopt optimal body positioning whilst transferring the Sit to Stand Workstation between various working heights or use an electronically programed adjustable height workstation. |
| Visual / Audible distraction and lack of privacy for other employees seated near a Standing Workstation in an open plan office. | The manager is to consider best placement for the Sit to Stand Workstation to minimise disruption and maximise privacy for all employees. |
| Storage of anti-fatigue mat causing a trip or manual handling hazard. | Anti-fatigue mats are not always necessary, particularly on carpeted floors. If an anti-fatigue mat is in use it is only needed while standing. The employee is to ensure a safe and accessible storage location when mat is not in use. |
| Placement of chair when not in use causing a trip hazard. | Ensure adequate space for positioning of chair when not in use to avoid creating a trip hazard to all staff. Chair positioning should not impede on users working area or thoroughfares. |
| Risk of collision/crushing/pinching of people or items due to desk movement. Including damage to monitors due to hitting shelves / other structures over desk height. | Purchase of equipment that incorporates anti-collision and anti-pinch technology. Care taken with placement of monitors to avoid contact with shelving or other structures above desk height. Cord management system required to prevent entrapment. Keep fingers and other items clear of moving parts. |

Tips for Optimal Standing Posture:

- Imagine a string attached to the top of your head, pulling you upwards just enough to stretch you taller.
- Stand with your weight evenly distributed between your heel and the balls of your feet (imagine a triangle on the sole of your foot).
- Your feet should be about shoulder width, and pointing slightly outward.
- Avoid locking your knees straight, keep a slight bend to maintain muscle activation.
- Very gently draw your abdominal muscles in and don't let your pelvis roll forward.
- Keep your chest lifted and shoulders back, don't let them slump forward.
- Relax your arms and let them hang naturally down the sides of your body.
- Hold your head up straight with your chin tucked in. Don't hold prolonged postures with your head tilted either forward, backward or sideways. Look straight ahead.
- If standing for a long period of time, shift weight from one foot to the other, or rock from heels to toes.

Internal Resources

WHS-PRO-CHK-007a Ergonomic Workstation Self-Assessment
WHS-PRO-GUI-007c Standing Workstation Set Up Guideline
WHS-PRO-GUI-007e Ergonomic Equipment Purchasing Guideline
WHS-PRO-GUI-007f Activity Based Work Guideline

External Resources

[Worksafe Queensland / Worksafe Queensland: Setting up your workstation](#)

Sit to Stand Workstation Considerations and Comparison

| Considerations | Whole Desk | Desktop Apparatus |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Example |  |  |
| Ease of Use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most models are now electric and controlled via buttons. Some manual models may still exist which involve a winding mechanism; • Electric controls reduce the need for manual handling and are easier for those with musculoskeletal injuries to use; • Some electric whole desk options include programmable height settings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some electrical models exist. Many are manual requiring the user to lift and lower the desktop apparatus; • Manual versions increase the risk of injury/aggravation for anyone who may be experiencing pain or discomfort in the back, neck, shoulders, wrists/hands; • Stability can vary between models; • Maximum weight limit in place is specific to brand and model. |
| Suitability for Work Tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best suited for those who work with paper, computer and phone based tasks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best suited for computer based tasks only; • Often have insufficient space for additional items (books/paperwork/ phone etc). |
| Working Posture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal working posture able to be achieved in both sitting and standing positions, provided the desk raises to the correct standing height i.e. just below elbow level; • Measure elbow height of user against height adjustments of desk before purchase; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keyboard platform plus original desk thickness can make for insufficient clearance under desk for legs; • Taller workers may not be able to reach optimal working postures. Measure elbow height of user against the height adjustments of the apparatus, specifically the keyboard platform; • Space restrictions due to keyboard platform; • Does not allow for resting of forearms. |
| Price / Installation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expensive >\$1000 with price increasing with desk size; • May require a trained installer; • Requires electricity to operate and appropriate cord management; • To be purchased from a JCU preferred supplier. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less expensive, often \$500-\$900 depending on size of apparatus; • Usually comes with minimal installation requirements; • To be purchased from a JCU preferred supplier. |

Recommendation:

- Electric: JCU WHS Unit does not support the provision of a manual Sit to Stand apparatus
- Programmable height settings
- Anti-collision and anti-pinch mechanisms
- To be purchased through a JCU preferred provider