

## Health & Safety advice

Sitting at a computer for long periods is not good for your body. It can cause problems such as joint pain, eye strain and a painful, irreversible condition called repetitive strain injury (RSI).

You can reduce the risk of this happening by following the advice on this page.

### Take a break

- Plan your work so that you have mini-breaks of 5 minutes away from the computer every hour. You can be doing something productive during this time, such as looking for books on your reading list, renewing your library books, or refilling your water bottle.
- It's better to take short, frequent breaks than occasional, longer breaks
- Do some simple stretches while you are sitting at the computer – you can find lots of examples by doing a simple web search, or you could try the stretches at <http://www.backcare.org.uk/CMS/files/703-exercises-for-office-workers.pdf>

### Posture

Bad posture – sitting hunched or slumped at the computer – can cause pain in your back, neck and other joints.

You can avoid these problems by sitting correctly while you are working:

- Your lower back should be supported
- Your knees should be level with your hips
- Your feet should be flat on the floor
- Your eye level should be level with or just above the top of the screen – all our PC monitors are fully adjustable
- As a rough guide, your forearm should be at a right angle to your upper arm, and your wrist should be in a straight line with your forearm.



## **Lighting**

The Open Access Centres have good natural and artificial lighting. There are blinds to prevent glare from the sunlight – please ask a member of staff if you need help to adjust them.

You can also adjust the brightness and contrast controls to suit the lighting in the room – again, please ask one of the Open Access team if you need help with this.

## **Heating**

Our open access centres have air conditioning. However if the temperature is too hot or too cold for you to work in comfort, please let one of the Open Access team know and we will pass this information on to our Facilities Department.