ERGONOMICS

ERGONOMICS in the home study environment is mainly about making sure that the space where you work and the equipment you are using work well for you and your body’s needs.

It is about making sure that the environment is safe, comfortable, easy to use and helps you work to the best of your ability with the minimum amount of stress or discomfort.
• Can you adjust the height of your chair from the ground? YES NO

• Do your feet sit flat on the floor (or on a footrest) when you are sitting in your chair? YES NO

• Can you adjust the back support on your chair? YES NO

• Does the back rest sit comfortably in the small of your back (called lumbar support)? YES NO

• Is your seat back angle at 90-120 degrees? YES NO

• Do your legs make a 90 degree angle with the floor? YES NO

• Do your forearms sit comfortably on the desk? YES NO

• Does your chair have adjustable armrests? YES NO

• Is the top of your monitor around 5cm above eye level? YES NO

• Do you make sure there is no glare on the screen? YES NO

• Do you sit at arms length from the monitor (your face will be about half a metre from the screen)? YES NO

• If doing a lot of typing from papers etc, do you have a document holder in line with the screen? YES NO

• Are your arms and elbows relaxed (ie not tensed up) and held close to your body? YES NO

• Are the monitor and keyboards centered in front of you (ie not off to the side)? YES NO

• Is your keyboard stable (ie not tipping or moving when you type)? YES NO

• Is your keyboard angled so your wrists are flat and straight? YES NO

• Do you take frequent short micro-breaks? YES NO

• Are your knees making a 90 degree angle and are perpendicular to the floor? YES NO

Out in the workplace, ergonomics is an important aspect of occupational health and safety. It has to do mainly with safety of employees – both in the short-term and to prevent long-term health problems. This of course is a moral duty for the organisation, but it will help to keep down the company’s costs with less employees being absent from work due to injury or the cost of worker’s compensation claims. Here’s a useful website: http://www.ergonomics.com.au

RELATIVE/REACTIVE ERGONOMICS: At home, you probably have engaged in ‘relative/reactive ergonomics’. This is where you realise something needs to be fixed so you take action to do something about it.

PROACTIVE ERGONOMICS: What we are doing in this unit is ‘proactive ergonomics’. This is where you go looking for what could be improved so you can fix things before they become a big problem. You might change lots of different things.