UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER GUIDANCE FOR WORKING REMOTELY FROM HOME

During the 2019/20 Academic Year, HR, Information Assurance Services, and IT have been developing guidance for staff working from home.

This guidance had been drafted initially with business as usual in mind. However, with the developing COVID-19 Pandemic and the University's continued commitment to the safety of its staff and students, whilst effectively meeting the public health challenge presented, we are extending the remote working provision. This is to ensure that University members of staff can work remotely from home whenever necessary in the coming weeks.

Remote or Home Working arrangements are not new, but because they may be unfamiliar to some staff and managers, this generic resource will help you and your team navigate potential scenarios.

In this guidance document, you will find guidance for manager, supervisors, members of staff, and teams designed to help set up temporary remote working arrangements quickly and successfully.

Home working is easiest to implement for jobs or tasks that require desk based activities such as reading, writing, research, working with data and managing phone queries. . In general, and at management's discretion, a role is suited to working if the job or some components of it can be done off-site without disruption to the flow of work and communication. Some jobs may need to be modified to operate remote working arrangements in these unique circumstances.

Additional documents to support this guidance include:

1) Top Tips for working remotely from home handout

2) Ergonomic Workstation Assessment tool

3) Practical Guidance for working from home due to COVID 19

FAQ's can also be found on the COVID 19 webpages

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER – GUIDANCE FOR WORKING REMOTELY FROM HOME

1. Introduction

1.1 With the advance of office technology, it has become possible to perform certain kinds of work at home rather than in the office. This guidance covers the issues that need to be considered for both the member of staff and manager and the action that should be taken if it is agreed that a member of staff may work at home.

1.2 It is recognised that some members of staff already work occasionally from home e.g. preparing material, assessing work, carrying out research etc. The objective of this guidance document is not to undermine existing work practices or impose unnecessary restrictions. Rather, the objectives are to:-
   • ensure the health and safety of all members of staff
   • to support the new government advice to work from home where possible due the COVID 19 pandemic
   • to provide members of staff with the opportunity to work from home where this is possible (dependent on role, equipment etc.)
   • to ensure that members of staff are aware of their obligations in relation to information security, data protection, freedom of information and records management.

1.3 When considering working remotely from home the needs of our business will always take priority and those who are allowed to work from home must comply with this guidance.

1.4 Remote working should not usually be used to accommodate caring responsibilities however in this evolving situation, this is now a reality that will not always be able to be avoided and increased flexibility will be required. However where caring for dependents is necessary and disrupts the ability to work from home other forms of leave e.g. Special Leave will need to explored with an individual.

1.5 Principles of working from home:

   a. The arrangements for home working should be agreed between the manager and the member of staff following discussions.
   b. It is not intended to create a situation where staff feel obliged to work excessive hours.
   c. It will not be possible for all staff to perform their full role from home, however some tasks / duties may allow this arrangement to be put in place and the change in expectations of the individual member of staff will need to be agreed.
   d. It will not attract subsidy and costs of working from home will be in accordance with section 5.24 of the Universities Finance Regulations.

1.6 Advantages and Disadvantages of home working

Advantages of Home Working	
For the Member of staff	**For the Manager**
Increased responsibility in that the member of staff can manage their own time across the day with increased flexibility to respond to ever changing circumstances	Retention of valued and skilled members of staff
More flexibility to arrange working hours to suit domestic commitments alongside service delivery	Ability to ensure critical services are still able to be delivered and staff are able to remain "at work" during the pandemic
A saving on travelling time and costs	Maintaining productivity for those able to work
Reducing the risk to staff safety	Assisting in protecting the health and safety of the workforce

Disadvantages of Home Working
The disadvantages also need to be considered and overcome, namely
Increased demands on members of staff covering work on campus, whilst others work at home
Lack of management/supervision of work undertaken at home
Availability of key personnel at the workplace
There may be issues relating to maintaining confidentiality and data protection.
Social isolation- loss of contact with the University and difficulties with keeping up-to-date
Not suitable for all roles

Some solutions and considerations to these potential disadvantages are covered in the following sections

2. Types of Home working

2.1 Definitions: Home workers typically fall into two categories:

- **Occasional Home Workers:** Member of staffs, who spend the majority of their time in the office but, with their Manager's prior agreement, are allowed to work at home occasionally or for the set periods of time due to government advice.

- **Regular Home Workers:** Members of staff who have a formal arrangement to routinely work at home

For the avoidance of doubt short and medium term arrangements to work from home due to the COVID 19 pandemic would fall under the definition of occasional home working at this stage however this will be kept under regular review.

2.2 Occasional Home Workers

Work, such as writing reports, preparation of lectures, marking assessments, preparing papers and projects may be carried out from home, (not an exhaustive list).

A manager should ensure, before agreeing that a member of staff can work from home, that the practicalities of the arrangement have been discussed and that the advantages are weighed against the disadvantages. For example, where members of the same team will all be working from home, arrangements need to be in place for regular communication, to ensure that members of the team do not feel isolated and messages can be passed on and disseminated easily.

When a member of staff works at home, contact details such as email and/or telephone must be in place and kept up to date to ensure that the individual can be contacted at home during their agreed working hours.

2.3 Regular Home Workers

This applies to members of staff who work at home regularly having made a flexible working request, in line with the University's Flexible Working Policy, for all or part of their contracted hours.

Regular home working may be appropriate for certain roles in one or more of the following circumstances:

- o Where the member of staff's presence is required on campus but not all the time
- o To cut down on the amount of time spent commuting and/or relocation
- o To maximise limited physical space on university premises

As stated it is not envisaged that the move to more staff working from home in this interim period will result in new regular home working arrangements, however staff who already have these in place will need to review their arrangement in light of the current advice to ensure the arrangement is still fit for purpose in the short term.

The line manager can request that members of staff attend their normal place of work on any normal working day e.g. to attend meetings, cover sickness, respond to a need to provide critical services however this will be done in discussion to ensure the health and safety of staff is not compromised.

2.4   Process for Considering implementing Home Working

The following points should be considered when assessing if an individual case for home working, in response to the COVID 19 pandemic, can be supported.

2.4.1 The Individual

Managers need to consider the following when reviewing home working arrangements:-

Does the individual have either an underlying health condition, are pregnant or over 70 years old? If so, they are the highest priority for homeworking.

Does the individual work in a designated essential service and has their work been identified as essential in that service? If so they are a priority for homeworking if all, or a substantial proportion, of their work is suitable for homeworking.

Individuals in these categories who are willing and can be supported to work at home should complete the Universities Home worker Health & Safety questionnaire (Appendix 1.) to assess if their home is a suitable working environment. Where concerns arise these need to be discussed so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place and/or adjustments made to the tasks being asked to be completed.

Members of staff working at home should ensure that that their Outlook calendars and email signature show they are working at home and appropriate means of contact such as email, Microsoft Teams, Skype for Business and/or telephone must be in place and kept up to date to ensure that individuals can be contacted at home during their normal / agreed working hours.

Managers should:

- Agree the working pattern with the individuals at the outset so that contact is limited, where possible, to a member of staffs working hours and that these are reviewed on a regular basis e.g. weekly and in line with up to date Government advice.
- Assist members of staff with being able to set their own agenda of work whilst ensuring the needs of the service are considered
- Ensure measures are in place so there is regular contact and utilise methods to encourage team interaction so that members of staff do not feel isolated away from work colleagues
- Ensure any training required is accessed e.g. IT user guides

2.4.2 Nature of the role

- The work tasks should be assessed to see if they can conveniently be carried out and managed at a home

- The advantages to the manager and member of staff should outweigh the disadvantages
- The member of staff's objectives should be clearly stated in terms of the quality and quantity expected for the period of working from home.

Home working should ideally not commence until agreement has been sort and confirmed however in this ever changing time the University accepts that this will not always be possible.

2.4.3 Place of work

- Should be adequate in terms of space, lighting and able to take the equipment required.
- Should be conducive to work
- If leased, the terms of the lease should allow the member of staff to work at home

2.4.4 Action required to implement a Working from Home arrangement

A manager's checklist is included in Appendix 2 to ensure that the appropriate considerations are given to each arrangement. In addition, a separate handout with top tips is available on the university website.

2.4.5 Practical considerations

- Good communication is an essential part of any successful homeworking arrangement. Provision must be made to allow for effective communication between the home worker and their line manager e.g. using means such as Skype for Business, work email and/or Microsoft Teams.
- Develop methods of keeping the home worker in touch with the organisation and colleagues (particularly where whole teams are home working) so that they avoid isolation and maintain reporting arrangements
- Consider special training required, e.g. health and safety, using different IT packages, maintenance of equipment.
- Members of staff working at home need to inform their manager if they are sick or unable to work in accordance with the appropriate reporting procedures. If a members of staff situation changes due to the following advice in relation to COVID 19 the link to reporting can be found here. For any other absence it should be reported in line with the Maximising Attendance Policy and Procedure.
- Keep checking the IT Service homepage or IT Services Yammer group for up to date information to support working from home.
- If you have a University staff laptop you must ensure you take it and your power lead home each evening, so you are ready to work at home if necessary.
- University Remote Access (VPN) is available on Windows 10 staff laptops (you should request access to University Remote Access (VPN) if you don't have it already). Connect to VPN on your laptop when off-campus, to access files and programs as though you were on campus.
- Ensure you install any program you will need from the Software Center. You can install programs using VPN, but it may be much slower to install than when on campus.
- You can access essential University services without a University staff laptop. See the Remote Access page for useful links.
- You can access your University email from any modern web browser. Go to webmail.le.ac.uk. Enter your full University email address (username@leicester.ac.uk)

- All of Office 365, including online versions of Word, Excel and PowerPoint can be accessed from office365.le.ac.uk
- **Blackboard** – Access University's VLE from blackboard.le.ac.uk
- Personal Z: drive is available through MyFiles. You can store files using OneDrive or using a Team Collaboration Space.
- If you need to, you can forward calls from your University desk phone to another number.
- If you have been provided with a University mobile phone, you must include your University mobile phone number in your email signature, so that people can call you on your mobile.
- You can hold online meetings in Microsoft Teams App. Your University Staff Laptop has a built-in microphone and speaker or alternatively you may be able to use your own headset or earphones (with microphone) which you acquired with a mobile phone.
- You can also install the Teams app on your mobile phone. This will allow you to join meetings in the same way.
- Use your University calendar to arrange meetings, lunch or other times when you are not available.
- Authorised users will be given access to use University remote desktop to access University files (e.g. Shared Departmental X: drive) and systems (e.g. SITS and SAP). This will enable them to work away from campus if they do not have a University laptop with VPN enabled.
- It is University policy that staff **should not take equipment home** except for University staff laptops and mobile phones. This is to satisfy the University insurance arrangements, however there may be some flexibility in these circumstances that needs to be agreed on a local basis.

3. Additional Considerations

3.1 Health and Safety

The university is committed to ensuring you work safely whilst working from home.

Under normal circumstances, we would look to support people required to work from home, to ensure their home workspaces imitate those in place at the University (and thereby complying with the relevant legislative requirements. The situation we find ourselves in means that we may need to mobilise the "work from home" scenario to a large number of staff, very quickly. So we need to achieve a balance between enabling this to happen but at the same time taking common sense steps to ensure you are working safely.

We have produced a standalone practical guidance document and the safety questionnaire/assessment form in appendix 1.

University guidance on lone working as well as the "Working alone" leaflet on the Health and Safety Executive website, which can be found here provide some useful advice.
It is not envisaged that home workers will use their home address as a venue for meetings, where meetings need to take place these should be completed virtually or where absolutely necessary by booking venues on university premises, giving consideration to ensure the environment is appropriate for the subject matter.

The university is keen to ensure that members of staff working at home do not see an adverse impact on their work-life balance.

3.2   Equipment and Technology

The University will not normally provide the member of staff with additional IT equipment except those agreed as necessary to work from home and as part of the home working arrangement e.g. laptop. This will be in accordance with 5.24 of the Universities Financial Regulations and additional phone lines, broadband connectivity, printers or furniture to work from home would not be included and will be the responsibility of the home worker. In cases of reasonable adjustments, this will be looked at on a case by case basis.

The member of staff is responsible for ensuring that they have suitable telephone and broadband services where required, and contacting their service provider in the event of any technical difficulties as the University's IT Service team are unable to provide IT support to equipment owned by the member of staff.

The home worker is responsible at all times for the security of university equipment and must make all reasonable efforts to protect equipment from loss or accidental damage.
The line manager or other university officers may require access to a homeworker's equipment during his/her normal working hours. Urgent access may be required for security and audit purposes.

Non-urgent access, for which at least 24 hours' notice will normally be given, may be required for:

- maintenance or replacement of equipment and supplies
- assessing and monitoring security arrangements for equipment
- health and safety assessments

3.3   Information Security / Data Protection

When working from home you are bound by an obligation of confidentiality. To discharge this responsibility, you need to comply with the University's Information Security Polices, the provisions of the new Data Protection Legislation and any third party contractual obligations e.g. External Funder.

To comply you will need to:

- Have completed the University's Mandatory training (currently this is '*Data Protection, Information Security and You*') and refresh your training every 12 months.
- Familiarise yourself with the University's [Data Classification Model](#) and know how the data you will need to transport /access/process is classified and how this should be protected and stored securely. See below for more guidance on what is appropriate.
- Know how the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 applies to the data you will process at home - will you need to process third party *personal* and *special category data*?

- Identify whether the data you will process is subject to any contractual obligations owed to third parties for e.g. Funder or those of other data controllers which specify security measures or prohibit remote access.
- Agree with your manager what technical, procedural and security arrangements are appropriate and which you will need to follow to ensure that you transport data securely when you are in transit from office to home and that your processing of data is conducted in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal or confidential data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage. Advice should be sought from ITS and IAS as appropriate.
- Only access the data you need to carry out your work particularly if this data requires greater security e.g. *highly restricted* or *special category data*
- Know how to identify and report a data breach as soon as you suspect it by calling 0116 2525800
- Ensure that your department has a record of both the mobile devices equipment and any paper files you are taking out of the office with you. A central log on the departmental 'X' Drive is useful.

Security arrangements need to be appropriate to the risks presented by your processing

What is appropriate?
- **University Assured devices with a VPN connection** issued to you must be used as this provides the most secure access to emails and access to and storage of files on the Z, X and R drives and One Drive. In addition, this provides secure access to other systems which hold confidential information, personal and special category data of staff students and third parties.
- **Any UoL mobile phone** issued to you **must be used**.
- **Remote access to 'R' Drive using WEbDav** (*My files)* where the data held is classified no higher than *Unrestricted* provided you are not subject to any obligation to provide a higher level of security for the data.

What may be appropriate?
- Access to Emails via Outlook Web (Webmail) from a non-assured private device *provided*
  - That you are using a secure Wi-Fi and Internet browser
  - that your account login and password are not shared with anyone else.
  - you ensure that others in your home cannot gain access to your email account.

What is not appropriate and is prohibited:
- Using open/non-secure Wi-Fi or internet services.
- Forwarding business emails to your private email account.
- Copying or forwarding files to use on your own private devices.
- Using a non-university assured device to access data which is classified as *Restricted*, *Highly Restricted* or comprises third party *Personal* or *Special Category Data* or would be breach an obligation in respect of the security of that data.
- To print documents that include *Restricted*, *Highly Restricted* or comprises third party *Personal* or *Special Category Data*

Top tips to Minimise risk
1. Keep mobile devices and paper files secure in transit.
2. Don't leave devices or paper files unattended in a car (even one parked outside your home).
3. Only take and access data that is essential for the work you need to do.
4. Avoid working next to a window where the screen can be overlooked.
5. Don't leave paper files unattended where they could be viewed by others

Additional Information Security Considerations

The Information Security Policies apply to all of the Information Assets which are owned by the University, used by the University for business purposes or which are connected to any networks managed by the University; to all information which the University processes, irrespective of ownership or form; to all members of the University and any others who may process information on behalf of the University.

Information must be protected in line with all relevant legislation and University policies, notably those relating to data protection, human rights and freedom of information. Each information asset will have a nominated owner who will be assigned responsibility for defining the appropriate uses of the asset and ensuring that appropriate security measures are in place to protect the asset.
Information will be made available solely to those who have a legitimate need for access. All information will be classified according to an appropriate level of security. The integrity of information must l be maintained. All individuals who have been granted access to information are responsible for handling it appropriately in accordance with its classification. Information must be protected against unauthorised access.

Staff can get advice from IT services on accessing services remotely and appropriate use of devices by contacting the helpdesk or using the resources at the following link here

3.4   Insurance

Individuals working from home are responsible for assessing the personal implications of home working in respect of taxation, insurance and any leasing arrangements.
The University holds liability insurances that provide cover for legal liabilities of the University and its members of staff whenever they are engaged in University business. This cover applies irrespective of where the activity is taking place.

3.5   Cost / Expenses

At this time the University will not be making a separate financial contribution to those working from home for normal household expenses such as heating, lighting, or Council Tax costs. The rationale for this is:

- the requirement to work from home is being advised by the UK Government
- by allowing the maximum number of staff to work from home the university should be able to provide a flexible response for staff to cater to the ever-changing situation

- any saving in travel to work would assist in mitigating the additional cost
- Special Leave provisions and Sick Pay provisions have been amended to ensure staff are not at a detriment for following Government advice.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

Appendix 1

University of Leicester Home Worker Health and Safety Inspection Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to support members of staff working from home identify potential risks that they can discuss with their line manager. The following questions give a good indication of the areas that should be covered. Note this list however is not exhaustive and there may be additional risks that are unique to the home worker.

Personal Details

Name:	
Address where work will be undertaken remotely:	
Telephone No:	
Job Title:	
School / Division / Department:	
Line Manager:	
Email address:	

Please include a brief description of the home work task(s) that will be undertaken, the data classifications that this would encompass and any work equipment that will be used:

Questions	Yes/No	Management Action required?	Done
1 Workspace and storage			
Is there enough space for the employee to work comfortably?			
Does the work area provide enough privacy and freedom from disturbances?			
2 Workstation and equipment. For home use, does the employee have:			

A desktop PC		A Laptop		Other (please specify		

Questions	Yes/No	Management Action required?	Done
Does the employee have a desk with a sufficiently large surface to accommodate their equipment and any documents they need to refer to?			
Does the employee have an office chair that is height adjustable, has a 5 spoke base with casters and a robust seat back?			
Does the employee need additional equipment e.g. monitor, keyboard, mouse or docking station? (These will be needed if a laptop is regularly used for long periods without breaks)			
Does the employee require any specialist equipment (e.g. alternate mice or other form of input device)			
Is the employee over-reliant on handheld devices or smartphones for written communication?			
Are there any other concerns? (Please specify)			
3 Miscellaneous			
Are there any concerns about managing working hours, workload or work–life balance?			
Is the employee aware of arrangements and requirements for communication and reporting to the office base?			
Is the employee aware of how to get help on using computers or other equipment?			
Are there any security (including data security) concerns?			

Feedback Checklist	Yes/No	Management Action required?	Done
Have you read and understood the university's guidance relating to remote working?			
Are you happy with the arrangements for communicating with your manager or other team members			
Do you take regular breaks from computer work (i.e. a short break each hour)?			
Do you know how to report work-related accidents or ill health?			
Do you know how to report health and safety concerns?			
Please detail any health and safety concerns you would like to raise now.			

I confirm that the information contained in this assessment is accurate.

I confirm that I have read and understood my responsibilities in regards to Information Assurance and that this new arrangement will not impact on my ability to continue to adhere to the relevant policies as listed below:-

List of relevant policies with links

Home Worker Signature:-

Date:-

To be completed by the line manager:-

I have checked the responses to this questionnaire and identified actions with the member of staff to address any arising issues, where necessary.

Line Manager Signature:-

Date:-

Member of staff and line manager to retain a signed copy each.

Appendix 2 – Managers Checklist when implementing Home Working

Managers can work through this checklist to ensure that the practical considerations are given due attention:-

1) Is the member of staff working in an essential service?

If yes priority should be given to support home working.

2) Does the member of staff have an underlying health condition, currently pregnant or aged over 70 years old?

These individuals are considered at more risk from COVID 19 and therefore please ensure you check the latest advice and implement arrangements to support them

3) Does the member of staff have a Laptop?

If not do they have the facilities to be able to work from home and what tasks will they be asked to complete

4) Does the member of staff need authorisation for the remote working desktop facility?

5) Have you discussed the self-assessment of work environment with the staff member to address any potential risks?

At present we need an enabling approach for a short initial period but will need reviewing after 2 weeks of homeworking to ensure appropriate measures are in place for a longer-term arrangement

6) Has the individual completed their data protection and DSE training through blackboard?

You need to ensure as manger you understand the risks and support staff in managing them whilst they are working from home

7) Have you given consideration to how you will support the member of staff with homeworking and how you will maintain regular communications?

8) Does the individual have the skills/training needs in relation to remote working and/or virtual collaboration/meetings?

Also need to assess if you as a manager have these skills / competencies so that you can support