



University  
of Exeter

## **Remote working guidance**

### **Introduction**

This guidance should be read alongside the Remote working policy and is specifically aimed at those staff who are working with a formal remote contract of employment within the UK.

### **Scope and Eligibility**

Staff within scope of this guidance have been designated as remote workers based on the level of activity within their role. The type of working pattern is dependent on service needs, role, flexibility requirements, and the suitability of the individual's home working environment.

It is important to note that the primary location of work for all remote workers will be based in the United Kingdom.

### **Principles**

Using these flexible working arrangements, we aim to:

- Promote work taking place at the most effective locations, and at the most effective times, in accordance with the needs of our students, service delivery, the member of staff, their team and the wider University community.
- Adopt the use of functional space across university buildings, or remotely, enabling staff to work in an environment conducive to staff and the task they are completing, both individually, and as part of a team.
- Develop a culture of trust focused on measuring productivity, by our results and outcomes, rather than our physical presence.
- Meet the accessibility needs of all staff, regardless of contractual location of work (e.g., on campus, remote or hybrid). These needs will be taken into consideration with regards to the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure staff can thrive in their working environment.
- Make the University an employer of choice, by utilising technology to deliver high quality, flexible working environments.
- Improve ways of achieving objectives, whilst being aware of and promoting staff positive mental and physical wellbeing and respecting their diverse needs and requirements.
- Ensure that all staff are safe, supported and connected regardless of their working pattern or work location.
- Reduce the University's impact on the environment by condensing its physical footprint, and increasing its environmental sustainability, by digitising paper-based activity, and reducing unnecessary commuting.
- Create opportunities for our community to come together in ways it may not have been able to previously, through integrated and collaborative partnerships across disciplines and functional areas.

## Responsibilities

**Everyone** should be honest and open about remote working arrangements and share responsibility for making them work.

**Leadership teams of Faculties and Services** are responsible for reading the relevant guidance and making decisions about remote working based on the principles above.

**Managers** are responsible for thinking about how remote working in their team may help them to achieve their business objectives and manage space effectively. Requests to work remotely must be managed in line with the principles above and associated guidance; managers should encourage and support requests that have a positive or neutral impact on the University. However, if an individual's home working environment may be harmful to an individual or adjustments cannot be made within the home working environment to ensure a safe working environment, then managers are responsible for having discussions with individuals and changing their working location to hybrid or on-campus.

**Staff** who are remote working are responsible for reading the relevant guidance and for considering and discussing the impact on their colleagues, the service they provide and how any issues may be overcome. Individuals who accept a remote contract are expected to ensure that they have a safe and suitable environment in which to work. This includes:

- being able to comply with DSE requirements as set out on the University [Homeworking information and Guidance Sharepoint](#)
- being able to comply with any reasonable adjustments the University has approved
- being able to comply with wider health and safety at work act requirements

**Human Resources** is responsible for keeping the policy and guidance up to date, providing advice to managers and staff, recording and confirming arrangements as well as monitoring the overall uptake of remote working at the University.

## Remote working - key areas

### Working Hours and Keeping in Touch

- Remote working offers flexibility of when and where to work. Whilst working at home, you should be contactable during your agreed working hours. You should agree with your line manager the appropriate method of communication (e.g., telephone, email, Teams). We trust you to manage your own time and make sure you do the hours you are contracted to do.
- Remote working should not result in extra work for other members of the team or compromise the objectives of your team.

### Equipment and Environment

- Remote workers are covered by the University's insurance policy for employers' liability and personal accident in the same way as campus-based employees.
- Employees that work at home using a computer should refer to the [Workstation General Guidance](#) and the [Homeworking Guidance](#), make as many adjustments as possible and then complete a [DSE Self-Assessment](#) of their home workstation.

- You will be provided with the appropriate IT equipment and technology (including hardware and software) to effectively complete your work. Please see the IT equipment standards of [recommended IT equipment for colleagues](#). Remote employees are to use this equipment for business purposes only and are expected to take appropriate steps to keep this equipment safe.
- You are expected to have a suitable and safe working environment that is compliant with [DSE regulations](#). Exceptionally furniture may be provided by the University to enable remote working.
- Where staff are contractually required to work from home as part of their employment agreement, the University will provide appropriate equipment where it is satisfied that adjustments are needed to meet its duties under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations and/or Equality Act. Any equipment supplied by the University will remain the property of the University and must be returned when your employment or remote working arrangement comes to an end.
- Should you require additional equipment over and above [reasonable adjustments](#) that the University will support you with, then you may be eligible for additional support through [Access to Work](#) if you have a physical or mental health condition or disability.
- Where the provision of furniture (i.e. desk/chair) is recommended by the Occupational Health team, provision should be considered in the following priority order:
  - Repurposing furniture from campus from within the Directorate's work areas.
  - Alternatively, the desk and/or chair should be ordered through the University's approved supplier where lead times from order date to delivery is usually 4-6 weeks.
- It is not permissible for the employee to purchase their own furniture and recharge the cost to the University even if the cost is less than that of the University's approved supplier.
- Where applicable, arrangements will be made for specialist IT equipment (e.g. mouse, keyboard) required to meet DSE requirements to be delivered to the employee's home address. Ideally, this should be ready for the employee's first day of employment with their standard IT equipment. This can be requested via [IT Services](#). Any equipment supplied by the University will remain the property of the University and must be returned when your employment or remote working arrangement comes to an end.
- Employees who live in radon affected areas are strongly encouraged to undertake home radon testing. The University will not cover any costs associated with this testing. For more information, please see the [HSE guidance](#).
- Employees are responsible for having a safe working environment while working at home, this will include safety areas such as having appropriate gas safety checks, reducing the impacts of slips, trip and falls, having safe electrics (regular visual checks), working smoke alarms etc. Additional information on these requirements can be found at on the [Health and Safety Hub](#)
- You should advise your landlord or mortgage provider and your buildings and contents insurer that your employment is based entirely at your home. Although this does not usually result in a change in costs, the University will not be responsible for any additional costs incurred as a result.

#### Health and Safety for Remote Workers

- As part of the onboarding process, it is important that you discuss your homeworking environment with your manager so that they can be assured that you are safe and effectively supported while working from home. This will also provide you with the opportunity to raise any concerns and/or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed to facilitate homeworking.
- When you are setting up your homeworking arrangements, please ensure you have read the [Display Screen Equipment Guidance](#). The guidance will take you through a workstation self assessment to help you make sure that your place of work is safe, supportive, free from risk and that any access to confidential information or data is treated with care.

- Workplace health and safety law applies whilst working from home and the University has the same legal duty to protect your health, safety and welfare as if you were office based full time. For more information see the “Working from home safely and effectively” section of the University’s [homeworking webpages](#).
- You must ensure that you have a secure, private and appropriately lit and heated space to work in, with a reliable and secure internet connection. You must have sufficient space to accommodate a workstation that meets [DSE guidance](#).
- If you need any reasonable adjustments to be made to your workstation at home, you should contact your manager to discuss your needs.

### Training

- Training and guidance will be available to support both managers and employees develop the skills needed to deliver effective communication, performance management and relationship building in teams that are working both remotely and on campus.

### Your Wellbeing

- Whilst working remotely it is important that you take regular rest breaks; at least 20 consecutive minutes if working for 6 hours or more.
- Where working for long spells at a screen make sure you take regular breaks away from your screen. Our Health and Safety webpages have useful advice on [Micro Breaks & Stretching Exercises](#) and [Eye Care](#).
- We know that collaboration, connection and having a sense of belonging can help you stay well. We encourage you to think about what this means for you and to actively make time to connect with your colleagues.
- If you are ill, then you should inform your manager and follow the [Absence Code of Practice](#).
- The University [Colleague Wellbeing](#) webpages have information on internal and external support services as well as advice and tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing regardless of your work location. If you have concerns, then discussing these with your manager may also be helpful.

### Security

- Staff are responsible for ensuring they adhere to Information and Data Protection legislation and relevant University information security policies, when undertaking their role for the University, regardless of location.

### Costs and Expenses

- You may claim for the cost of any necessary business telephone calls made from your home telephone (unless you are provided with a mobile phone by the University). Claims should be submitted via the Expenses module in T1, supported by copies of itemised statements highlighting business calls. Calls will be reimbursed at the supplier’s standard rate except where calls incur no charge (due to specific rental options, for example).
- Any costs for Wi-Fi, heating, lighting and electricity and commuting costs to your designated place of work will be a personal expense in line with HMRC guidelines.

### **Useful Links**

- [Homeworking Information and Guidance SharePoint](#)
- [Recommended IT equipment for colleagues.](#)
- [HSE guidance on Radon](#)
- [Health and Safety Hub](#)
- [Workstation General Guidance](#)
- [Homeworking Guidance](#)

- [DSE Self-Assessment](#)
- [Display Screen Equipment Guidance](#)
- [Expenses Policy](#)
- [Access to Work](#)