



Regionally Focused – Globally Engaged

Homeworking Policy

October 2021

History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1.1	Dates of policy and review.	D Kerr	January 2015
1.2	No changes	D Kerr	March 2017
1.3	Reference to Hybrid working included	D Kerr	October 2021

Scope

This policy will only apply to staff who are contractually classified as home workers. The Working Off Site policy applies in situations where staff are working from home by agreement with their line manager, or are following a hybrid working model as defined in the Hybrid Working Toolkit.

Introduction

Where it is appropriate and mutually beneficial for the College and the member of staff, a formal contractual arrangement will be put in place for the home to be used as the main base. It is likely that even where the main base is home, there will be times when the member of staff will be required to attend the College. In addition where working hours are flexible, the College will specify times when the member of staff must be contactable.

There will be a six month probationary period to ensure that the new arrangement for home working is satisfactory to both parties. The arrangement will be reviewed on a monthly basis. If it is the College's view that the new arrangement is not satisfactory, the College reserves the right to require the member of staff to revert to previous contractual arrangements.

It is not considered appropriate to combine home based working with dependant care. In addition it is expected that family and friends will be informed of the home working arrangement to ensure minimum disruption.

All College policies, procedures and guidelines will continue to apply including those governing the management and reporting of sickness absence.

Key Principles

Security

The College will provide a computer if appropriate and any other equipment to enable work to be done at home. These items remain the property of the College and must be returned when either the employment or the arrangement to work at home terminates. The member of staff must keep the equipment in good condition and be responsible for its physical security. Compliance is required with the College Information Security Policy. Home workers are expected to ensure the necessary confidentiality and to only use any equipment supplied by the College for College work. This will help to protect against the introduction of viruses on Computer Systems.

Help Desk support will normally only be available during normal working hours (8.45am to 5pm – 4pm Fridays). Problems with hardware will normally need to be resolved in the College i.e. you will normally be required to bring the equipment into College.

Insurance

The member of staff will be covered by the College's employer's liability insurance when working from home. Each individual should, however, advise his/her own insurance company and mortgage lender/landlord of the intention to work at home in case of any additional costs and restrictions. Any potential council tax liability should also be checked.

Health & Safety

Homeworking arrangements are covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This means that the College has the same duty to manage home workers' health, safety and welfare as it does for staff based in College premises. Home workers also have the same duties under the above act as all employees in that they must take reasonable steps to ensure that the place of work at home provides a safe and secure environment without risk of personal injury to themselves or any third party. Establishing the compliance of an individual's home with current health and safety requirements will be a key factor in determining the appropriateness of home working. The individual will therefore be asked to complete a home working questionnaire before permission to work at home is granted (see Appendix III).

Electrical equipment should also be returned to College when requested for PAT testing. Sections in the Health and Safety Policy dealing with Homeworking and Use of Laptops should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Access

Home workers will be expected to provide access to their premises if required to enable the College to review the physical state of the working environment for security or health and safety purposes, to carry out maintenance on property or equipment where necessary, to install new equipment, to recover College property on resignation or dismissal or simply to deliver supplies. The College will normally give a minimum of 48 hours' notice of any such visit which will normally take place during office hours.

Responsibilities

Management Responsibility

- Ordering, delivery and installation where appropriate of necessary equipment
- Establishing communication and reporting procedures together with any arrangement for face to face meetings
- Agreeing individual working arrangements including how to record hours worked
- Establishing a means of monitoring performance and output measures
- Regular reviews and setting of objectives, outputs, project and work plans
- Respecting the agreed working arrangement

Employee Responsibility

- Agreeing working arrangements with line manager
- Being available and contactable at the time agreed with the line manager
- Carrying out health and safety assessments within the home
- Attending the College when required
- Returning the equipment when requested for PAT testing

Procedures

Please read the information contained within the above policy together with Appendix I on criteria for suitability and Appendix II on financial procedure. If you wish to apply for home working you should discuss this in the first instance with your line manager. A letter of formal application should then be sent to the appropriate Senior Manager together with a completed Home working checklist as attached at Appendix III.

Criteria for homeworking application

- Tasks associated with the post should involve a high degree of written as opposed to manual work.
- Tasks should involve working on an individual basis or with clearly defined areas of individual work e.g. project work, research/report writing, administrative tasks
- Tasks should have clearly defined objectives, and not be subject to sudden changes of priorities
- Work should have performance measurement indicators
- Work should not require frequent input from other members of staff and centrally provided facilities
- The introduction of home working will not have an adverse effect on the level and quality of service
- The individual should have access at home to the internet

Personal Qualities of homeworker

- Self motivated
- Self-reliance and discipline to work without direct supervision
- The ability to complete work to scheduled deadlines
- Initiative, flexibility and time management skills
- Ability to cope with reduced social contact and isolation
- Ability to cope with additional pressure of working in the home where the demands of family life can be difficult to ignore

Financial Procedures

Work related expenses incurred by staff contracted to work at home, such as telephone bills, will be reimbursed on a monthly basis. The procedure for this will be the monthly submission of the Travel and Subsistence Claim form, which should clearly indicate the dates and times of home working, the relevant costs incurred and supporting evidence, such as itemised phone bills. Staff should make every effort to ensure that costs are reasonable and minimised wherever possible.

Homeworking Statement of Intent

Before permission is given for any employee to work at home, the following statement must be completed and signed. This is for us to assess the suitability of any proposed home working arrangement against current health and safety regulations.

We rely on your honesty in completing this and retain the right to revoke any home working arrangements given, should any information prove to be inaccurate. Please confirm the following statements.

Home Working Statement

Work Station - I Confirm I have a separate room with sufficient space to accommodate a computer desk, computer, printer and computer chair comfortably. Lighting levels are appropriate for PC use and appropriately positioned to prevent glare.

Y N

Insurance - I will ensure my home insurance is amended to cover my work at home and inform the college immediately of any changes to the policy cover.

Y N

Fire - I confirm I have smoke detection installed in my home and suitable means of escape in the event of a fire.

Y N

Electricity - My electrical household supply is suitable for PC use and associated equipment. I will ensure sockets are not overloaded and trailing cables are appropriately positioned to prevent a trip hazard. Where the electrical supply is not adequately protected I will use a Residual Current Device (RCD).

Y N

Signed Date

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