

## Working from Home Temporary and Remote Working Guidance and Helpful Hints

This guidance has been updated to take account of the extended working from home arrangements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Temporary working from home will be extended so it's important that our employees are set up with suitable equipment and information so they can be comfortable, healthy, safe and DSE-compliant.

Many people already work from home. If you are not, there is lots you can do to work well at home to prevent discomfort. There is no increased risk from display screen equipment (DSE) work for those working at home temporarily, but it is advised that you undertake a basic home workstation assessment and consider what you can do to ensure you are comfortable.

Here are some simple quick steps you can take to reduce the risks from working at your display screen:

- breaking up long spells of DSE work with rest breaks (at least 5 minutes every hour) or changes in activity
- avoiding awkward, static postures by regularly changing position and taking breaks
- getting up and moving or doing stretching exercises
- avoiding eye fatigue by changing focus

### **Home DSE Assessments and other safety information**

Have you carried out the Home working DSE self-user assessment/checklist at the bottom of this document whilst you are working from home and where possible been able to apply the equipment principles below?

Have you looked at the OLLIE module for DSE Assessments – this gives you some practical demonstrations that may help you, especially when using a laptop.

Check out the guidance notes on the Educational SharePoint about DSE's, work stations and agile working and working from home. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have produced a video clip on working from home.

Are you able to access an ergonomic chair if not we encourage you to try other ways of creating a comfortable working environment (e.g. supporting cushions)

Are you able to access a keyboard, mouse, monitor, laptop raiser? If not we encourage you to use the pointers below to try and create a more comfortable option.

Your manager should review the outcomes of the assessment and address any issues that prevent you from setting up a suitable temporary workstation at home.

If you have had an Access to Work DSE assessment and have been issued with equipment we will try to meet those needs where possible. If you have already been provided with alternative equipment in your usual place of work e.g. ergonomic chair or specialist mouse consider whether you can take these for use at home.

### **Equipment**

There are many equipment options to support people working away from the office, but these may not always be available if working from home is needed to be implemented quickly. There is a lot however we can all do to look after ourselves in this situation.

You are likely to fall into one of these four categories:



### 1. Good Equipment already provided or in place

Desk/table, adjustable office chair, monitor/screen raiser or laptop stand, separate keyboard and mouse.

- ✓ Take the time to set up the equipment you have to support your position
- ✓ Adjust your chair so your elbows are keyboard height, forearms are level and back is supported
- ✓ Top of screen about eye level
- ✓ Keyboard and mouse close so your arms are relaxed by your body
- ✓ Make sure you move regularly whilst working, look away from your screen at least every 20 minutes and try to get up at least every hour

### 2. Some Equipment Provided

Screen raiser or laptop stand, separate keyboard and mouse

- ✓ Follow the above advice
- ✓ Be creative to achieve a well-supported and good seated position.
- ✓ Use towels, cushions, pillows or a wedge to get your seated height to the suitable level
- ✓ Make sure your back is supported with a cushion
- ✓ If you need foot support consider using an old book, file or box as a footrest
- ✓ It is even more important to move regularly whilst working, look away from your screen at least every 20 minutes and try to get up every hour



### 3. Separate Keyboard and mouse only

- ✓ Follow the above advice
- ✓ Find a way of raising your laptop. A plastic box, books or file can do the job but if the items are flammable please make sure you use a mat or tray between the laptop and the item.
- ✓ It is even more important to move regularly whilst working, look away from your screen at least every 20 minutes and try to get up every hour
- ✓ Ensure the laptop is well ventilated



#### 4. No Additional Equipment

If you only have your portable device, you can still take care of yourself

- ✓ Use the tips above to get a better position and support from a chair
- ✓ Can you borrow a keyboard and mouse?
- ✓ Perform some simple exercises
- ✓ Ensure you move at least every 15 minutes if your posture is compromised
- ✓ Any concerns, you must let your manager know as soon as possible

#### **Other information and guidance**

[HSE video on working from home safely](#)

[Helping people working at home](#)

**Home working DSE Assessment** Fill in the Home DSE assessment – this will enable us to ensure you are working from home as safely as possible and identify any actions that need to be implemented

Home DSE Assessment/ checklist	Yes	No	Comments
<b>Name .....</b> <b>Date.....</b>			
Have you been able to make enough space for you to work comfortably?			
Do you know how to get help on using computers or other equipment?			
Do you have any issues with your IT systems?			
Do you have effective use of internet at home?			
Where you can and using the guidance note, have you tried to set up the workstation and chair for comfortable use?			

Have you made sure the screen is clear, readable and flicker-free?			
Is the brightness and contrast adjustable and do you know how to adjust them?			
Are your eyes level with the top of the screen?			
Do you have a separate keyboard and mouse?			
Is the keyboard tilt able and is there space in front of it to rest your hands when not typing?			
Have you made sure the screen, computer and keyboard are kept clean?			
If your chair is adjustable has it been adjusted to suit your needs?			
If it is not adjustable have you followed the advice to make it as comfortable as possible?			
Are your feet flat on the floor when you are sat in your chair? If not do you need to raise your feet?			
Have you made sure there is enough legroom for free movement?			
Is your equipment and papers within easy reach?			
Is there enough space on the table/ desk for you to undertake your work?			
Is the mouse or input device suitable?			
Do you take adequate breaks from computer work?			
When using the computer, do you get aches, pains, tingling or pins and needles in the hands, arms, shoulders, neck or back?			
Since working from home have you experienced any aches, pains or discomfort related to your temporary DSE arrangements?			
Do the symptoms persist after you have stopped working on the computer?			
Do you regularly suffer from blurred/poor vision, red/sore/dry eyes or headaches while using the computer?			
Do you have any concerns about managing your working hours, workload or work-life balance?			
Are you experiencing any adverse effects of working in isolation?			
Are there any other concerns about your home working set up or working from home that you would like to raise? (Please specify)			
When you have completed your Home Working DSE Assessment please send to your manager so they can identify any areas of concern that may need further support, monitor and review.			