Working from Home

For many of you it might be the first time you've ever had to work from home. This guidance is provided to help ensure you are comfortable and look after yourselves during these exceptional circumstances.

For staff who do not require access to secure data there should be no significant technical obstacle to working from home, provided you utilise Microsoft Teams. Information on getting help from IT Services and technical aspects of working from home is available HERE.
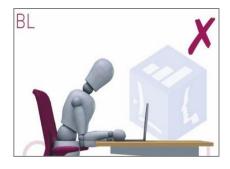
Planning to work from home

1. Assess your work-needs in terms of computer equipment e.g. do you need to take the work laptop home or arrange a loan from IT Services.

2. Familiarise yourself with how to utilise Microsoft Teams.
3. Where required, arrange specific 'authorisations' for remotely accessing University systems.

Setting up at home

1. Try to set up a dedicated 'work area', clear of clutter and ready distractions.

2. If you can, work by natural light and set up away from bright artificial light.

3. Easy to move, work computer aids (e.g. ergonomic keyboard & mouse, footrests, screen) can be taken home.

4. Setting up:

   a. Use a desk or suitable height table.

   b. Chairs should give you good support and posture.

   c. Your eyes should naturally hit the top of the screen when looking straight ahead. Reams of paper or books are a good way to create a base and raise the screen height.

   d. Feet should be planted on the floor or footrest. An old firm pillow or cushion can act as a temporary footrest.

   e. If using a laptop, ensure you have a separate screen or a separate mouse and keyboard.

Day to day

1. Try to pretend you are not at home.

2. Set your working hours. Establish boundaries between work and life.

3. Create a checklist of what needs to get done every day – be realistic of what you can achieve.

4. Get up and dress as if going to work (even if comfy clothes) - it separates work from home.

5. It is easy to become engrossed in work without realising you have not moved for a while. **Move around often.**

   o The more 'makeshift' your set-up, the more important it is for you to move.

   o If you have a good home office set-up, take a break for 5-10 minutes every hour.

   o Avoid eye fatigue by changing focus or blinking from time to time.

   o Get up and do some stretching exercises, such as these.

6. Set lunch and tea break times. Stick to these and take them away from your 'work area'.

7. Remain hydrated – drink plenty of water.

8. Get fresh air – open windows, go into the garden.

9. Try not to get distracted, especially if others are at home with you. However, if you do get distracted, do something completely different away from your work area, and if possible, try to get some fresh air as part of your 'distraction'.

10. If you can work with background noise, play music etc.

11. Wherever you are, always maintain good hygiene standards.

Staying in touch

Even though working from home has its perks, and we need to minimise face-to-face contact, social interaction is still really important. You also need to stay in touch with your Manager and your colleagues through the period you are working from home.

1. Do use the technology available to stay in touch with colleagues, friends and family e.g. emails, phone calls, FaceTime, WhatsApp.

2. Remember the University does have an Employee Assistance programme if you are anxious and wish to talk to someone.

For further information on staying healthy mentally please see our other links.