

## Assessment Checklist of Home Environment for Flexible/Home Working

<b>Employee Name:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Home Address:</b>	
<b>Department/Service/Division:</b>	
<b>Line Manager:</b>	(please print)
<b>Date discussed with line manager:</b>	(date)

This assessment is to be completed by the employee as part of an application to work at home. This checklist is to ensure that those working at home have an appropriate health & safety assessment of their home 'work environment' to ensure that there will be no risks to their health & safety.

The employee must complete the form, giving relevant information in the spaces provided, and return the completed checklist to their manager.

The manager should read through and discuss the information with the employee, including any problems identified, and decide what action to take. Managers will record decisions in the Managers Comments column. **The manager must be satisfied that the employee can work safely at home before permission is given.** A visit to the employees home may be necessary before home working begins, or as part of the monitoring process at any point after home working commences.

If any action is required/agreed it is the responsibility of the manager to check that these are completed within a reasonable amount of time.

Home working guidance and training pack are available on the Occupational Safety Website. If further advice is required please contact the Occupational Safety Team.

**If working at home is approved, this assessment should be reviewed annually or earlier if the home environment changes. Health and safety issues should be discussed regularly at supervision meetings.**

**A DSE Workstation Assessment Checklist must be completed for the home computer workstation set up, within the first 6 weeks of home working starting.**

## Assessment Checklist of Home Environment

**Employee & manager - see notes at the end for further information.**

Risk Factors	Tick answer		Employee comments/information	Manager comments/information
	Yes	No		
<b>Workspace/Working area</b>				
<p>Description of the area/room in the home intended to be used as workplace.</p> <p>Describe the area/ room in the home intended to be used for work and include layout; size; factors such as the position of doors, windows, furniture, and shape of room. Also provide details showing the location of the room in relation to the whole premises and the access/egress routes</p>			<i>(Please attach photos/sketch plans for the manager to see)</i>	
Specify the form of lighting present. Is it suitable/sufficient?				
Specify the form of heating present. Is it suitable/sufficient?				
Specify the form of ventilation present. Is it suitable/sufficient?				
At the end of the working day, will it be possible to secure work equipment etc. away from the rest of the household and to avoid a 'constant reminder' of work?				

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Risk Factors	Tick answer		Employee comments/information	Manager comments/information
	Yes	No		
Will the workspace (including any stairs & thoroughfares) be free of tripping hazards/obstacles?				
Are there suitable storage facilities for equipment and consumables so as to ensure that there are no tripping hazards?				
Is the workspace suitable? If No, what adjustments are required to improve the safety of the intended working area?				
<b>Furniture/Equipment</b>				
List what furniture and equipment would be used whilst working at home and if owned/provided by the Council or employee.				
If the employee is to use their own furniture and/or equipment, is it fit for purpose and safe to use?				
Is all furniture and equipment suitable?				
Specify what phone services will be available in the intended work area.				

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Risk Factors	Tick answer		Employee comments/information	Manager comments/ information
	Yes	No		
<b>Electricity</b>				
To your knowledge is the home electrical system safe?				
Are there sufficient electrical sockets in the proposed work area to cope with essential electrical equipment?				
Are electrical and telephone sockets appropriately located so as to avoid the need for trailing cables across the room whilst working?				
<b>DSE (Display Screen Equipment)</b>				
If DSE is to be used, will the workstation meet minimum standards? If no, outline what additional furniture/equipment would be required (and who would provide it), <b>or</b> attach a risk assessment showing the work activities do not require the workstation to meet the minimum standards.				
Is a laptop to be used? If yes, outline any additional equipment required and/or time limits for laptop use.				
Are there any particular disabilities or health conditions that require consideration if using DSE at home? If yes, please specify these issues.				
Are there any specific measures required to				

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Risk Factors	Tick answer		Employee comments/information	Manager comments/information
	Yes	No		
address disability or health conditions? If yes please specify.				
<b>Fire Precautions</b>				
Are there suitable and sufficient escape routes from the work area? If no, what additional precautions can be put in place to improve the safety of the intended working area?				
Is a smoke detector required? If yes, has a smoke detector been installed?				
<b>Manual Handling</b>				
Will the work in the home environment involve any significant manual handling activities that may cause injury? If Yes please specify.				
Is there a need to provide any additional equipment for home and/or flexible working?				
<b>First Aid</b>				
Is basic first aid training required?				
Is a suitable First Aid kit required?				
<b>Training</b>				
Is training required before Home Working/Flexible Working could begin?				

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Risk Factors	Tick answer		Employee comments/information	Manager comments/information
	Yes	No		
If Yes, please give details.				
<b>Other issues</b>				
Are there any other safety issues that will prevent the employee working in their home environment? If yes, what additional measures are required to make the home environment suitable?				
Are there any other hazards (to employee, visiting colleagues, family members or occupants) that have not been identified above? If Yes, please outline and include any steps required to reduce the risk.				

### TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYEE

I understand the importance of this assessment, and, if working at home is approved, realise the need to report to my manager any changes that occur to my home working environment and any work related pain or discomfort.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

### TO BE COMPLETED BY MANAGER

Is the home environment suitable for Home Working/Flexible Working? **Yes/No**

Are further actions required before home working can commence? **Yes/No**

If Yes give details and include who is responsible for implementing the actions and the date by which they must be completed.

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Signed: ..... Date: .....

**If working in the home environment is approved ensure that suitable arrangements are in place e.g.**

- systems to ensure manager knows when employee starts and finishes work.
- procedures to follow if employee encounters problems whilst working at home.
- accident and sickness reporting procedures.
- communication systems/contact times/frequency of face to face meetings.
- arrangements to receive Team & Council communications.

Electrical equipment provided by the Council must be included in the PAT testing programme.

### **Review**

If working at home is approved, this assessment and other related risk assessments should be reviewed (once a year, or more often if circumstances or working practices change) to ensure they remain valid and relevant. The review date(s) can be recorded here, but if there have been significant changes complete a new assessment form.

Date Reviewed	Manager's Signature	Employee's Signature	Comments

### **Notes**

**Relevant documents:**

*Home Working Safely - H&S Guidance for Managers*

*Home Working Safely - Safety Training Pack*

*Flexible Working - H&S Guidance for Managers*

*Display Screen Equipment - H&S Guidance for Managers*

*Laptops & Other Portable Computing Devices Guidance*

*Using Portable Computing Devices: Advice for Staff*

#### **Workspace/Working area**

Description of the area/ room in the home intended to be used as the workplace should include layout; size in square meters of the designated area; location in house; access/egress routes; details of lighting, heating and ventilation; location of electrical and telephone sockets.

The work area must be free of tripping hazards/obstacles (including stairs & thoroughfares).

The size of room/space must be adequate for the proposed work activities, with sufficient room to move around safely. Factors such as the position of doors, windows, furniture, and shape of room are all likely to have a bearing on the space needed.

Can the employee insulate themselves from the domestic activities during work time? Can the work be 'put away' and not be a 'constant reminder' whilst enjoying family activities.

Suitable and sufficient lighting is required in the work area. Be mindful of seasonal variations.

(Guidance note – If unsure, lighting levels of 300-500 Lux are recommended for DSE work, with blinds/curtains to prevent glare on screens)

Heating – will a comfortable temperature be maintained whilst working?

Sufficient electrical sockets are required to cope with essential electrical equipment; located to avoid the need for trailing wires/cables.

If mechanical ventilation is present, what type is it and how is it maintained?

Consider potential hazards to other adults and children if the work area is used/accessed by others.

#### **Furniture/Equipment**

All furniture and equipment must be suitable for the proposed work tasks, meet all relevant health and safety standards and be installed correctly. It is recommended that all furniture and equipment required for work is supplied by the Council. If an employee is to use their own furniture and/or equipment the manager must be satisfied that it is suitable and safe and is included in the risk assessments.

(Guidance note – as a guide a desk/table/work surface area approx 1.2m wide and 0.8m deep is suitable for typical general office type activities)

Where work involves the use of a computer/laptop the workstation must meet the minimum standards set out in the *Display Screen Equipment, H&S Guidance for Managers*.

Consider the storage requirements for equipment, consumables etc.

A telephone will be required in the work area. If a landline is to be used a point must be available in the working area or a cordless phone used. Would dependants require use of the phone, broadband or internet services whilst the employee would be working?

#### **Electricity**

The employee is responsible for the safety of their domestic electricity supply. If electrical equipment is supplied by the Council for use in the home a suitable circuit breaker will be provided and must only be used for that equipment.

The number and position of electrical sockets must allow suitable and safe cable management. Wires and cables must not cross walk ways.



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### DSE

Where work involves the use of a computer/laptop the workstation must meet the minimum standards set out in the *Display Screen Equipment, Health & Safety Guidance* (e.g. work desk/surface at a suitable height and large enough to allow flexible arrangement of screen, keyboard, documents, mouse etc.; adjustable DSE chair).

Employees are advised to refer to the minimum standards when considering working at home and especially if intending to purchase furniture and equipment. If work is to be done whilst seated the Council will supply a suitable DSE chair.

Laptops are not designed for intensive or prolonged use and should not be provided for such use without assessing the risks. Additional equipment or accessories may be required to make them safer to use e.g. connectors so a normal mouse and keyboard can be used. A laptop should not be used where a standard DSE workstation set up can reasonably be provided.

**Note – the employee must complete a DSE Workstation Assessment Checklist for the home workstation set up, within the first 6 weeks of starting home/flexible working.**

### Fire Precautions

An employee working at home for all or a significantly proportion of their working time, must install a suitable smoke detector to effectively cover the means of escape from the work area, **before** home working commences. The employee will be responsible for testing and maintenance.

Where the working area is on upper floors, is there an opening window at that level to aid escape?

### Manual Handling

The manager will determine if a manual handling risk assessment is required – consider the work tasks; individual capability; the load being moved; and the working area.

The employee may need additional equipment to aid manual handling e.g. laptop rucksack or small trolley for a flexible worker.

### First Aid

First aid provision should be considered as part of the assessment. In all cases there must be a suitable telephone/mobile phone in the work area for the employee to summon help if ill or injured. Depending on the nature of the work activities, the work environment/location and the risks involved, consider if the employee should have basic first aid training and a suitable First Aid Kit.

### Training

List what relevant health & safety training and information have been given and consider if additional training/information is required. The manager may also need to consider if other colleagues (including the line manager) need additional training, information or instructions to support the home worker/flexible worker.

### Working arrangements

If working at home is approved, there must be clear arrangements for employees to report accidents/incidents; sickness absence; health problems; equipment failure etc.

For staff working **from** home there must be a system for ensuring they are safe at the end of the working day e.g. a phone call to 'clock off' when leaving site or arriving home. There must also be an action plan for if the employee does not make contact at the end of the working day.

Home workers cannot look after or care for others whilst working. If applicable, discuss what care arrangements the employee will make, e.g. for children during school holidays.

Discuss how working hours will be recorded and monitored. Research has shown that staff working at home frequently forget to take breaks (lunch breaks, DSE task breaks etc.) or work beyond their contracted hours.