

COVID- 19 Remote Working Risk Assessment – Liverpool Hope University

Date of Risk Assessment: January 2021

Date of Review: 15/12/2021

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This is the overarching risk assessment dealing with the principles adopted by the University to support remote working at an institutional level during the pandemic.

Activity assessed / title of risk assessment:	Continued safe homeworking
Detailed description of activities covered by this assessment:	<i>This risk assessment identifies the generic risks associated with working from home. The control measures implemented provide a safe working environment for all staff who are not required to work on campus.</i> <i>England is moving to Plan B in response to the risks of the Omicron variant. From the 13th December 2021 the government advice is to work from home where possible</i>

Hazard	Who Might be Harmed and How?	What is the risk level?	Controls	Any further action needed to control the risk?	Who needs to implement/ by when
Ergonomic hazards	<p>Staff – strains, headaches, eye strain and fatigue from increased screen time.</p> <p>Poor space layout leading to poor posture, poor lighting levels. Too low, too high table/ work surface, no monitor increasing potential for work related upper limb disorders.</p> <p>Poor audio and connectivity affecting workload.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice for homeworkers available on H&S Webpages • Workstation set up checklist is used to outline a good how to set up laptop and PC's at home. • Tips on managing virtual meetings available on the HR webpages. • Staff advised to take mini breaks every hour. • Staff advised to report strains or discomfort linked to their workstation set up via their Line Manager / HR Manager. • Suggestions for minimising fatigue listed on HR webpages • Link to NHS webpages provided for stretching exercises • Details of University eye test voucher scheme available via HR webpages <p>User guides available online to support remote desktop, network drives etc. and specific software</p>	HR Manager to offer OH referral or additional workstation assessment where necessary.	HRM as reports received.
Stress	<p>Staff – fatigue, changes to workload resulting in work related stress.</p> <p>Change management-change to working environment, unsafe or unsuitable working environment</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular team meetings or one to one's agreed with line manager. • Workloads agreed and discussed regularly with line manager. • Staff are encouraged to raise issues where they feel they need additional support, either during one-to-ones, email or via HR. • Guidance provided to staff regarding maintaining a regular routine with set start and finish times and breaks in between. 		

	<p>Fatigue due to increased screen time,</p> <p>Leadership – change in leadership style or method due to remote working</p> <p>Critical incident – bereavement or illness due to COVID 19 affecting household or family members</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to campus, when an alternative or safe work environment cannot be accessed, can be provided upon discussion with line manager. • Managers provided with guidance to provide weekly meetings/ one-to-ones and advice about supporting staff. • Regular updates from USET to all staff to communicate government guidance • Virtual team networks/ informal meetings encouraged to provide support and break from work. • Staff and managers encouraged to vary communication methods to avoid excessive screen time • Signposting to external support services available via the HR webpages. • Guidance on how to contact the University’s Counselling Service and 24/7 helpline via the webpages • Stress risk assessment available to agree a plan to support a staff member with tailored support measures as part of the University’s Work Related Stress policy. • Guidance on homeworking and workstation set up provided via webpages. • Tailored advice and signposting for those dealing with bereavement 		
Fire	<p>Staff</p> <p>Household members -</p> <p>Defective electrical equipment, accumulated combustibles,</p>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on basic fire safety whilst homeworking provided previously in the Homeworking Checklist. • Ensure working smoke / heat detectors in use. • Check and maintain clear evacuation routes at all times. • Maintain good housekeeping, not allowing combustibles to accumulate and kept separate from ignition sources. • Means of contacting the emergency services in place. 	<p>Staff to complete periodic fire refresher training (every 3 years).</p> <p>Further fire safety advice via the Government Fire</p>	<p>H&S Advisor & Staff Development Coordinator providing online training on a rolling basis</p>

	<p>cooking appliances, smoking in the house</p> <p>Burns, smoke inhalation, damage to property, serious injury, loss of life</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If extinguishers are available ensure the correct type is in use. 	<p>Safety in the Home guidance.</p>	
Electrical Equipment	<p>Staff</p> <p>Household members</p> <p>– electric shock, burns/ hot surfaces, fire, overloaded sockets or adapters. Defective, staff using own devices/ personal equipment</p>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to check for defective cords, plugs and maintain good housekeeping. Cords to be routed away from walkways Power sockets not to be overloaded and powered down overnight. Further advice available via the Electrical Safety First 	<p>Safety webpages to be updated with electrical safety links</p> <p>Simple checks to save your life</p>	<p>H&S Advisor by 29th March 2021.</p> <p>Completed 14/04.</p>
Slips and Trips	<p>Staff</p> <p>Household members</p> <p>Poor housekeeping resulting falls, minor and major injuries, delayed medical assistance if living alone.</p>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance around good housekeeping and minimising trip hazards provided via Homeworking checklist Floors around workspace kept clear Spillages managed promptly. Cables routed away from walking routes Evacuation routes kept clear 		

<p>Safeguarding issues, bullying, victimisation and harassment</p>	<p>Staff delivering sessions & hosting groupwork online</p> <p>Impaired concentration, distress, anxiety, physical illness, reduced work performance</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues should be raised with line manager in regular one to one meetings. • HR Managers can signpost to further advice and guidance appropriate to the circumstances. • The University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy sets out procedures for handling and investigating cases of harassment, bullying, discrimination and victimisation. • Formal complaints about student conduct can be made via caseworker@hope.ac.uk • The Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Process may also be referred to when reporting complaints about student conduct. 		
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RISK MATRIX			SEVERITY				
			INSIGNIFICANT (e.g. sustained but no reaction needed)	MINOR (e.g. sustained but minor/minimal reaction required)	SERIOUS (e.g. harm sustained resulting in lost time and/or referral to other professionals for further reaction or observation)	MAJOR (E.g. harm requires suspension of activities and scrutiny by oversight management)	FATALITY /DISABILITY
			1	2	3	4	5
LIKELIHOOD	REMOTE (improbable, but might happen only rarely)	1	LOW 1	LOW 2	LOW 3	LOW 4	LOW 5
	UNLIKELY (but could happen at some time)	2	LOW 2	LOW 4	MEDIUM 6	MEDIUM 8	MEDIUM 10
	LIKELY (will probably happen at some time)	3	LOW 3	MEDIUM 6	MEDIUM 9	MEDIUM 12	HIGH 15
	VERY LIKELY (will definitely happen at some time)	4	LOW 4	MEDIUM 8	MEDIUM 12	HIGH 16	HIGH 20
	CERTAIN (will happen imminently)	5	LOW 5	MEDIUM 10	HIGH 15	HIGH 20	HIGH 25

RISK LEVEL	ACTION AND TIMESCALE
LOW 1-5	No additional controls are required and monitoring is required to ensure that the controls are maintained. Consideration may be given to a more cost-effective solution or improvement that imposes no additional cost burden.
MEDIUM 6-12	Aim to reduce the risk to a tolerable level if reasonably practicable. If not practicable, try to reduce the presented risk to the lower scale of 'Medium' There is a greater likelihood that detailed local safe working procedures will need to be written to make existing control measures more robust for moderate risks. E.g. advanced or increased frequency of training, increased supervisions If a control measure cannot be financed immediately it may be possible to plan for its implementation over a longer period of time e.g. 6 months, while a number of other limited risk reduction measures are put in its place as an interim course of action.
HIGH 15-25	Work should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced. If it is not possible to reduce the risk, even with unlimited resources, work has to remain prohibited.