



# UKRI Health and Safety Briefing – Working at Home Roles & Responsibilities

Health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities of UKRI and its employees when working at home are discussed in this briefing. For more information on the risks mentioned and how to mitigate them, consult the [Guidance Documents](#) available on the [Office Estates Health and Safety SharePoint](#) page.

## Essentials

- The responsibilities of both Employee and Employer are the same when working from home (either temporarily or permanently) or from an employer's premises:
  - the employer has a duty to protect the health and safety of its employees, and to keep them informed about health and safety matters in the workplace, including any risks associated to their role.
  - the employee has a responsibility to look after themselves and others and to abide by any health and safety procedures/policies that have been put in place by the employer.

## Risks & Responsibilities



### Risk Assessment

- Risk assessments must be carried out to identify if there are any hazards relating to the homeworkers' work activities and show the steps that have been taken to prevent any harm .
- Standard risk assessments are completed by UKRI and are available on the [Office Estates Health and Safety SharePoint](#) page.
- You need to ensure that you are aware of the mitigations set out in relevant risk assessments. Consulting the [Guidance Documents](#) for each category is an easy way to do this, they can be found on the Office Estates Health and Safety SharePoint page.



### Display Screen Equipment and Ergonomics

- The most common health effects experienced from the prolonged use of DSE are headaches, back/neck ache and eye strain. For this reason, you should undertake DSE training and risk assessment as provided by UKRI to identify any issues.
- If your time is split between homeworking and time in the office in the 'hybrid' working model, any concerns, in the first instance should be highlighted to your Line Manager and/or local Health and Safety Advisor. It may be necessary for a DSE assessment in both locations with the risk mitigations that may consider working practices and locations.



### Fire Safety

- Sensible measures should be put in place to prevent fire in the home regardless of whether or not you use it as a workplace. Government guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/make-your-home-safe-from-fire>
- You should follow the same guidance you would in the office such as keeping your workplace tidy and ensuring flammable and combustible materials are kept to a minimum. You should also plan an escape route in the event of an emergency.
- Any fire detection and prevention measures in place are your responsibility to maintain, it is also for you to decide whether or not to install additional measures.
- If you are concerned about any aspect of Fire Safety, at home or in the office that may affect your work, please discuss it with your local Health and Safety Advisor.

# Risks & Responsibilities



## Electrical Safety

- It is the responsibility of UKRI to maintain, and replace if necessary, any equipment provided such as laptops and screens.
- You should perform regular, visual checks of devices to ensure that there are no exposed, live parts. Do not use any equipment if damage is found, report it and request an immediate replacement.
- UKRI is not responsible for any part of your domestic electrical system such as sockets and wiring.



## First Aid

- Although the likelihood of requiring first aid assistance at home is low it is important that access to first aid information and advice is made available when working from home. It is good practice to:
  - keep your emergency contact details up to date with HR and/or line manager.
  - advise your line manager or HR if you have any medical issues which may be relevant whilst working from home or the office.
  - Complete a Personal Evacuation Plan if you may require assistance during an evacuation when working in the office.
  - Keep local emergency contact details such as GP up to date.
- First Aid guidance for Homeworkers can be found on the HSE Site [here](#).
- Though vastly different from standard arrangements UKRI will put measures in place to ensure that a form of First Aid arrangement exists for homeworking, with such arrangements communicated to Line Managers appropriately.



## Wellbeing and Lone Working

- UKRI will support those working at home so that they do not feel isolated, stressed or feel down. A wealth of support measures can be found on The [Source](#) and will continue to be developed to cope with new ways of working.
- Homeworkers have a responsibility to help their employer fulfil health, safety and wellbeing obligations by:
  - taking reasonable care to look after their own health and safety.
  - by asking for support when needed.
  - communicating with members of their team on a regular basis, and to report when experiencing any issues related to DSE working.
  - Reporting sickness and accident or ill-health relating to work processes. [Report incidents on SHE Assure here](#).
- Homeworking also comes under the umbrella of Lone Working – workers who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, and many of the aspects above stem from this.



## Training and Information

- Training and information should still be provided by the employer to those working at home, as is one of the principles of this Briefing.



# Other Issues



## Home Insurance

- You should not need to make changes to your normal home and/or contents insurance. The conditions are usually that:
  - The work is of clerical nature only.
  - You do not receive any visitors to your home as part of your work.
  - Your address is not a registered business address.

You should consult with your Insurance company if you are unclear on any aspect surrounding insurance and working from home.



## Line Managers Responsibilities

- As a line manager you are responsible to ensure that your employees have access to the appropriate information and training to enable safe working whilst carrying out UKRI activities. If you are unsure or need further information, contact your local H&S Advisor.

Consider the following points:

- Your team member may be feeling anxious about returning to your usual place of work.  
**What can you do to help them?**
- Have one to one meetings with employees to focus on health, safety and wellbeing.
- Discuss any support or adjustments prior to returning. Talk about any concerns which may need addressing.
- Keep up communication as employees settle into new ways of working, other changes will arise.
- Make staff aware of and ensure they understand new ways of working, particularly the H&S measures in place for their safe return to work.
- There's [support for Line Managers](#) on the Source including information on managing staff anxiety and wellbeing in Our [Wellbeing](#) section.

