

THE UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON
WORKING FROM HOME GUIDELINES

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 There may be times, for a variety of reasons that some employees may wish to undertake some of their duties away from their normal place of work (e.g. to work uninterrupted on difficult or lengthy work). As in other HEI's, whilst there is an expectation that employees spend the majority of their working time on University premise, the University accepts that there may be times where it may be mutually beneficial for employees to work from home or at another remote location.
- 1.2 This document outlines the arrangements to be followed when employees wish to request to work from home. It is imperative that the University ensures fair treatment and consistency of the approach and that such arrangements do not give rise to operational issues. With this in mind it is important that these guidelines are understood and applied consistency by all appropriate line managers/Academic Group Leaders/Heads of Service (thereafter referred to as "line manager").

2.0 Guidance Statement

- 2.1 This guidance document covers occasional and ad hoc home working, where it does not follow a particular pattern of working from home on a regular basis and will be agreed under exceptional circumstances. Home working is also subject to prior approval from the appropriate line manager on each occasion. It may be used by employees to complete a specific piece of work, or to be part of a phased return to work after sick leave.
- 2.2 Please note that working from home is not a contractual right, it is agreed at the University's discretion and requires prior approval of the appropriate line manager following a discussion with the employee. It does not alter any terms and conditions of employment.

3.0 Eligibility

- 3.1 Working from home can be requested by any University employee (regardless of contract type or duration) although the University recognises that because of the nature of some roles, home working may not be practical for all employees. Some examples (although not exhaustive) include roles involved in regular and direct face to face contact e.g. reception; or those servicing the University's estate e.g. facilities.

4.0 Approval

- 4.1 If an employee wants to work from home they must give at least three working days' notice with the details of why they feel it would be beneficial to work from home and an outline of the work that they are going to undertake whilst they are at home. Exceptionally, e.g. where severe weather makes it impossible for employees to attend work, the requirement to give at least three working days' notice can be waived.
- 4.2 The appropriate line manager will make a decision as to whether the employee can work from home (taking into account operational requirements, workload and the nature of the employees role) and will send an email confirming approval. If an employee has not received an approval email from the appropriate line manager then they are not deemed to have the appropriate approval to work from home on the requested day. A line manager can refuse a request if it is not completed within the required timescale. Requests will not be unreasonable refused – however employees should be given a reason for any request that is not approved. There is no right of appeal under these guidelines.

5.0 Communication

- 5.1 It is essential that if it has been agreed that employees can work from home, provision must be made to allow effective communication with work colleagues, students and external clients during the working day.
- 5.2 Employees must be contactable throughout normal working hours by the appropriate line manager and other University employees. Contact arrangements should be made prior to the day the individual employee is working from home (e.g. use of home telephone number, mobile and email). The employees contact details will not be given out unless permission has been given to do so.

6.0 Facilities and Equipment

- 6.1 It is not University practice to contribute to any costs or expenses associated with any homeworking. Employees are responsible for ensuring that University information/data is stored / processed securely when accessed at home and need to pay attention to the provisions of the Acceptable Use Policy, particularly around information handling. Employees should ensure they have suitable telephone, broadband and any required PC equipment at home in order that they can produce work from home. They should ensure such equipment is maintained and similarly employees should ensure they have appropriate home insurance cover in place.

7.0 Responsibilities

Appropriate Line Manager

- Consider and grant permission for working at home at their discretion.
- Communicate this guidance so all employees are aware of the procedure.

Employee

- Follow the guidance in this document.
- Provide contact details to the appropriate line manager so they can contact staff at home within normal working hours.
- Ensure that all employees, students and external clients can contact the employee whilst working from home.
- Ensure that they understand their own responsibilities regarding Health and Safety, data security and confidentiality whilst working from home.

HR

- To provide advice and support to line managers and employees on how to deal with requests for working from home or on the application of these guidelines.

Health and Safety

- A self-assessment form (Homeworkers Health and Safety Self-Assessment Checklist) will need to be completed and sent to the Specialist Services and Safety Manager before working from home commences.

8.0 Equality and Diversity Statement

- 8.1 It is a priority for the University that requests for home working are conducted in a fair and appropriate manner. This document takes into consideration current employment legislation and will be implemented in conjunction with the University's Equal Opportunities policy.
<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Diversity/Documents/EqOppsPol.pdf>

9.0 Monitoring and Review

This set of guidelines and their application will be monitored annually by HR in order to assess their effectiveness.

10.0 Other Policies and Procedures

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Flexible Working
- Information Security policy
- Guide to Information Security for Mobile Devices