

## Homeworking Guidelines

*These guidelines have been developed to support PDSE employees who are working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic.*

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### 1. When should I work from home?

Staff who work in the following groups should attend work as usual:

- Dental Nurses
- Dental Administrators
- Decontamination Staff
- Team Leaders
- Administrators

In line with government guidelines staff who can work from home should continue to do so, subject to the prior agreement from their line manager. This is now limited to staff who have a laptop issued by PDSE.

### 2. Will I be able to complete my normal duties at home?

If you have a work-issued laptop, you should be able to continue with the majority of your usual duties whilst working at home. For any work that cannot be completed at home you must attend the DEF to ensure this work is still completed.

You should maintain regular contact with your line manager to ensure that your workload is reasonable whilst working from home. If you have any concerns about what work you should complete at home, please discuss this with your line manager.

### **3. Is there anything else I should do whilst working from home?**

You must ensure that all of your mandatory training and CPD is kept up to date. If this is all up to date, you could also try other learning resources such as [e-Learning for Healthcare](#) or [LinkedIn Learning](#).

You must also ensure that you are up to date with all policies and procedures in relation to your role.

### **4. I am struggling to work from home due to childcare. What should I do?**

We understand that working from home when you have childcare responsibilities may not be easy for everyone. We ask that if possible, you seek childcare support from another suitable adult within your household. There is support and guidance for working parents at [Parent Scheme](#) which you may find helpful.

If you have concerns about working from home whilst you have childcare responsibilities, please discuss this with your line manager.

You may also find further guidance in our [Covid-19 FAQs for Employees](#).

### **5. How do I keep in touch with my colleagues or line manager whilst at home?**

You should be contactable during your normal working hours by phone. You should also be checking your email account regularly.

Many of us are used to working as part of a team so it may feel strange to work at home in isolation. You should continue to maintain regular contact with you line manager and your colleagues whilst working at home.

Whilst we are used to making phone calls and exchanging emails already, there are also other methods we can use whilst working from home, such as video calling.

### **6. What digital tools may be useful to me whilst working at home?**

You should be able to access your emails, OneDrive and SharePoint at home by logging in to the [University of Plymouth website](#). When logging in, you will need to use your work email address.

Unfortunately, other sites may have limited or no access from home, for example, R4. You may be required to attend work in order to access sites that you are not able to access from home.

Digital tools such as [Skype](#), [Microsoft Teams](#) and [Zoom](#), are available to use from home. Your line manager will recommend whether you are required to use these programs or not.

**7. What should I do if I am unable to work from home due to technical difficulties or if I do not have access to a suitable PC/device?**

Only staff who have a laptop issued by PDSE should work from home. If you do not have access to this you should attend work at the DEF. If you experience any technical difficulties, you should report this to your line manager. They will seek to find a resolution with you.

You may be asked to return to work if you are not able to continue working from home.

**8. How can I ensure that working from home does not impact my health and wellbeing?**

It is important for us to recognise that working from home, particularly when this is not part of your usual role, may have an impact on your health and wellbeing.

We recommend that you keep your routine as close to normal as you can to minimise the impact of this. You should continue with your normal working hours and ensure you have regular rest breaks, including your usual 45 minute lunch break. You should also maintain regular contact with your colleagues and line manager.

Health Education England (HEE) have 4 courses available to support you with your mental health and wellbeing. Access to the courses is via the [HEE Dental website](#). The courses are free and available for all staff regardless of if you hold a GDC registration. The courses include:

- Change and Resilience
- Mental Health: Body and Mind
- Managing Stress and Anxiety
- Work-Life Balance

Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available to all PDSE staff and offers support with mental health and wellbeing. To access the EAP, [click here](#) and enter the details below:

- Username: PDSE
- Password: Employee

If you feel that working from home is having an impact on your health and wellbeing, you should discuss this with your line manager.

**9. What health and safety measures should I consider at home?**

When working from home, you should identify a suitable area to use as your workspace. If you already have a desk set up at home, this may be the best place for you to use. If you don't have a desk set up already, you should think about an alternative area that may be suitable to work.

When using Display Screen Equipment (DSE) such as a computer or laptop, it is important to consider that this is positioned appropriately and is safe for you to use. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) have advised that there is no requirement for home workstation assessments. However, it is good practice for you to ensure you set up a suitable workstation and ensure safe working practices are maintained. There are some simple steps you can follow to reduce the risks from DSE work at home:



- Take regular breaks away from the screen or change the activity you are doing
- Ensure you are sat comfortably and your posture is comfortable and not awkward
- You should move regularly and may benefit from stretching exercises

A DSE self-assessment may assist you in setting up and assessing your workspace whilst working from home. A copy of this can be found [here](#).

During contact with your line manager, they will enquire as to your health, safety and wellbeing whilst working at home.