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Working from Home: Guidelines

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Currently, Snowdonia National Park Authority does not have any posts which are home based i.e. are permanently located at an individual's home.
- 1.2. However, the Authority recognises that it may be appropriate for some employees from time to time to carry out some of their duties from home. Whilst it is expected that normally staff will be in the workplace it is accepted that there will be circumstances where an individual and the relevant manager agree that it is mutually beneficial for that individual to work from home.

2. Definition

- 2.1. It should be noted that these guidelines cover occasional work from home only. For the purpose of this policy, occasionally will be defined to represent no more than 20% of working time calculated on a four week (flexi calendar) basis. This provision is intended to allow for times when staff may need to work from home on specific occasions and for specific purposes for example, to have a quiet space to concentrate on a particular piece of work.
- 2.2. If an employee wishes to submit a request to work from home for more than 20% of their working time and / or on a more permanent basis e.g. requests under flexible working regulations for parents with children under the age of 6; further advice should be sought from the Personnel Manager.

3. Principles

- 3.1. Working from home can be considered where there is no requirement for close supervision or regular interactions in order for work to be completed, and where working away from the Authority would not affect the quality of the work. Consideration must also be given to the work of the individual's team and requirement for communication.
- 3.2. It is not considered appropriate to combine home based working with dependent care. Therefore employees must be made aware that

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working from home is not a substitute for making arrangements for care of dependents.

- 3.3. Since one of the main advantages of working from home is to complete a piece of work with minimum distraction, it is understood that anyone working from home should not be interrupted unnecessarily. However employees must always be available and contactable during agreed working hours.
- 3.4. Home working is not a right, but is based on an underlying management philosophy of trust and mutual benefit. Working from home requires prior approval with the appropriate Section Manager or Head of Service. Approval is given at a manager's discretion following consultation and discussion with the individual.
- 3.5. Prior approval is required so that the appropriate manager knows the whereabouts of the individual, and so that there is no possible confusion about why the individual is not at his or her normal place of work. All sections should put in place arrangements that reflect the above needs.
- 3.6. Occasional home working does not change an employee's terms and conditions.
- 3.7. Occasional home working does not normally mean that equipment, e.g. PCs, will be provided by the Authority for use at home, although consideration may be given to allowing access to a 'pool' of laptops where the extent of the Authority's insurance cover has been taken into account.
- 3.8. Employees must log the time spent working at home clearly on their timesheets, and must be able to provide information and evidence if required to show how their time was spent.
- 3.9. Employees must take all reasonable steps to safeguard the security and confidentiality of the Authority's equipment and information while it is in their possession. Employees should be able to describe what steps they will take to prevent access by friends/family, and what anti-virus protection they have in place to prevent loss of data or transfer of viruses to the Authority's machines.
- 3.10. The Authority is not able to pay costs relating to home working (e.g. light, heat, telephone etc.), so employees should bear this in mind when they submit a request to do occasional work from home.
- 3.11. It is up to the individual to check that occasional home working will not affect their mortgage/rent agreement, insurance or taxation.

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4. Health and Safety

- 4.1. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act the Authority has to take reasonable steps to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees. There is a duty to carry out a risk assessment in relation to all work activities for all staff. This does not mean that it will be necessary to visit the homes of every member of staff who occasionally works from home. However, it will be necessary to bring to the attention of an employee the potential hazards.
- 4.2. Individual employees will also be responsible for completing their own work station assessment on their home work station - this is required by the Display Screen Equipment Regulations.
- 4.3. Both these actions can be done by giving the individual employee a copy of 'Health and Safety: Working from Home General Checklist' which is attached. The relevant manager must explain the checklist and ensures that the employee completes the required actions within it and is fully aware of their responsibilities. The employee must then sign and return the document.

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Health & Safety: Working from Home General Checklist

This section covers:

- What you should do
- Equipment / Electrical checklist
- Display Screen Equipment Checklist
- Correct Workstation set up
- Seating and Posture for Typical Office Tasks
- Work Station Assessment
- Portable Computers (Laptops)
- Staff Agreement

What should you do?

- Ensure that you have sufficient space to work at home.
- Keep the work area free from clutter and hazards to ensure safe access and egress in case of emergency, to minimise slips, trips and falls and to reduce the risk of fire.
- Ensure that you make use of any personal protective equipment supplied by the Authority.
- Keep young children and pets away from work area.
- Notify your line manager of any work-related accidents, incidents or ill health immediately.

Equipment / Electrical Checklist

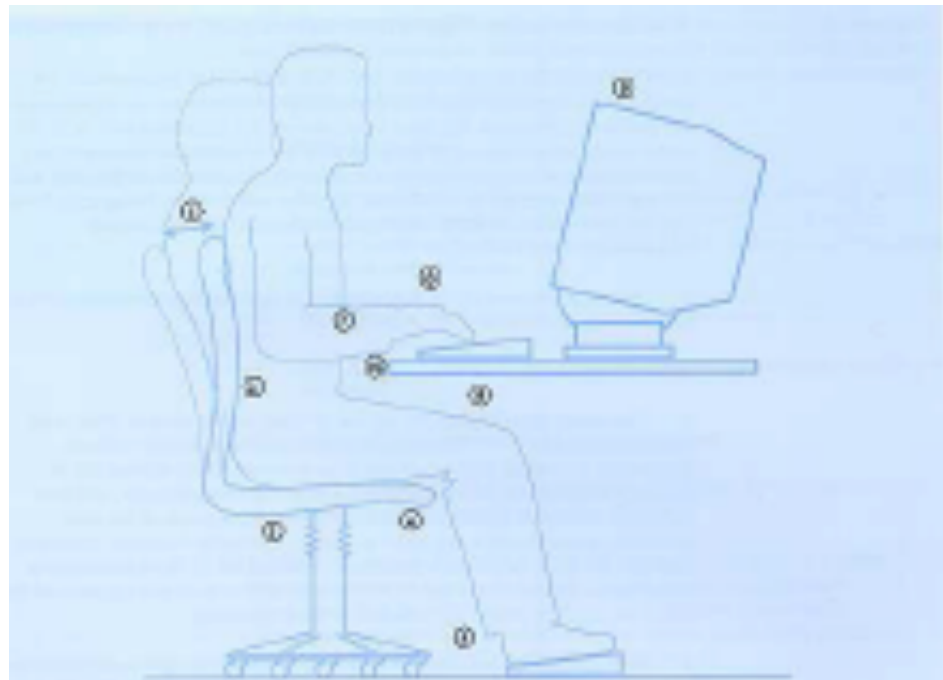
- Ensure that your domestic electrical wiring is safe to use.
- Ensure that all electrical equipment provided by the Authority is safe and adequately maintained and is PAT tested annually.
- Do not overload sockets.
- Make regular visual checks to ensure that the cables are free from damage and properly secured in plugs, and that correctly rated fuses are fitted.
- Ensure that there are no trailing cables that could cause trips.
- Keep young children and pets away from equipment.
- Notify line manager or IS section of any problems with any supplied equipment.

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Display Screen Equipment Work Station Checklist

- Ensure that your chair height is adjusted so that forearms are horizontal when using your keyboard and mouse.
- Ensure that your backrest is adjusted so that it supports your lower back.
- Ensure that your display screen is located at the correct height and distance.
- Ensure that the display screen image is clear, stable, free of flicker and easy to read. Also ensure that it is free from distracting reflections/glare.
- Do not use laptops for prolonged periods of time – no longer than an hour, unless in conjunction with a separate keyboard, mouse and monitor.
- Break up display screen equipment use with regular changes of activity.
- Ensure that there is adequate lighting.

Correct Work Station setup

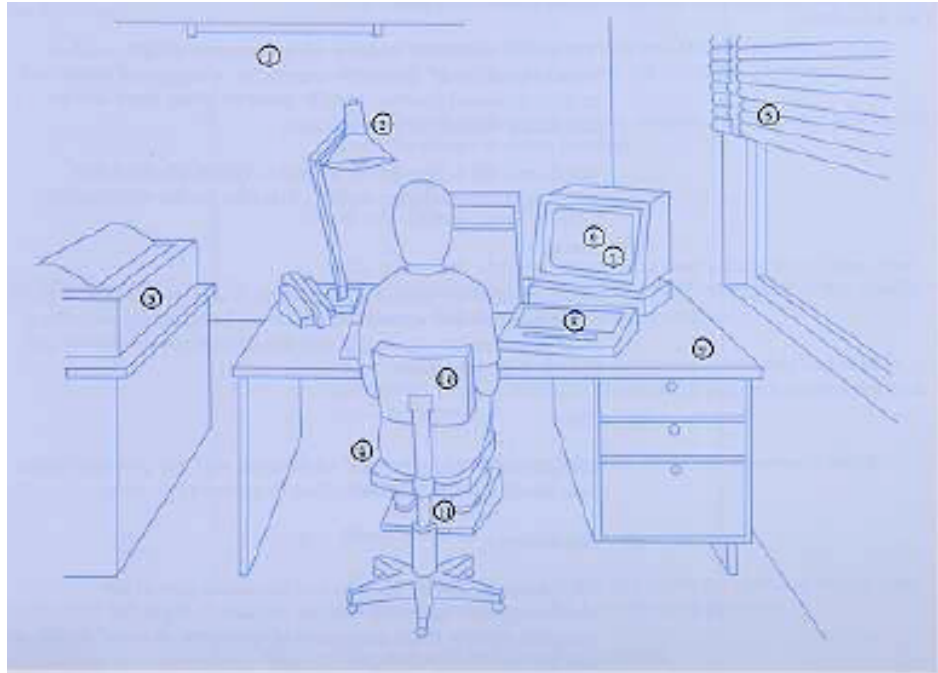


Seating and Posture for Typical Office Tasks

- 1) Seat back adjustability
- 2) Good lumbar support
- 3) Seat height adjustability
- 4) No excess pressure on underside of thighs and backs of knees
- 5) Foot support if needed
- 6) Space for postural change, no obstacles under desk
- 7) Forearms approximately horizontal
- 8) Minimal extension, flexion or deviation of wrists
- 9) Screen height and angle should allow comfortable head position
- 10) Space in front of keyboard to support hand / wrists during pauses in keying

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Work Station Assessment

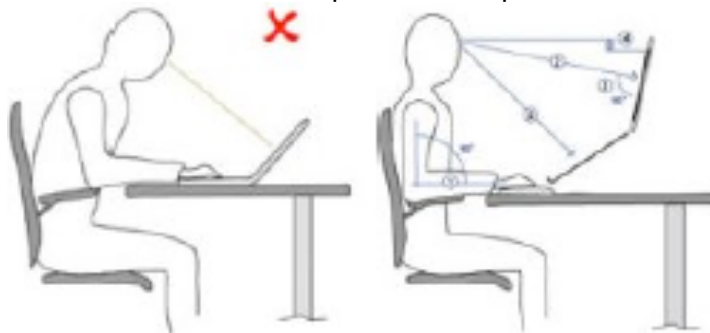


- 1) Adequate lighting
- 2) Adequate contrast, no glare or distracting reflections
- 3) Distracting noise minimised
- 4) Leg room and leg clearance to allow postural changes
- 5) Window covering
- 6) Software appropriate to task, adapted to user, provides feedback on system status
- 7) Screen: stable image, adjustable, readable, glare/reflection free
- 8) Keyboard: Adjustable, usable, detachable, legible
- 9) Work surface: allow flexible arrangements, sufficient space, glare free
- 10) Work Chair: adjustable
- 11) Footrest

Portable Computers (Laptops)

The text of "The New Guidelines" from the DSE Regulations states: "Portable DES, such as laptop or notebook computers, are subject to the DSE Regulations if it is in prolonged use."

Users and employers should be aware that some design compromises inherent in portable computers can lead to postural or other problems (for example a bent neck; or headaches arising from the low, fixed position of the screen). One way of tackling such risks is to avoid prolonged use and take more frequent breaks. Another way, if working in an office, is to use the portable computer with a docking station."



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Health & Safety:

Working from Home General Checklist

Staff Agreement

I agree to ensure that when working from home I will adhere to the guidelines above to ensure my safety and long term health. I will notify my line manager immediately if I am unable for any reason to comply with the recommendations or become aware of any issues which may adversely affect my safety or long term health.

I understand that should I deliberately ignore these guidelines and / or fail to notify my line manager of any issues, the Authority will not be held responsible for any resulting accidents or health problems that may arise.

Name (Print):

Post:

Signature:

Signature of Line Manager:

Date:
