

Name of Procedure:

Working from Home – Health and Safety Considerations

Procedure Category:

Council Academic Management

Scope:

This procedure outlines the University's requirements and practices to manage health and safety risks associated with staff who are engaged in performing work, usually computer work, from a home-based worksite.

Procedure:

1. Planning and Preparation

It is reasonable for employees to work outside of University premises where the work is aligned with the core business of the workplace, can be performed safely without detriment to their health and wellbeing, and without negative impact on the University or other people.

Approval to work off University premises is at the discretion of the employee's manager and staff must seek their manager's approval before arranging this.

- 1.1 Managers must consider the following when a request is received by an employee to establish a work from home arrangement (WFHA):
 - 1.1.1 Whether the employee's health and safety will be put at risk by allowing work from home.
 - 1.1.2 The duration or frequency is compatible with good communication.
 - 1.1.3 The employee's work can be effectively monitored to ensure that required objectives or outcomes are being met; identifying any work dependencies.
 - 1.1.4 Whether other team members at work will be able to meet the needs of customers, students and other employees in the absence of their colleague.
 - 1.1.5 The compatibility of work tasks and ability to perform them from home.
 - 1.1.6 Suitability of the alternative workspace; whether it is safe and ergonomically sound.
 - 1.1.7 Any foreseeable risks associated with working from home.
 - 1.1.8 Ease and reliability of communication with the employee.
 - 1.1.9 Provisions required for accessing the University's [virtual private network](#) safely and in accordance with the University's [Acceptable use of Information Technology facilities policy](#).

- 1.1.10 Any dependent children or others at the home-based worksite that will require the attention of the employee. If so, other arrangements should be made for their needs as the employee will be working.
- 1.1.11 All employees are treated equitably when considering approval of a work from home request.
- 1.2 Requests to work from home for the employee's full hours should not ordinarily be approved as this would result in disconnection from the University and other employees. For example, it is more appropriate to approve one or two days per week with the remainder of time being worked from University premises unless there are exceptional circumstances where the manager needs to use their discretion.
- 1.3 Employees must complete and submit to their manager the following forms:
 - WHS52 Working from Home – Agreed Arrangement
 - WHS29 Working from Home – Work Health and Safety Self-Assessment.

2. Managing risks in a work from home arrangement

If any work is to be conducted that is hazardous, a UniSA WHS [Consultant](#) should be consulted for guidance in undertaking a risk assessment before a decision is made to approve the arrangement.

- 2.1 The manager can request that the employee supply photographs of their home-based worksite.
- 2.2 If deemed necessary, with appropriate notice, a University representative with at least one other person (not including the employee) can visit the employee's home-based worksite to undertake:
 - A work health and safety assessment.
 - Maintenance of University equipment and supplies.
 - An assessment and monitoring of security arrangements for University assets.
- 2.3 A WHS consultant can provide guidance on tools that can support the arrangement for voice activated software that reduces the amount of typing required or software that reminds employees to take a rest break, do some stretching exercises and provides guidance on effective workstation setup.
- 2.4 The University's injury management process applies to any employee engaged in an approved work from home arrangement. An employee is entitled to claim for workers compensation if they are injured as a result of conducting work for University business.
- 2.5 If an employee has an accepted workers compensation claim, working from home may be a part of their graduated return to work and will be managed by the injury management team in consultation with the employee's manager and treatment providers.

- 2.6 Portable computers and other equipment may be purchased under a [salary sacrifice arrangement](#) with the approval of a University Tax Accountant if the main purpose for the purchase is to perform work.
- 2.7 Working from home is not a right and is always a mutually agreeable arrangement that suits the circumstances of both the workplace and the employee. A WFHA can be altered or terminated at any time.
- 2.8 Where a disability or non-work-related injury or illness is a factor in the decision making, the local People, Talent and Culture Business Partner should be consulted for guidance as the arrangement may need to be documented in a 'Work Support Plan' that provides for additional assistance.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Employee Responsibilities

- 3.1.1. Provide a safe and healthy place of work and manage their own workload, breaks, physical and mental wellbeing.
- 3.1.2. Comply with all applicable University safety policies, procedures and guidelines when they are working from home.
- 3.1.3. Ensure the environment is adequately illuminated, ventilated and electrically safe with no trip or slip hazards.
- 3.1.4. Provide an environment with appropriately designed equipment including desk, chair, computing facilities and any other requirements they need. The home-based worksite must be capable to enable communication and for using information technology facilities to access shared drives or cloud hosted file storage facilities, Skype or other tools to enable communication etc. This means that good, reliable internet connection is essential.
- 3.1.5. Advise their manager where sickness necessitates leave provisions.
- 3.1.6. Immediately report any injuries sustained to their manager and log an incident report in the [online hazard/incident reporting & investigation system](#).
- 3.1.7. Ensure that their home is appropriately insured from a public liability perspective as University insurance, other than workers compensation, does not extend to people's homes.
- 3.1.8. To consult their tax advisor regarding any impact on their personal tax claims for work related expenses while working from home.

3.2. Manager Responsibilities

- 3.2.1. Ensure that all health and safety considerations have been made to address the request by an employee to establish a WFHA.

- 3.2.2. Ensure work arrangements are assessed using the WHS29 Working from Home – Work Health and Safety Self-Assessment form and any issues identified are suitably rectified prior to approving the employee to commence WFHA. Contact the [Safety and Wellbeing team](#) for assistance if required.
- 3.2.3. Ensure the applicable WFHA request form is completed by the employee and signed off by the manager once all considerations have been met.
- 3.2.4. Ensure that WFHA documentation is maintained at the local level and the employee’s contact details remain confidential. Documentation must be made available for audit purposes as required.
- 3.2.5. Ensure WFHAs are regularly reviewed (at least annually, in conjunction with the employee’s performance and development review).

Related documentation

Further advice on managing risks in University workplaces, including supporting documents and training courses are available on the [Safety and Wellbeing](#) website.

WHS29 Working from Home – Work Health and Safety Self-Assessment.

WHS52 Working from Home – Formal Agreed Arrangement.

Additionally:

[Performance Management Policy and Guideline](#)

[Work Health and Safety Act 2012 \(SA\)](#)

Document history

V2.0 March 25, 2020

Responsible Officer:

Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture

Approval and Review	Approved by	Approval Date	Review
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