



## Working from Home - Professional and General Staff

- Introduction
- Definitions
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Who can work from home
- Procedure
- Conditions
- Agreed working from home arrangement
- When can a regular Working from Home Arrangement be altered or terminated
- Access arrangements
- Documents/Forms
- References

### Introduction

Working from home is a work arrangement particularly suited to office-based duties, although not exclusively so. Working from home arrangements may occur on an irregular basis and will not normally be used as a continuing arrangement. Working from home is not an appropriate substitute for dependent care.

Occupational health and safety requirements extend beyond the employer's place of business to include any place where the employer requires or permits an employee to perform work, including the employee's own home.

The manager and employee responsibilities for occupational health and safety in a home-based work arrangement are the same as they are if work is conducted at the employer's workplace. Managers have a legal duty to ensure that their employees are safe from injury and risks to health whilst undertaking work on behalf of the University.

Employees must ensure they follow reasonable instruction, use any safety equipment provided, comply with UniSA policies, and conduct themselves in a manner whilst engaged in work which does not put themselves or others at risk of injury. This procedure outlines the necessary steps that must be followed in order to enable any regular or irregular working from home arrangement.

### Definitions

**Home-based work** – a formal arrangement between the line manager and an employee for the employee to carry out some or all of their usual duties from home for a defined period of time.

**Home-based worksite** – an employee's usual place of residence and an area designated in the employee's residence which has been agreed between the line manager and the employee for use by the employee to perform home-based work.

**Industrial Instrument** – refers to the applicable Collective Agreement, Award, Australian Workplace Agreement, contract of employment or legislation.

**Line Manager** – a member of the Senior Management Group, Head of School, Manager/Director of Unit, Director of Research Institute, and Dean of Centre for Regional Engagement and Division Manager responsible for a Division Office.

**Supervisor** – any employee to whom other employees report.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Line Managers are responsible for:

- implementing this procedure in their area of responsibility
- ensuring careful consideration has been taken prior to approving a request from an employee to enter into a working from home arrangement
- ensuring that decisions about which staff can work from home are equitable



- preparing in consultation with the employee an agreed working from home arrangement prior to the commencement of the arrangement
- effectively managing employees who have been granted approval to engage in a working from home arrangement
- ensuring all relevant documentation ([OHSW 52 - Working from Home Arrangement](#) and [OHSW 29 - OHSW & Ergonomic Self Assessment](#)) is completed prior to the employee commencing work at the home-based site
- ensuring that “working from home” documentation is filed appropriately at the local level and is made available for inspection as required
- regular reviewing of working from home arrangements (on at least an annual basis, perhaps in conjunction with the employee’s performance review).

Employees are responsible for:

- not placing themselves or others at risk of injury in a home working environment
- completing [OHSW 29 - OHSW & Ergonomic Self Assessment](#) and assisting with rectifying non-compliance matters
- reporting to and consulting with line managers and/or supervisors in relation to any issues related to working at home (including OHSW matters).

### **Who can work from home?**

A regular working from home arrangement should only be considered in rare circumstances and have regard to the following:

- the operational requirements of the workplace
- whether the nature of the employee’s role and current work is suitable to be performed from home.

Positions suitable for working from home will generally have the following characteristics:

- the position is not in a supervisory role
- the position does not require a high degree of supervision or close scrutiny
- the position does not require frequent face-to-face contact with clients
- the position does not require the employee to be a member of a team where face-to-face contact on a daily basis is required with other team members at the office-based site
- the duties are not hazardous.

### **Procedure**

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the University Policy Occupational Health, Safety, Welfare and Injury Management (C - 6.4).

This Working from Home procedure sets out the necessary conditions for an employee to work from home for periods of time. These conditions must be agreed prior to approval being granted. An employee cannot be directed to work from home nor is the University under any obligation to approve a request from an employee to enter into a working from home agreement.

The terms and conditions of employment as set out in the applicable industrial instruments that apply to the employee whilst at work also apply whilst working from home.

### **Working from home on a regular basis**

This procedure is designed to apply to situations where there is formal approval for an employee to engage in a regular working from home arrangement.

### **Conditions**

Certain conditions must be met prior to approval being granted for a regular working from home arrangement.

These include:

- completion of [OHSW 52](#) – Agreed Working from Home Arrangement form, signed by both parties
- completion of [OHSW 29](#) – OHSW and Ergonomic Self-Assessment
- all OHSW considerations have been addressed
- approval from the line manager.



### **Agreed working from home arrangement**

The terms of an employee's arrangement will not set a precedent for use as the basis of another employee's arrangement or any future requests to work from home.

The arrangement must record the days and/or hours in which the work shall be performed at the home-based worksite. It should also include such matters as communication arrangements, levels of supervision, duties to be performed, equipment and furniture requirements, health and safety and security arrangements.

### **When can a regular working from home arrangement be altered or terminated?**

A working from home arrangement may be terminated or altered:

- upon request by the employee or the line manager by giving or receiving notice in writing within 10 working days where either party has failed to meet the agreed outcomes or conditions identified in the agreement
- upon change of the employee's residential address unless renegotiated
- by the line manager for reasons such as a change in employment-related legislation or other instruments that affect the nature of employment, operational requirements of the University or inefficiency in the arrangement or security risks
- by a change in business direction.

All alterations must be in writing and signed by both the line manager and employee. Once approved, the altered working from home arrangement must be filed appropriately at the local level and be available for inspection as required.

Any regular working from home arrangements must be reviewed on at least an annual basis (perhaps in conjunction with the employee's performance review).

### **Working from home on an irregular basis**

Irregular working arrangements constitute a period of less than five working days. Line manager approval is required; this requires completion of [OHSW 53](#) - Request to work from home, irregular arrangement form. The request to work from home must be accompanied by a completed [OHSW 29](#) - OHSW & Ergonomics Self Assessment form.

### **Access arrangements**

Where required, the University, upon obtaining the consent of the employee may access a home-based site to undertake the following:

- maintenance of University equipment and supplies
- assessing and monitoring security arrangements of equipment and documents and
- occupational health and safety assessments.

There may be instances where University management needs urgent access to a home-based site; in these circumstances as much notice as possible will be provided to the employee. These incidences may include:

- maintenance of faulty equipment
- occupational health and safety purposes
- urgent security matters
- other purposes agreed to between the University and the employee.

### **Documents/Forms**

[OHSW 29 - OHSW & Ergonomic Self-Assessment – Working From Home Environment Checklist](#)

[OHSW 52 – Agreed Working from Home Arrangement Form](#)

[OHSW 53 – Request to work from Home – Irregular Arrangement](#)

[FS69 Asset Loan Form](#)

### **References**

[University OHSW&IM Policy](#)

[University OHSW Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011 \(PDF 158kb\)](#)

[University Injury Management Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011 \(PDF 85kb\)](#)

[OHSW & Injury Management System \(PDF 128kb\)](#)

[Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act, 1986](#)

[Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations, 2010](#)

[Performance Management Policy and Guideline](#)