

TEMPORARY REMOTE WORKING POLICY

Policy Owner: Director of Human Resources

Issue Date: August 2020

Review Date: June 2021

Introduction

This policy sets out the College’s approach to remote working during the coronavirus pandemic.

This is a temporary policy and the College reserves the right to require employees to work on campus as applicable and with appropriate notice.

This policy is applicable to all College employees. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Working Patterns

Employees working remotely should agree a working pattern with their line manager that is broadly in line with their normal working day and week. Any significant changes to working pattern or hours must be requested through the College’s Flexible Working Policy. [Flexible Working Policy](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/Principal%20and%20Chief%20Executive/ci_policies_procedures_hub/Documents/Flexible%20Working%20Policy%20Procedure.pdf)

To ensure wellbeing, adequate rest breaks should be taken, in the same way that you are advised to when working on campus i.e.:

* after 6 hours of work, take a break of at least 20 minutes;
* ensure the time period between stopping work one day and beginning the next is not less than 11 hours; and
* have at least one complete day each week when no work is done.

Communication

Line managers must ensure that the usual arrangements for one to one and team meetings continue and will agree with teams and individual employees how communication will operate during the period of remote working.

Employees must also keep in regular contact with their line manager and ensure they are kept up to date with their individual circumstances as appropriate.

All methods of communication including email, telephone and video calls, WhatsApp groups etc. will be utilised to ensure relationships are maintained and work continues. Shared calendars and out of office messaging must be used to ensure colleagues are aware of availability.

Health and Safety

All employees, wherever they may be working, including when working from home, have a duty to ensure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that they take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of anyone else who is affected by their work. This includes the way they set up their working space.

We respect that it is your home work space and therefore how you lay that out is up to you. So, to help you the College provides advice on the best practice for setting up a home workstation. Therefore, we ask you to complete the Working with Computers Module of the Health & Safety Essentials Training [Health and Safety Essentials Training](https://moodle.ccacolchester.com/enrol/index.php?id=6758)

and complete a DSE Assessment

[Home VDU Risk Assessment](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/FinandRes/Health%20and%20Safety/VDU_Assessment/_layouts/15/WopiFrame2.aspx?sourcedoc=/support_departments/FinandRes/Health%20and%20Safety/VDU_Assessment/Document%20Library/HOME%20BASED%20VDU%20RISK%20ASSESSMENT%20FORM%20December%20%202020.docx&action=default)

[VDU Risk Assessment Guidelines](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/FinandRes/Health%20and%20Safety/VDU_Assessment/_layouts/15/WopiFrame2.aspx?sourcedoc=/support_departments/FinandRes/Health%20and%20Safety/VDU_Assessment/Document%20Library/VDU%20Assessment%20Guidance%20December%202020.docx&action=default)

While working at home, employees who experience any issue that could be H&S related should report those to their line manager so that we can discuss the issue and consider possible causes and advise more specifically on the home work station set-up

If there is an actual work related accident or near miss in the home work space, It is important that it is reported to the line manager as soon as possible so that advice and support can be given.

Equipment and Materials

Whilst some equipment/materials can be and are provided by the College, this will depend upon the requirements of the role, individual circumstances, availability, cost and reasonableness.

Where a member of staff cannot work from home due to availability of equipment, software, connectivity, cost, health and safety etc, they will be asked to do so from a College campus.

Exceptions can only be made where an individual risk assessment has identified the individual cannot work on campus and no reasonable adjustments can be made to enable them to do so.

It is the responsibility of the employee to take care of any equipment provided by the College and report any faults. The equipment remains College property and must be returned when the period of remote working ends, or if the staff member leaves the College’s employment

Expenses/Tax

The College will not reimburse employees for any household expenses whilst working remotely.

The College will reimburse additional telephone costs on production of relevant documentation.

Employees may be able to claim tax relief for themselves for household expenses incurred as a result of working from home, provided the expenses are solely work related. If employees wish to benefit from this tax relief, see the Government's guide on claiming tax relief for your job expenses at [www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home](https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home).

Security

Employees who work from home are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with the College secure at all times, and in accordance with the Colleges Data Protection Policy, aligned to the GDPR and DPA 2018. Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

* Keep equipment password protected, using a unique password for their work computer and any other digital devices used for work.
* Store equipment in a safe and clean space when not in use.
* Follow all data encryption, protection standards and settings.
* Refrain from downloading suspicious, unauthorized or illegal software.
* Keep sensitive documentation under lock and key at all times except when in use

In addition, any equipment provided by the College must be used for work-related purposes only and must not be used by any other member of the family or third party at any time or for any purpose.

If any equipment is lost or stolen you must report this, including any possible data security loss, to your line manager immediately.

Home Based On-line meetings

Employees should complete the risk assessment on the link below to ensure they engage appropriately with colleagues, business partners and students when running on-line meetings from home. For further guidance on engaging with students, please refer to the guidance later in this document.

[Home Based On-line Meetings Risk Assessment](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/FinandRes/Health%20and%20Safety/VDU_Assessment/_layouts/15/WopiFrame2.aspx?sourcedoc=/support_departments/FinandRes/Health%20and%20Safety/VDU_Assessment/Document%20Library/HOME%20BASED%20ZOOM%20READY%20VDU%20RISK%20ASSESSMENT%20FORM%202020.docx&action=default)

Insurance

Employees should check with their home and contents insurance providers that they have adequate cover for the fact that they work from home/that any of their own equipment is covered for work use.

Mortgage or rental agreements

Employees are responsible for checking applicable mortgage or rental agreements to ensure they are permitted to work from home, and for obtaining any permissions necessary to work from home.

Safeguarding

College staff working with students must take particular care with regard to safeguarding whilst working remotely and adhere to the principles of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure at all times. In particular, care must be taken when using on-line video conferencing platforms. The links below are the protocols in place for students when engaging with students remotely from home.

[Protocols for Video Conferencing for live online teaching](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/Hum_ResandStaff_Dev/Human%20Resources/Document%20Library/Protocols%20for%20Video%20Conferencing%20-%20September%2020.pdf)

[Conducting 1:1 Video Conferencing from College site or home](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/Hum_ResandStaff_Dev/Human%20Resources/Document%20Library/Protocols%20for%201%20to%201%20Video%20Conferencing%20-%20September%2020.pdf)

[Guidelines for Live online Teaching (HE)](https://portal.colchester.ac.uk/support_departments/human_resources_training_development/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/support_departments/human_resources_training_development/Coronavirus%20Files/HE%20guidelines%20for%20online%20teaching%20final.pdf&action=default)

Terms and Conditions of Employment

All terms and conditions of employment remain unchanged during this period of remote working.

Any permanent or significant temporary changes to terms and conditions of employment must be implemented in accordance with usual College policies/procedures.

All College policies and procedures still apply, including:

* Sickness Absence
* Flexible Working Policy
* Data Protection Policy
* Safeguarding
* Code of Conduct
* Equality & Diversity
* IT Acceptable Use Policy

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