

# Working from Home Guidelines

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## INTRODUCTION

A working from home arrangement is not an entitlement and may only be entered into by mutual agreement between the University and the staff member. A staff member cannot be directed to work from home and the University is under no obligation to approve a request from a staff member to enter into a working from home arrangement.

Applications may be considered on a case-by-case basis, however, the University also recognises that it is not always appropriate for a staff member to carry out part or all of his or her duties from home and there are reasons why approval of a working from home arrangement may be refused or limited.

Careful planning and consultation is required to maximise the benefits to the University and the staff member. Before the University will approve a working from home arrangement, the staff member and his or her senior manager must follow the procedure for approval as outlined in the Working from Home Procedures.

## COMPLIANCE

This is a compliance requirement under the [Code of Conduct](#) and [Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act](#).

## INTENT

This document provides additional guidelines for staff members who may seek an infrequent working from home arrangement.

## RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document

**Ad hoc** working from home arrangement means a working from home arrangement that may be authorised by a staff member's senior manager, and does not occur on a regular basis or follow a regular pattern. Relevant terms, duties and responsibilities detailed in these procedures still apply to ad hoc arrangements, as does the requirement complete the Working from Home WHS Checklist;

**Home-based work site** means the area of a private dwelling designated by the staff member to be used as the workplace where the staff member will perform the duties as agreed between the University and the staff member when working from home;

**Ongoing working from home arrangement** means a working from home agreement authorised by the Deputy Chief Operating Officer that occurs at least once each week/fortnight for more than one (1) month;

**Senior Manager** means a staff member of the University holding the position of Director or Head of School or equivalent;

**Staff member** means anyone employed by the University and includes all continuing, fixed-term, casual, adjunct or honorary staff or those holding University offices or who are a member of a University committee;

**Working from home** means an authorised and cooperative arrangement made between the staff member and the University for the performance of specified work at the home-based work site during ordinary hours of duty at the staff member's house;

**Working from Home Agreement** means a written document (template) used by the University to record formally the staff members ongoing working from home arrangement including an outline of the conditions, expectations, output and expected duration of the agreement. The agreement is signed by the applicant, immediate supervisor and approved by the senior manager; and

**Workplace** means an area or place, vehicle or vessel whether on land or water, where a staff member performs his or her duties on behalf of the University and includes laboratories, workshops, training rooms, on-site recreational facilities, on field trips, in teaching facilities, in offices, in rural environments and any area of industry operations.

## GUIDELINES

### Suitability

Senior managers should consider and take into account the following when assessing any requests for a working from home arrangement:

- The staff member's ability to continue to make a sufficient contribution to citizenship, academic management and scholarly life as required;
- The suitability of the work, including consideration of the impact on any duties, as well as:
  - Whether the job involves the handling, processing or creation of information, rather than the delivery of a service that needs to take place on campus, for example, working as a receptionist, maintaining buildings or equipment;
  - Whether the staff member can access required information easily and quickly from home;
  - Whether the output of the work to be done from home can be clearly defined and monitored;
  - Whether the staff member has the ability to work autonomously;
  - Whether the general nature and requirements of the staff member's work duties require him or her to be present at the workplace, for example, laboratory-based work, delivery of a service;
- The suitability of the home-based work site in terms of meeting Work Health and Safety standards and risk assessments;
- The capability and role development needs of the staff member, such consideration to include:
  - The ability of the staff member to deliver work effectively without supervision;
  - Self-motivation, self-discipline and possession of good time management skills; and
  - Clarity of requirements, deadlines and objectives with feedback.

In the situation where a staff member requires close supervision or close interaction with other staff members, students or customers of the University a working from home arrangement may not be considered appropriate.

## Academic Staff Members

Requests by academic staff members for working from home arrangement should be negotiated through:

- PDRS discussions;
- Specific meetings with the Head of School; and/or
- Research proposals or course developments proposals.

Where an academic staff member is seeking to enter into a working from home arrangement, the academic staff member and their senior manager must consult and take into account the academic staff member's teaching, research and professional commitments against the impact on colleagues, students, and faculty initiatives and responsibilities when the academic staff member is absent from the campus.

Prior to supporting a request, Senior Managers should ensure that any such arrangements:

- Do not leave programs or units understaffed or experiencing a negative impact from the academic staff member's absence; and
- Do not impede the normal operations of the University.

On-going working from home arrangements on a regular basis such as for one (1) day each week or fortnight for more than one (1) month, may include, but is not limited to:

- Specified research such as completing postgraduate study or undertaking research activities;
- Teaching and presentation using technology such as Learnline;
- Marking and assessment of units as well as postgraduate scripts;
- Editing publications and other roles associated with publication;
- Writing for publications and other creative scholarly activities; or
- Working on research projects that include data collation, categorisation and analysis;

Ad-hoc working from home arrangements for a shorter period of time on a more sporadic basis such as two (2) to three (3) a days a week for a period of three (3) to four (4) weeks, may include, but is not limited to:

- Preparation for teaching sessions;
- Communication, liaison and feedback to students through technology such as Learnline and telephone;
- Completing a funded project or publication; or
- Another task.

Staff consultation with students is recognised as an important duty and must only be conducted face-to-face on campus, or through telephone, Learnline and email.

There may be occasions where students and staff members dine together, such as celebrations at the end of semester or the completion of postgraduate study. The preference is for University premises to be used for these purposes. However, where this may not be possible, academic staff members must ensure that:

- Students are provided with options for locations or refuse to participate without penalty; and
- Students, and other staff members are safe and that they are not in a situation where it could be reasonably concluded that they were in any danger of:
  - Improper conduct; and/or

- A sexual harassment; and
- That there is a responsible service and consumption of alcohol in accordance with the University's [Alcohol, Drugs and other Substances Policy](#).

## Insurance

Staff members who are working from home under an approved Working from Home Arrangement will be covered by the University's Workers Compensation Insurance, if performing University work in accordance with the Working from Home Arrangement.

Staff members are solely responsible for checking whether working from home has any impact on any existing insurance arrangements he or she may have for the home-based work site, including:

- Public liability;
- Equipment covered by the staff members home contents insurance; and
- Any obligations the staff member may have to notify his or her insurer that the residence is to be used for work purposes.

## Absences

Where the staff member is unwell or is caring for a family member who is unwell and is unable to perform his or her duties from the home-based work site, the staff member must notifying his or her supervisor in the same manner expected as if the staff member was to be working from University premises and in accordance with the requirements in the relevant [Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement](#).

## University Not Liable to any Third Party

The University will not be liable for any liability, loss, damage, costs or expenses incurred or suffered by any person arising directly or indirectly out of or in connection with the working from home arrangement, including but not limited to any liability, loss, damage, costs or expenses as a result of faulty equipment, except to the extent that any liability, loss, damage, costs or expenses are caused or contributed to by the negligence of the University.

## Services

Not all on-campus services are available or supportable when used from a staff member's home-based work site. The staff member must accept this situation and agree not to impose any overheads on the University for additional services.

## Training

It is compulsory for staff members to complete the online Ergonomics in the Workplace training. As a minimum, all staff, prior to commencing to work from home must have completed training in Workstation Ergonomics and completed the University's ergonomic Computerised Workstation Checklist.

## ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Internal

[Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substances Policy](#)

[CDU and Union Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Conflicts of Interest Policy](#)

[Human Resources Policy](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Information Privacy Policy](#)

[Staff - Working from Home Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Working from Home Agreement form](#)

#### **External**

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#) (NT)

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#) (QLD)

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#) (NSW)

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

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Regulations 2011](#) (NT)

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Regulations 2011](#) (QLD)

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Regulations 2011](#) (NSW)

[Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Regulations 2012](#) (SA)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#) (Vic)

[Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007](#) (VIC)

## Document History and Version Control

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1.01	15 Dec 2017	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion to new Governance template due to new University branding</li> <li>• Updated definitions</li> <li>• Updated hyperlinks</li> <li>• Contact person changed to Director, Office of People and Capabilities</li> <li>• Reference to Privacy Policy changed to Information Privacy Policy</li> </ul>