



## WORKING FROM HOME POLICY

### OVERVIEW

The University of Tasmania is committed to providing a safe and healthy place of work for all employees and this applies to staff who work from home. Allowing home-based work provides working arrangements for staff to assist in balancing the demands of work and family/personal life. The University recognises that promoting flexible working arrangements has mutual benefits.

### DEFINITIONS

#### Accountable Person:

An individual, who assumes responsibility for the health or welfare of any other person in a workplace by providing instruction, direction, assistance, advice or service, is deemed an Accountable Person in accordance with the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998*. All management and supervisory staff (which includes those with responsibility for students) are designated as Accountable Persons.

#### Employee:

For the purposes of this Policy, employee means any employee of the University.

#### Home-based site:

That part of a private dwelling where the employee will perform home-based work.

#### Home-based work:

Regular performance of duties at the home-based site as agreed between the University and employee, which shall be conducted within the standard span of hours unless otherwise agreed.

#### Working From Home Agreement (“the Agreement”):

The signed written agreement (Appendix 1) outlining the conditions of a working from home arrangement between the University and an employee.

### Responsible Officer:

Deans, Heads of Division, Heads of School and Administrative Sections have been designated as Responsible Officers under the *Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995*.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Accountable Persons:

Need to ensure that the home-based work environment is appropriate and meets the requirements of the Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Working From Home Report. Need to monitor and review the home-based work arrangements. Need to ensure that the checklist for ownership of items required to perform duties at home is completed.

### Employee

If home-based work is desired and practical express their interest to their Accountable Person and complete the Working From Home Agreement including the OH&S Working From Home Report.

### Responsible Officers:

Need to ensure that the Working From Home Policy is implemented within their area of responsibility in an appropriate manner. Need to ensure that all Working From Home Agreements are formally authorised and recorded, and forwarded to Human Resources for inclusion on the employee's personal file.

## **PROCEDURE**

The opportunity to work from home is not an entitlement or a right, and can only occur by formal agreement between the University and the employee.

An employee may work from home for regular periods of time under certain conditions, which are described below. One-off or occasional work from home for a few hours does not require formal application although approval must be obtained from the Accountable Person. However, Accountable Persons need to be mindful that duty of care responsibilities still apply.

The duties to be performed whilst undertaking home-based work need to be clearly detailed and formalised in the Agreement prior to commencing such an arrangement. Likewise measurement of output and supervision shall be agreed upon prior to the arrangement being in place. The Accountable Person should also regularly review the home-based working arrangement to ensure that it is working effectively.

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ("OH&S") CONSIDERATIONS**

Under the *Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995*, an employer must provide a safe working environment and safe systems of work as far as is reasonably practicable for employees. The same applies to the home-based site. Therefore, prior to an employee being granted approval to commence home-based work the following shall occur:

1. The area of the private dwelling to be used as the worksite shall be clearly identified and recorded in the Agreement. This designated home-based site would not normally include a whole dwelling.
2. The employee will complete the OH&S Working From Home Report (Appendix 2) and forward it to their appropriate Accountable Person.
3. The Accountable Person must review the OH&S Working From Home Report with the employee and assess compliance with the University's OH&S Policies & Procedures. Where the employee has confirmed in the Working From Home Report that all requirements have been met and the Accountable Person is satisfied that all OH&S Policies & Procedures have been complied with, no home based inspection will be required. Where the employee has been unable to confirm that all requirements have been met, a home based site inspection will be necessary. This will be undertaken by the Accountable Person who will determine the suitability of the proposed working from home arrangements. In the event that the home-based arrangements do not comply with the University's OH&S Policy and Procedures framework the home-based work arrangements should not be approved until appropriate changes have been made. When the Accountable Person is satisfied that there are no additional OH&S risks associated with the employee undertaking work from their home base, the Working From Home Agreement and Working From Home Report should be forwarded via the Responsible Officer to Human Resources. This documentation will be placed on the employee's personal file.
4. All OH&S policies that apply to employees of the University in general shall, as far as practicable, apply in carrying out work at the home-based site. University OH&S Policies and Procedures can be sourced at: [www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol\\_proc/index.html](http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/index.html).

## **EQUIPMENT AND UTILITIES USED AT THE HOME-BASED SITE**

Prior to an employee being granted approval to commence home-based work, the University and the employee should identify the equipment required by the employee in order to undertake their work duties at the home-based site. The list should include items such as telephone, mobile telephone, computing equipment and stationary. This list must specify who owns each item. Whoever owns an item is responsible for its maintenance and insurance. The final agreed list that is negotiated between the Accountable Person and employee must be attached to the Working From Home Agreement (Appendix 1).

## **SECURITY - COMPUTER NETWORK**

The Accountable Person and the employee must ensure that arrangements are in place for the security of the computer network and that the employee whilst working from home will abide by the standards and guidelines as defined in the relevant University policies.

## **CONTACT AVAILABILITY**

Contact arrangements will be agreed between the employee and Accountable Person and a written note attached to the Work From Home Agreement. These may range from diverting the employee's University phone number to their home base, limiting client contact to email or screening of calls by another work colleague if appropriate and practicable. The suitability of these arrangements will be determined on the basis that service delivery will not be adversely affected. The employee's home contact details will remain confidential and will not be provided to other people unless the employee has agreed in advance.

## **ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS TO THE HOME-BASED SITE**

The consent of an employee working from a home-based site is required before access can be obtained to a home-based site. Reasonable access should not be denied for reasons that include:

- routine maintenance of equipment and supplies;
- assessing and monitoring security arrangements of equipment and documents;
- OH&S inspections;
- incident investigation; and
- supervision.

## **RECORDS**

Completed and approved Working From Home Agreements shall be forwarded to Human Resources for inclusion on the employee's personal file.

## **REFERENCES**

The following legislative provisions have guided the development of this Policy:

- *Workplace Health & Safety Act 1995*
- *Workplace Health & Safety Regulations 1998*

*Approved by the OH&S Committee: 3 March 2005*

### **Disclaimer**

*This procedure was designed for use within the University of Tasmania. The University makes no guarantee and assumes no responsibility as to the absolute correctness for all circumstances or for the adaptation outside the University of Tasmania environment.*

# WORKING FROM HOME AGREEMENT



This Agreement must be read in conjunction with the relevant Enterprise Agreement and related policies and procedures that govern employment at the University. This Agreement must be forwarded to Human Resources for placement on the employee's personal file following approval.

## Employee Details

Employee Number \_\_\_\_\_

Family Name \_\_\_\_\_ Given Names \_\_\_\_\_

Position Number \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title \_\_\_\_\_

School/Section \_\_\_\_\_

## Private Dwelling containing Home-based Site

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Agreement Details

Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number of \_\_\_\_\_ days/hours per week at home-based site

Attendance requirements at University or other work sites (eg. Meetings, training etc)

.....

- |                                                                                       |                    |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| • Designated Home-based Site (Sketch attached)                                        | Yes                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Equipment supplied by University or the staff member (Details attached)             | Yes                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Equipment taken "Off Campus" (Details attached)                                     | Yes/Not Applicable |                          |
| • Special arrangements (Details attached & signed by employee and Accountable Person) | Yes/Not Applicable |                          |
| • OH&S Working From Home Report (attached and signed by Accountable Person)           | Yes                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • A copy of the Working From Home Policy provided to staff member                     | Yes                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Approvals

This agreement is between the University of Tasmania ("the University") and

..... ("the employee")

I have read and understood the University's Working From Home Policy and consent to abide by them and be bound by this Agreement as indicated by my signature below:

Signed (Employee)..... Date.....

Signed Accountable Person.....Date.....

*On behalf of the University of Tasmania*

Signed (Head of School/Section).....Date.....

*On behalf of the University of Tasmania*

## University of Tasmania OH&S Working From Home Report

Prior to working from a home-based site the employee must use the following checklist to assess their home-based site in order to minimise the risk of illness or injury whilst performing University work. This checklist should be used in conjunction with the University Screened Based Equipment – Guidelines for Use and the Prevention of Occupational Overuse Syndrome (OOS) Policy.

### Home-based Site Checklist

#### 1. Workstation

- |                                                                               |                              |                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is the workstation size adequate for the tasks to be performed?               | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there adequate leg space to allow free leg movement under the workstation? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the work surface a single continuous surface?                              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is a footrest available?                                                      | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the non-adjustable workstation between 680 – 720mm in height?              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are most frequently used items within easy reach from the seated position?    | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are cables stowed out of the way?                                             | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 2. Chair

- |                                       |                              |                             |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Do you have a fully adjustable chair? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the chair have a five-star base? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the chair move freely?           | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there adequate lumbar support?     | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the padding adequate?              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 3. Computer, Screen, Keyboard

- |                                                                        |                              |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is the screen approx arms length from user?                            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the screen height approx 400mm above work surface?                  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are characters sharp (no fuzzy edges) standing out against background? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can the screen be adjusted (tilted up and down)?                       | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there adequate space to use the keyboard in front of the screen?    | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 4. Mouse

- |                                                          |                              |                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is the mouse used on a mouse pad?                        | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the mouse on the same height surface as the keyboard? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can the mouse be used on either side?                    | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 5. Other Equipment

- |                                                            |                              |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is a printer required?                                     | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is a document holder required?                             | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the document holder support the documents adequately? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are documents easy to read and manipulate?                 | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is a headset required?                                     | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there adequate storage space?                           | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 6. Environment

- |                                                                                                           |                              |                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Is there adequate lighting for the tasks being performed?                                                 | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can glare be controlled by window coverings?                                                              | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the room temperature, humidity and air flow comfortable<br>- heating and cooling as required?          | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you attached a plan of the home-based site including desk,<br>power outlets, telephone and lighting? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

**7. Other Considerations**

- Is the floor space free from tripping hazards? Yes  No
- Is the PC protected by a circuit breaker and surge protector? Yes  No
- Are there adequate power outlets to run the PC and other equipment? Yes  No
- Are all power cables, leads, power boards etc in good condition and have a current test and tag? Yes  No
- Have you notified your insurance company of the home-based work arrangement and attached the name and address of your home insurer to the Agreement? Yes  No
- Is there a functioning smoke detector in the house? Yes  No
- Is there safe access and egress provided? Yes  No
- Has the employee completed OH&S training? Yes  No
- Has Information Technology Resources been notified regarding accessing the campus network? Yes  No

On completion of this checklist please discuss this with your Accountable Person and address any concerns with your Accountable Person regarding your home-based site.

..... **Date**.....  
**Employee Signature**

**Approved:** Yes  No  **Was site inspected?** Yes  No

.....  
**Accountable Person – (print name)**

..... **Date**.....  
**Signature**

Please ensure Appendix 2 is attached to the Working From Home Agreement.

For further assistance and reference material regarding University OH&S Policies and Procedures go to: [www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol\\_proc/index.html](http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/index.html) or contact the OH&S Unit.