Equality and Wellbeing Risk Assessment: Continuing to Work from Home  
Last Update: 7th December 2020

**Purpose**
To identify the potential risks for those staff required to remain working at home/remotely for the longer term.  
To provide a template for individual equality and wellbeing risk assessment that Managers can use to implement appropriate mitigation and support.

**Terms of Reference**
Risk assessments should be introduced for staff working from home during the annual SRDS discussion, in routine 1:1’s and other employee/manager wellbeing related conversations as appropriate. Conversations that consider an individual’s wellbeing should be the norm. The risk assessment is dynamic and should be revisited on a regular basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Considerations</th>
<th>Likelihood (H/M/L)</th>
<th>Impact (H/M/L)</th>
<th>Current Impact</th>
<th>Measures taken to mitigate</th>
<th>Likelihood of risk following mitigation (H/M/L)</th>
<th>Residual Impact</th>
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| 1. Working from home on a frequent and regular basis may cause stress for some employees.  
  This may include feelings of 'burnout' and 'working from home fatigue'. | High | High | Staff have been working from home since the end of March.  
  Staff and managers may not be familiar with ‘burnout’ and ‘working from home fatigue’ as a concept. The early signs of this type of stress may be missed.  
  Managers may be struggling with this themselves and in turn | Managers are encouraged to check in with their staff on a frequent and regular basis. Guidance on [How to bring wellbeing into the everyday](https://www.example.com) has been provided.  
  Information and Guidance has been collated in response to the risk of ‘burnout’ and ‘working from home fatigue’ and can be found here [How to manage working from home fatigue and burnout](https://www.example.com)  
  The [Managers Wellbeing Toolkit](https://www.example.com) contains a series of tools to assist | | |
Managers in responding to this risk. This includes access to a [Working from home; MIND Wellness Action Plan](#) and how to set up a Wellbeing Hub so that staff can stay connected.

Managers are encouraged to utilise the People Development [How To Series](#) module, ‘How to have a Wellbeing Conversation?’, ‘How to Manage Teams Wherever they Are’ and ‘How to support your own and others’ Resilience’.

The recently updated [Stress Risk Web Pages](#) include tools for individual and team risk assessment and action plans.

Staff are encouraged to take annual leave on a regular basis to seek rest and recuperation. Avoiding carry over of annual leave as far as possible, but knowing carry over of 10 days is possible if necessary.

Continue to use the [Staff Survey](#) to listen to what staff say they need in respect to their wellbeing during this time.
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<th>Information about future working practices and the timings of a return to campus are not yet available to share with all staff.</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>The uncertainty and ambiguity of future working practices and timings may cause stress and anxiety. There is a risk this can be exacerbated where staff have existing mental health conditions. Managing staff in the absence of this information may cause Managers stress.</th>
<th>Resources to support staff to cope with change, ambiguity and anxiety are available via the <a href="#">Staff Wellbeing</a> pages. Resources to assist Managers in supporting their staff are also available via the <a href="#">Staff Wellbeing</a> pages. A <a href="#">Wellbeing Champions Toolkit</a> has been developed to assist with the implementation of Champion scheme as a means of support for staff. Managers are encouraged to utilise the People Development <a href="#">How To Series</a> module, ‘How to lead through Change’.</th>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Staff may not have access to the IT equipment that is required to support working from home on a semi permanent basis.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Staff may be hindered in the safe delivery of their role if they do not have suitable equipment, technology or software. Staff may not be as able to connect with colleagues/students across the University.</td>
<td>A process by which staff can book a date and time to access their physical office space to collect items they may need has been created. Information is available via the <a href="#">Remote Working</a> pages. Staff with specific equipment needs are encouraged to raise their requirement with their Manager in the first instance. Requests can</td>
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|   | Working space may be unsuitable for longer term working from home. | Medium | Medium | A risk of poor muscular-skeletal health.  
A risk of working from home ‘fatigue’.

Managers are encouraged to check in with their staff on a frequent and regular basis. Guidance on *How to bring wellbeing into the everyday* has been provided.

Managers are encouraged to utilise the People Development *How To Series* module, ‘How to have a Wellbeing Conversation?’

Staff are reminded of their personal responsibility for H&S whilst working remotely.

The following guidance, *Desk Set Up when Home Working* is available to help staff with setting up a safe working space.

Staff can revisit DSE online training [here](#) and view the DSE policy and procedures [here](#)

Staff are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their Manager so that the appropriate processes can be
5. Home may not be a safe or healthy environment for some staff.

| Medium | High | There is potential for an increase in domestic abuse and violence. There is an increase in the amount of technology that is currently used to support home working. Abusers outside of the home can reach staff more easily to carry out technology mediated violence and abuse. Pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse. Existing abuse may get worse during pregnancy or after giving birth. For some groups of staff, barriers to safety may be multiplied (including BAME women, disabled, and LGBT+ community) | Routes of support and guidance for staff and managers concerned about domestic violence is available on the Staff Wellbeing pages. Working space has been made available at Solly Street for those staff for whom working from home is having a detrimental impact on their wellbeing. Staff should discuss the need with their Manager in the first instance. Space is available to book here Resource Booking. Managers are encouraged to continue to check in with their staff on a frequent and regular basis. Guidance on How to bring wellbeing into the everyday has been provided. Staff are encouraged to check in with and support each other regularly. See #listening from home campaign. It is clear via the Staff Wellbeing pages and other communications, where staff can go in Sheffield (and the surrounding areas) to access safe refuge. |
There are potential cultural and social differences amongst our staff group which may mean that staff need specialist support.

The University communications and Staff Wellbeing pages are clear on how staff should report any concerns they may have for members of staff who may be experiencing domestic abuse and online harassment.

Managers are reminded of the Report + Support Portal for staff and students.

FED&I and HR Services colleagues are aware of the Working from Home Wellbeing Risk Assessment and of the support available for staff.

Links to the Domestic Violence and Abuse pages are available and highlighted via the Parents Network pages.

Remind Managers of the need to conduct a Pregnancy Risk assessment for expectant mothers who are working from home Pregnancy Risk Assessment Guidance

Ensure the range of support included in the above measures reflects and is appropriate to the diversity of our staff community.
6. Although, schools reopened to all children from September 2020, there is likely to be disruption to standard school hours and arrangements (e.g. pickups and dropoffs, risk of children needing time off school)

Staff may have childcare responsibilities for preschool age children who are not able to attend nursery or pre-school facilities per previous arrangements.

Although much reduced, there is potential for an increase in stress and anxiety in balancing work and family commitments.

Staff may have anxiety around their children returning to school in view of any ongoing COVID risk.

There is a risk that schools may not be able to remain open as planned during any future ‘wave’.

Managers should discuss caring responsibilities with staff and reiterate flexibility around working patterns and workloads.

Information and resources around managing anxiety are available via the [Staff Wellbeing pages](#).

Staff can view supportive information via the [Parents Network](#) here and can request to join the network itself. The web pages include the Sheffield Directory which will give information about childcare providers in the local area.

7. Some staff have caring responsibilities (beyond school age children) that include elderly relatives, disabled/vulnerable relatives and will continue to need to support their relatives whilst working from home.

There is potential for an increase in stress and anxiety in balancing work and caring commitments.

There is potential for some staff to be disproportionately impacted in the longer-term by caring responsibilities with some being more affected than others.

Managers should discuss caring responsibilities with staff and reiterate flexibility around working patterns and workloads.

Resources and support for staff with caring responsibilities are available here [Employers for Carers](#).
|   | Staff may experience emerging mental health difficulties related to COVID (ongoing cases or the after effects of). There is a risk that for staff working from home these may not be visible or known. | High | High | Some staff may have experienced bereavement or trauma during the pandemic. Some staff may have family members or friends who have been impacted and who require ongoing support. BAME staff are more likely to have been impacted on by the virus and may be feeling increased levels of anxiety, grief or similar. Some staff may be experiencing ongoing physical after effects of the illness that have not yet resolved. | Managers are encouraged to check in with their staff on a frequent and regular basis. Guidance on [How to bring wellbeing into the everyday](https://example.com) has been provided. Managers should exercise extra vigilance for those staff for whom it is known have been impacted by COVID directly or indirectly. Managers are encouraged to utilise the People Development [How To Series](https://example.com) module, ‘How to have a Wellbeing Conversation?’ and ‘How to Manage Teams Wherever they Are’. [Wellbeing Resources - Mental Health](https://example.com) gives a list of charities and supportive organisations that can help people with mental health challenges including critical emergency support such as the [Samaritans](https://example.com). Senior Leads are encouraged to consider a [Wellbeing Champions Scheme](https://example.com) for their Faculty or Department as a means of support for staff (if they haven’t already). |
Tools for stress risk assessments, wellness assessments and action plans are available in the Managers Wellbeing Toolkit.

Staff can contact the University EAP Health Assured for support and eight sessions of funded counselling if required. This includes trauma and bereavement.

Staff can seek an assessment with Occupational Health, Health Management Ltd.

Staff and Managers can access a range of mental health and wellbeing information via the Staff Wellbeing pages.

Specific advice regards Post Covid-19 Syndrome (Long Covid) and Supporting Wellbeing has been developed.<add link>.

Staff can access emotional support via the Chaplaincy service, see information here Chaplaincy Support.

| 9. The ongoing working from home environment may result in ongoing | Medium | High | Existing reasonable adjustments and support plans may no longer be appropriate. | Specific advice regards the challenges of working from home has been developed for |
challenges for disabled or neuro diverse staff.

Exacerbation of pre existing mental health conditions (anxiety, depression, OCD)

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<th>neuro-diverse staff and their managers</th>
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<td>Managers are encouraged to review any existing reasonable adjustments/action plans with their staff and identify whether any changes are required.</td>
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**Wellbeing Resources - Mental Health** gives a list of charities and supportive organisations that can help people with mental health challenges including critical emergency support such as the [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org).  

Senior Leads are encouraged to consider a [Wellbeing Champions Scheme](https://www.wellbeingchampions.org.uk) for their Faculty or Department as a means of support for staff (if they haven’t already).  

Tools for stress risk assessments, wellness assessments and action plans are available in the [Managers Wellbeing Toolkit](https://www.wellbeingtoolkit.org.uk).