



Procedure: Home based work

Purpose

To specify the circumstances and responsibilities in which home based work may be considered at the Australian National University (ANU) and to ensure compliance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)* and the *Work Health and Safety Regulations, 2011 (Cth)*, the *Safety and Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (SRC Act) 1988 (Cth)* and the University's Work Health & Safety (WHS) Management System. This procedure is linked to the Australian National University's Work health and safety and Rehabilitation policies and is one of the Safe Work procedures within the WHS Management System.

Definitions

Approved Delegate means General Managers, Research School and Service Division Directors.

Home Based Work means regular performance of University work for agreed hours from the home based site.

Home Based Work Site means an agreed area in the staff member's private dwelling.

Office Based Site means the location where the staff member would ordinarily work at the University if there were no home based work arrangement.

Supervisor means the person who is responsible for day-to-day supervision of the staff member.

Procedure

Scope

1. This procedure applies to all professional staff, while conducting University business activities at a home based location, either within Australia or overseas.
2. It excludes University business conducted as fieldwork or remote locations away from their usual place of work and while travelling, which is not conducted in a home environment. Requirements for these conditions are covered in the [Working safely away from campus procedure](#).
3. Academic staff who have a home based work site and require practical ergonomic assistance can refer to the [home based work for academic staff form](#).

Introduction

4. Home based work enables the use of flexible work arrangements by staff with the agreement of the University's approved delegate. Home based work may assist but is not a substitute for family responsibilities. The staff member must be able to work as efficiently and effectively as an equivalent staff member on campus.
5. The circumstances in which home based work may be considered include:
 - to assist staff in balancing family and carer responsibility in line with the work, study and family responsibilities policy;
 - in conjunction with a return to work program following injury, subject to assessment of the Rehabilitation Case Manager; or
 - other circumstances as deemed appropriate by the delegate.

Responsibilities

6. All General Managers/Directors, as the approved delegates, have responsibility to consider and approve home based work requests in accordance with this procedure.

Supervisors

7. All supervisors have the responsibility to review requests received for home based work requests and assist to detail the arrangements, work tasks and conditions of work that will be in place, for the approved delegate's consideration.

Professional staff

8. Professional staff members have the responsibility to consult with their supervisor about the proposed home based work arrangements, provide all necessary documentation and undertake all relevant work health and safety assessments as detailed in this procedure.

Work Environment Group

9. The Work Environment Group (WEG) has the responsibility for providing advice on the home based work assessment outcomes, recommended ergonomic adjustments and providing (as required) a list of suitably qualified health professionals to undertake a site inspection if deemed necessary.

Starting the process

10. A professional staff member may make an application in writing on the [home based work self-assessment and work schedule form](#) to their immediate supervisor to request a home based working arrangement.

11. The supervisor will email the application to whs@anu.edu.au, who will review the work health and safety standards of the home environment from the information provided, and then reply directly to the supervisor with further recommendations.
12. WEG may deem it necessary for a site inspection of the home based work locations to be conducted. This is to be carried out by a suitably qualified professional, with the costs of the assessment to be met by the relevant College, Research School or Service Division.
13. The supervisor will provide the completed form to the approved delegate for consideration.
14. The approved delegate will assess applications for home based work having regard to the following:
 - the requirements of the College, Research School or Service Division including the potential impact on performance of the work unit as a result of the home based work arrangement;
 - the essential requirements of the position and suitability of the staff member's duties for home based work;
 - the cost to the University;
 - the proportion of time to be spent at the home site and work site and the potential impact on the staff member's work performance as a result of the home based work arrangement;
 - whether there is a suitable home based work site available, as assessed by the WEG; and
 - in the case of a return to work program following injury, home based work is assessed as suitable by the Rehabilitation Case Manager and an approved medical practitioner.
15. The University will ensure that a staff member working from home has the same opportunities for professional training and development as University based staff.
16. While the University will endeavour to accommodate the needs of the staff members wherever possible, these arrangements are not rights and are available only after approval of the delegate has been received.
17. All University policies that apply at the staff member's usual place of work apply to the home based site as far as practicable.
18. The University is not responsible for any liability on the part of a third party that is not a staff member of the University at the home-based site.

19. Costs relating to a worksite assessment, set-up and/or reasonable adjustment of the home-based site are the responsibility of the College, Research School or Service Division.

20. The University reserves the right to discontinue a home based work arrangement.

Suitability of work for home based work arrangements

21. Examples of duties that may be considered suitable for home based work include research, data entry, computer applications design, projects, policy writing, report writing and planning.

22. Examples of duties that may be considered unsuitable for home based work include work:

- that requires a high degree of supervision, or has supervisory responsibilities;
- that requires a high degree of team work and collaboration on site;
- that requires client contact that cannot be achieved via telephone or email;
- that requires the staff member to service University facilities/assets; and
- where the staff member has little control over the workflow or demands of the job.

Designation of home based site

23. Prior to a staff member being granted approval to commence a home-based work arrangement, the staff member will inform the University of the precise area in the home to be used as the workplace. The area designated will be deemed to be the workplace and all other areas of the dwelling will not be classified as the workplace. Refer to the [home based work self-assessment and work schedule form](#).

24. Work health and safety inspections will be carried out in order to ensure that the proposed site is habitable and conforms to acceptable work health and safety standards commensurate with the type of work being undertaken and the risks involved. Such safety standards include (but are not limited to) working smoke alarms, door locks and emergency egress points.

25. The approved delegate must be satisfied that appropriate measures are in place to ensure the security of University information and assets.

26. The approved delegate must be satisfied that the staff member has adequate home insurance provisions to cover property damage which may occur as a result of home based work arrangements. Insurance costs are the responsibility of the staff member and evidence of the insurance policy is to be provided with the home-based work application.

27. The approved delegate should seek additional advice from the WEG prior to approval should there be any ongoing concerns that require specialist work health and safety advice.
28. Approval for any proposed working from home arrangement should not be granted by the approved delegate until any modifications to the home base workplace as recommended by the WEG have been made.
29. The local area is responsible for all costs relating to assessment, set-up and reasonable adjustment of the home based site.
30. If a suitable designated home based site cannot be identified, a working from home arrangement will not be approved.

Terms, conditions and duties - Negotiation and Agreement

31. If the type of work the staff member performs is found to be suitable for home based work and home based site is approved, the terms and conditions of the home based agreement will be discussed/negotiated and agreed to by the staff member, supervisor and the General Manager/Research School/Service Division Director (or other appropriate Delegate).
32. The terms and conditions must include the timeframe for the home based work arrangement, days and hours to be completed at home, and the mechanisms of both tracking the approval period and progress of the home based work arrangement. As a minimum the arrangement should be reviewed every 12 month period.
33. The terms and conditions must include methods by which the supervisor plans to monitor the staff member's home based work, e.g. staff member's delivery on their performance development review (PDR), regular reviews and feedback, phone calls, or other communication mechanisms. Home based work is a shared responsibility and the supervisor has an obligation to monitor the staff member's progress.
34. Staff members undertaking home based work will be responsible for associated costs such as internet or telephone expenses unless agreed otherwise by the delegate.
35. A [home based work self-assessment and work schedule form](#) must be completed and placed on the staff member's personnel file in ERMS.

Termination of the home based work arrangement

36. Prior to expiry, either party may terminate the agreement provided that the party wishing to terminate gives reasonable notice.

37. Reasonable notice shall be four weeks if the previously agreed period for home based work was for six months; or two weeks if the previously agreed period for home based work was for less than six months.

Incident reporting

38. University staff shall report incidents and hazards immediately to their Supervisor or University contact person and through the Workplace safety incident and hazard reporting tool as per the WHS incident management procedure.

Sources

Legal and other requirements
<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)</i>
<i>Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)</i>
<i>The Safety and Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (Cth)</i>

Document information

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