

THE FERGUSLIE GROUP

HOME WORKING POLICY



Date Approved by the
Management Board

Signed:

Chairperson

Date approved by the
NTC Executive Committee

Signed:

Date of Next Review

APRIL 2026

1. Introduction

Home working is where staff members can do work at home instead of at their workplace. ***There are two types of home working:***

- ***Contractual*** home workers are employees based at home on a regular basis either for all their working week or part of it.
- ***Occasional*** home workers spend the majority of their time at their workplace but following the pandemic, may now work from home for around 2 days a week depending on their role within the organisation. It can also be used where an employee cannot get to their workplace but could still do the work (for instance an injury or bad weather). It is up to the employer to set parameters for occasional home working and determine each request on its own merit. This arrangement does not require contractual change and it can be withdrawn at any time.

The Ferguslie Group does not consider any of its organisations' employees to be contractual 'homeworkers'. This policy therefore enables us to permit employees to work from home following the working practices established during the Covid_19 pandemic. The Ferguslie Group recognises the flexibility and benefits it can bring to both the employer and the employee.

2. Policy Principles

The Ferguslie Group's Home Working Policy aims:

- To benefit the business from timeous high-quality reports, policies and projects by giving appropriate staff the opportunity to do normal office-type work at home, without interruptions;
- Not to compromise the usual level of service offered to our customers; and
- To set out the parameters to ensure these aims are met.

3. Policy Conditions

Home Working Parameters

For home working there is a normal limit of **2** days per week. The only situations where this could be waived are if:

- bad weather, injury or sickness prevents the employee from being able to commute to/attend the office but the work could be done at home and the employee is well enough to work; and
- the office/service is affected by a disaster when staff may be required to work from home for more than 2 days a week

In addition, if staff have permission to work at home regularly, this will not apply when

they are required to provide office cover for another colleague who is absent on holiday, sick etc. Employers in the Ferguslie Group reserve the right to withdraw the home working arrangement for business reasons at any time, and with immediate effect.

4. Line Manager's Approval

Requests for home working of more than 2 days a week, on an occasional basis, must be individually discussed with and approved by a management team member, who will assess each request against the requirements set out by this policy.

5. Performance Management

Employees will be required to log in and log out of the time system as they do when in the office. Flexi-time cannot be accrued when working from home so normal working hours of 9am to 5pm, with an hour for lunch, should be adhered to, unless flexi-time, TOIL or annual leave is being used for part of the day.

6. Health & Safety

Only employees who have attended a suitable Health & Safety Awareness training course will be eligible. An employee will only be permitted to work from home where the management team member is satisfied with the individual's maturity and knowledge of safe working practices.

A health and safety assessment of the home workstation will be carried out by the employee according to The Ferguslie Group's DSE and health and safety checklists (**Appendix 1**), which cover VDU risks and general precautions for householder electrical safety. The results will then be validated by their line manager during a discussion or home visit. The employee will be expected to report any changes that may affect the arrangements in the future (in which case another assessment may be necessary).

Prior to permitting an employee to work from home the employee will be given a copy of the HSE guidance note INDG 226 (**Appendix 2**) and this Policy on Homeworking and will sign a statement confirming that he/she has read both documents and will take all reasonable precautions to ensure his/her safety and that of any others who may be affected by their work (e.g. children in the home). Such statements will be filed by the Health & Safety Administrator (HSA).

- An employee will only be permitted to take home computer equipment that has been subject to a suitable and valid inspection and test regime (e.g. PAT).
- No employee will be permitted to hold any meetings within their home apart

from telephone or video conferencing.

- Any accident/incident/near miss occurring during the time an employee is working from home will be reported without delay to the HSA, who will deal with the situation as appropriate.

7. Technical Support

The Ferguslie Group employers' IT infrastructure is capable of supporting this form of home working with remote access to calendars, emails and documents. Staff who work from home are required to use the Group's laptop computer equipment and their own home broadband. They can then log into the Group's network using the remote access software (VPN) set up by the Group's IT consultants.

The Group will provide computer equipment and software to allow people to work from home. Mobile phones will also be provided to some employees to keep in touch when not in the office. Other staff may use their own mobile phones and receive a monthly allowance (currently £15) towards the running costs. The mobile phones are also required for multi-authentication access to the network when working remotely.

8. Costs/Allowances

No allowance for paper/ink/subsistence/internet service/wear and tear on equipment will be considered or paid. It is considered that the saving in time and money getting to/from work is a reasonable notional offset to any personal cost of working from home.

9. Policy Compliance

Breaches of the policy will lead to the home working arrangement being withdrawn from the employee and potential formal disciplinary action. A review of this policy may also be carried out.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently, if circumstances change.

Appendix 1

DSE RISK ASSESSMENT

Note: This Assessment may be used by a Competent Person to assess the risks associated with each DSE User's working practices or by the DSE User as an initial 'Self-Assessment', followed by review by a Competent Person where problem areas or uncertainties are identified.

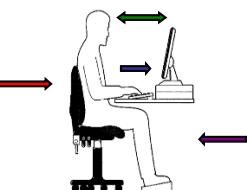
STAGE 1 – ASSESSMENT DETAILS			
Name of DSE user		Date of self-assessment	
Location of workstation		Desktop or laptop?	
Name of assessor		Date of assessment	
Signature of assessor		Review date	

STAGE 2 – DSE ACTIVITIES	
Provide a summary of DSE activities – e.g. type of use; number of hours used each day, length of continuous use, etc.	

STAGE 3 – PHOTOGRAPHS OF WORKSTATION (at time of Assessment)	

STAGE 4 – ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN							
No	Question		Self-Assessment – to be completed by the DSE User	Competent Person Assessment – comments (including actions taken)	Further Actions Required	Actions Completed (person and date)	
1	Do you feel any pain, discomfort or stiffness in your neck, shoulders, arms or hand(s) during or after using IT equipment?						
2	Have you have felt any of the above when working with IT equipment in the past (e.g. at another workstation or during previous employment)?						
3	Do you / have you had any health problems that could affect your work with IT equipment? (For example: epilepsy, back problems, poor circulation)						
4	Are the words on your screen clear, easy and comfortable to read?						
5	Is the image on the screen stable and flicker- free?						
6	Can you adjust the brightness and / or contrast?						
7	Does your screen		Swivel?				
			Tilt?				
8	Are there any reflections on the screen? (For example from windows or lights)						
9	Is the keyboard separate from the screen?						
10	Can you tilt the keyboard?						

STAGE 4 – ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN					
Nº	Question	Self-Assessment – to be completed by the DSE User	Competent Person Assessment – comments (including actions taken)	Further Actions Required	Actions Completed (person and date)
11	Can you easily read the letters, numbers and symbols on the keyboard?				
12	Do you have a comfortable keying position?				
13	Is the mouse suitable for your needs?				
14	When using a mouse do you: a) Keep it close to the keyboard?				
	b) Have a straight wrist and relaxed hand?				
	c) Take your hand off the mouse when you are not using it, i.e. type using both hands?				
	d) Support your wrist and forearm while using the mouse?				
15	Does the mouse work smoothly at a speed that suits you?				
16	Is the software you use suitable and can you use it comfortably?				
17	Is your work surface large enough to place all your equipment where you want it?				
18	Is the height of your desk suitable?				
19	Can your desk height be adjusted if necessary?				

STAGE 4 – ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN							
Nº	Question		Self-Assessment – to be completed by the DSE User	Competent Person Assessment – comments (including actions taken)	Further Actions Required	Actions Completed (person and date)	
20	Can you comfortably reach and use the equipment / papers etc. on your desk?						
21	Are your work surfaces free from reflections? (For example from windows or lights)						
22	a) Can you adjust your seat'		Back height?				
			Back tilt?				
			Seat height?				
	b) Does your seat have wheels / glides?						
23	Is your chair adjusted as follows:		The small of your back supported?				
			Forearms horizontal?				
			Eyes level with the top of the screen?				
	Feet flat on the floor without too much pressure from the seat on the backs of the legs?						
24	Do you have enough room under your desk to move your legs and change position?						
25	How long do you work at a computer before taking a break?						
26	How often do you have an eyesight test?						
27	When was your last eyesight test?						

STAGE 4 – ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN					
Nº	Question	Self-Assessment – to be completed by the DSE User	Competent Person Assessment – comments (including actions taken)	Further Actions Required	Actions Completed (person and date)
28	Do you wear glasses only when you are working with IT equipment?				
29	Do you feel that the lighting levels are suitable?				
30	Do you have comfortable levels of ventilation?				
31	Is the workplace at a comfortable temperature?				
32	Are there comfortable noise levels in the workplace?				
33	Do you have any other concerns or comments regarding your workstation or DSE use?				
34	Have you received adequate information, instruction and training on DSE use, hazards, risks, control measures, reporting faults and injuries and in the use of hardware and software?				

Appendix 1 cont.

The Ferguslie Group Health & Safety checklist for employees working from home.

This list is not exhaustive and employees should check any concerns with the Health & Safety Administrator.

Electrical Equipment

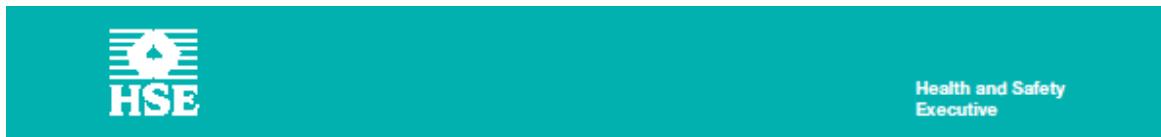
The safety and maintenance of the domestic electrical supply/installation is the responsibility of the house-holder. The Ferguslie Group will only take maintenance responsibility for any equipment it directly supplies.

Householder checklist:

- Ensure electrical equipment is turned off when not in use and before performing any checks.
- Check plugs are not damaged.
- Check domestic electrical supply is suitable for the equipment in use.
- Check plugs are properly wired and that the outer cable covering is gripped at the point it enters the plug or equipment.
- Check outer covers of equipment are sound and have no loose parts or missing screws.
- Check all leads and cables routinely against damage to the outer covers.
- Check for burn marks or other signs of overheating.
- Repair any electrical equipment with potential to harm.
- Check and secure all trailing wires – the best way is to use power outlets nearest to the equipment. Where this is not possible tuck trailing wires securely under desks etc. and out of normal walkways.
- Do not have young children unsupervised in any area where you are using electrical equipment.

Working at Home: HSE guidance note INDG 226

NB this document has only one page, not 2



Homeworkers

Guidance for employers on health and safety

What do I need to do as an employer?

A lot of work carried out at home is going to be low-risk, office-type work. Of the work equipment used at home, you are only responsible for the equipment you supply.

Work activities at home involving more risk

If your staff work at home doing activities such as working with adhesives or soldering, you will need to consider the particular risks involved in these activities. For example, you will need to check that any equipment you supply to your staff is in good condition and that they have the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) if needed.

There is straightforward guidance on how to carry out a risk assessment on the HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk/risk) as well as online assessment forms that you may find helpful.

Useful general information

- Health and safety made simple: www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/manage.htm
- Display screen equipment assessment: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf
- Five steps to risk assessment: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf
- Details of how HSE enforces health and safety: www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/enforcepolicy.htm

Useful information for activities at home involving more risk

- Personal protective equipment: www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/ppe.htm
- Working with substances that could be hazardous to health (for work involving adhesives etc): www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm
- Working with lead (for soldering work): www.hse.gov.uk/lead/index.htm

Where can you go if you need more help?

There is guidance for employers, employees and self-employed people on the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk

Help is also available through trade unions, employers' organisations, Business Link (www.businesslink.gov.uk), the Directgov website (www.direct.gov.uk) and trade associations.

Advice on personal security when working alone is also available from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust: www.suzylamplugh.org