**Home Working Policy**

**Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to define the Union’s Policy towards Home Working, which forms part of the Unions commitment to promoting work life balance and minimising environmental impact.

The Union’s policy is to encourage managers to give serious consideration to the option of Home Working when seeking solutions to management and individual problems and to make a sensible and realistic appraisal of any request to undertake a period of working from home.

**Types of Home Working**

The Union accepts two levels or categories of Home Working:

1. An occasional option to enable staff to meet intermittent professional or personal needs; or
2. A temporary and time limited arrangement to meet the specific needs of the Union or a member of staff.

**Initiating Home Working Arrangements**

A proposal for Home Working may be initiated by management for operational reasons or a request for Home Working may come from the member of staff. However the opportunity to work from home requires the agreement of both the individual and the line manager.

**Working from Home on an Occasional Basis**

If an employee works predominantly from the Union but requests to work from home occasionally - for example to finish a piece of work, then the Union would not be required to provide any ICT equipment or additional financial support. The use of a Union laptop may be appropriate.

For staff wishing to use Home Working as an occasional option, informal agreement with the Line Manager is sufficient.

**Working from Home on a Temporary Agreed Basis**

If it is agreed that an employee will work partly from home but also requires an office with IT equipment, the Union will not be responsible for providing or maintaining the equipment used at home. It may be possible for the employee to be provided with a Union laptop which can be used wherever the employee is working.

Staff wishing to apply for flexible working should in the first instance think through the impact this will have on their own performance and that of their team, and prepare a case in writing to put to their Manager which explains how these changes can be accommodated.

The Line Manager, having considered the request will respond within 28 days and arrange to meet with the employee to discuss the request. A decision will then be given to the member of staff within 14 days, giving reasons and next steps.

If the Manager cannot agree to the request, the employee may appeal in writing within 14 days and this will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer, who will make the decision in consultation with the manager and the legislation currently in force.

**Health and Safety**

The Unions Health and Safety Management Policy extend to staff working at home. These standards must be adhered to, as must the Health and Safety Executive Guidance, see www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg226.pdf

**Risk Assessment**

Managers of staff who work at home on a Temporary Agreed Basis must be satisfied that a proper risk assessment is carried out. This may be done by the member of staff themselves, but the line manager must monitor and decide if in particular circumstances a more detailed assessment is required, which may involve visiting the home.

Accidents in the home related to the employee’s work should be reported on an accident report form in the usual way.

**Insurance**

It is essential that employees contact their own home insurers to make the company aware that they are working from home. This may have an impact on the home insurance.

It is the individual’s responsibility to arrange appropriate personal home insurance cover, including cover for their own equipment if being used for work purposes, and to check that their home insurance policy includes public liability insurance and covers university owned equipment located in the home.

**Monitoring Home Working**

If the Home Working arrangement appears to be failing, the Manager should:

* establish the facts and identify why it is failing;
* notify the parties; and
* establish whether there are remedies to overcome the difficulties, but if this is not possible a notice of change and withdrawal of the arrangement should be agreed, but where it cannot be agreed the original contractual arrangements will be re-introduced following a period of notice consistent with the employee’s contractual terms.