



HOMEWORKING POLICY

About this policy

The College supports homeworking in appropriate circumstances either occasionally (to respond to specific circumstances or to complete particular tasks) and in some cases on a regular full or part-time basis.

This policy sets out how we will deal with requests for homeworking, and conditions on which homeworking may be allowed. If you are allowed to work from home, either on an occasional, temporary or permanent basis, you must comply with this policy.

This policy covers all employees, appointed contractors, volunteers, casual workers, and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

Working from home on an occasional or temporary basis

The College recognises there may be circumstances in which the ability to work from home on an occasional or temporary basis may be of benefit to you and the college.

Working at home must always be authorised in advance by your Head of Department (HoD), and for Academic staff also approved in advance by the Assistant Head: Teaching Staff & Professional Development, where, in their opinion:

- you have work that can effectively be undertaken at home; and
- working at home is cost-effective, is in the interest of both parties and any increase in work that may be passed to your colleagues as a result is kept to a minimum.

Any request to work from home, either on an occasional or permanent basis, must meet the needs of the College and be agreed in advance by your HoD. For regular/ permanent homeworking the relevant Head of Department for Operational Staff is required to inform the Bursar of the agreed arrangement. The Bursar must approve the requests for permanent homeworking.

Applying for Regular/Permanent Homeworking

You may want to vary your working arrangements so that, either permanently or for a fixed/temporary period, you work from home for all or part of your working week. However, not all roles and not all jobs are suitable for homeworking.

A request for homeworking is unlikely to be approved, on either an occasional or permanent basis if:

- you need to be present in College to effectively perform your job;
- your most recent appraisal or recent discussions concerning your performance identifies any aspect of your performance as unsatisfactory;
- you need supervision to deliver an acceptable quality and/or quantity of work.

If homeworking is permitted, we may ask for you to agree to a home visit by the Facilities Manager or a member of the H&S team in order to carry out a risk assessment, install or service equipment, or to reclaim equipment on termination of your homeworking arrangement.

Any terms on which it is agreed that you may work from home will include the following:

- We reserve the right to terminate the homeworking arrangements, for example if your role changes such that homeworking is no longer suitable.
- You will be subject to the same performance measures, processes and objectives that would apply if you worked in College.
- You should report and seek approval for any absence including sickness, medical appointments, dependant leave or any other leave to their HoD or the Assistant Head: Teaching Staff & Professional Development for Academic staff in the same way as if you were working at the College.
- If you receive an unsatisfactory appraisal/performance review or are subject to a disciplinary action your homeworking arrangements may be terminated immediately, and you will be expected to return to work at the College.
- Your HoD will remain responsible for supervising you, will regularly review your homeworking arrangements and take steps to address any problems. Where appropriate, and depending on the agreed home working arrangement, they will ensure that you are kept up to date with news and information relevant to your work.
- You agree to attend the College or other reasonable location for meetings, training or other events which we expect you to attend as part of your role.
- You will pay the costs for all utility charges including telephone and internet connections in your home.
- Stationery and postage can be obtained from the College and so no stationery or postage costs can be reclaimed through the College's expenses claim procedure

Working at or from home may affect your home and contents insurance policy, mortgage, lease, or rental agreement. You must make any necessary arrangements with your insurers, bank, mortgage provider or landlord before commencing homeworking.

Equipment and suitable workspace

If you are permitted to work from home, the College will try to provide equipment required for working from home, although this might not always be possible and ultimately it is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient and appropriate equipment for working from home. The College's IT Services team will provide support and maintenance for all equipment issued by the College; however, it will be your responsibility to bring the equipment back to the College for periodic maintenance.

While it is permissible to use personal equipment for homeworking, we are not responsible for the provision, maintenance, replacement, or repair in the event of loss or damage to any personal equipment used by you when working for us

Where equipment is provided by us you must:

- use it only for the purposes for which we have provided it;
- take reasonable care of it and use it only in accordance with any operating instructions and our policies and procedures; and
- make it available for inspection and periodic maintenance and return when requested to do so.

Data security and confidentiality

When working from home, all equipment and information must be kept securely. You should take all necessary steps to ensure that private and confidential material is always kept secure.

You may only use equipment which has been provided by or authorised by the College/HoD. You agree to comply with our instructions relating to software security and to implement all updates to equipment as soon as you are requested to do so.

You confirm that you have read and understood the College Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Use of E-mail, Internet Policy, Data Protection Policy, and other IT and data security related policies and that you will regularly keep yourself informed of the most current version of these policies.

If you discover or suspect that there has been an incident involving the security of information relating to the College, pupils, parents, or anyone working with or for the College, you must report it immediately to your HoD and Director of IT.

Wellbeing

The separation of work and home is especially difficult when home working, but nevertheless important.

You and your HoD should ensure that when working remotely you are doing so in a satisfactory environment. HoDs should remind their staff to take regular breaks, work within their contractual or reasonable hours and keep in regular contact with their team members to monitor their wellbeing. It is important to note that staff working from home have a right to disconnect.

They should not be expected to manage work calls and emails, or communications with their Manager / College, outside of their normal or reasonable working hours. This approach enables those working from home to switch off their devices, and not to feel pressured to give up their free time to work.

If you have any concerns whilst working from home you should in the first instance discuss these with your HoD and/or seek wellbeing medical advice.

Health and Safety

As an employer the college has the same responsibilities for our people working from home as we do for any of our people working in the college. We need to check that:

- Every individual feels the work they are being asked to do at home can be done safely
- Everyone has the correct equipment to work safely
- Managers keep in regular contact with their employees, including making sure they do not feel isolated.
- Reasonable adjustments are made for an employee who has a disability

Staff working from home, even on an occasional basis, have the same duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act as all other members of staff and must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected, ensuring that they follow health and safety guidance.

Anyone working from home should keep in regular contact with their manager and should tell their manager about:

- Any health and safety risks
- Any homeworking arrangements that need to change

To meet our responsibilities, those working from home are required to ensure that:

- The DSE briefing has been read and understood.
- If you are a regular or permanent homeworker the DSE Risk Assessment for homeworking is completed, to ensure you have a suitable workspace to carry out your duties, including appropriate equipment, desk, display screen, chair and lighting.
- You take practical steps to identify, eliminate and/or minimise any potential hazards and immediately report such potential hazards to your HoD;
- You manage their working time effectively and take appropriate breaks and rest;
- You inform your HoD in the event of any health and safety risks, accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences, any discomfort due to working from home (such as back pain) or any underlying health conditions which is affecting your work. Your HoD will escalate any matters to the Facilities Manager/H & S Compliance Officer, to investigate what action can be taken.
- You take responsibility for your own health and safety and that of anyone else in the home who is affected by your home working.

It is recommended that staff read the relevant HSE guidance on Homeworking <https://www.hse.gov.uk/home-working/worker/index.htm>

We retain the right to check home working areas for health and safety purposes. The need for such inspections will depend on the circumstances including the nature of the work undertaken.

When you are working from home you are covered by our accident insurance policy. Any accidents must be reported immediately in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy.

You should contact the H & S Compliance Officer emma.robinson@epsomcollege.org.uk for further information or advice if needed.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

You must not have meetings in person in your home with pupils or parents and must not give pupils, parents, or College contacts your home address or telephone number.

Whilst working from home you must at all times comply with the College's policies on safeguarding and child protection, including but not limited to, the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct for Staff Policy. If you have any concerns with regard to safeguarding and safety of pupils you should contact the College's DSL in the same way as you would if you were working in College.