

# Out of site, out of mind?

Managing remote working



IOSH publishes a range of free technical guidance. Our guidance literature is designed to support and inform members and motivate and influence health and safety stakeholders.

### Out of site, out of mind? Managing remote working

Advances in information technology mean that more and more people are working away from the office. Remote working has many advantages – including reduced costs for employers and greater flexibility for employees – but it also raises different health and safety concerns.

Our guide explains how to protect your staff and improve efficiency by managing the risks sensibly. It also includes some assessment checklists to help you manage remote working.

This guide refers to UK law, statistics and examples. The general principles and advice apply outside the UK, but if you're reading this in a non-UK context, you should be aware of possible differences and may need to use data from your own country.

If you have any comments or questions about this guide, please contact Research and Information Services at IOSH:

- t +44 (0)116 257 3100
- [researchandinformation@iosh.co.uk](mailto:researchandinformation@iosh.co.uk)

PDF versions of this and other guides are available at [www.iosh.co.uk/techguide](http://www.iosh.co.uk/techguide).

**Revised February 2012**

# Contents

1	What is remote working?	02
2	Risk assessment – introduction	03
3	Work environment	04
4	Work equipment	05
5	Mental wellbeing	06
6	Travelling	07
7	Working alone	08
8	Monitoring remote workers' health and safety	09
	More information	10
<b>Checklists</b>		
1	Assessment checklist for remote working	11
2	Feedback checklist for remote workers	15
3	Audit checklist for remote working	16

# 1 What is remote working?

Remote working is a way of working 'at a distance', using information technology (IT) to allow employees to undertake work away from the employers' premises. Remote workers can be based at home, occasionally work from home, or be mobile and connected from anywhere in the world. Remote working has increased dramatically as IT has developed. In particular, laptops, hand-held computers and smartphones mean that many people now find their job includes remote working to some extent.

Remote working offers many advantages to the employer and employee, by reducing costs of accommodation and travel, allowing flexible working and improving work efficiency. But it also brings its own health and safety hazards, from working in isolation to a lack of control over the work environment.

Organisations involved in remote working need policies and procedures to make sure they manage the hazards effectively. This IOSH guide covers some of the health and safety management issues that employers and their health and safety advisers need to consider when developing a remote working policy. There's more information on other aspects of managing remote workers in the publications listed at the end of the guide.

*Out of 'site', out of mind?* focuses on home-based and mobile 'office' work and, though it's based on UK standards, it addresses issues found anywhere.

## 2 Risk assessment – introduction

You'll need to look at the risks from both perspectives – your organisation's and the individual worker's.

It's best to start at the organisational level by asking some basic questions:

- How many staff are working remotely and how many are likely to do so in the future?
- What's the geographical spread of remote workers?
- What types of activity are involved?
- Are remote workers working from home, from other work locations, or travelling from place to place?

The way you manage health and safety risks will depend on all these factors – our 'Audit checklist for remote working' will help you assess your current situation.

You need to consider risks associated with using computers and work equipment, stress, lone working, manual handling, fire and so on. The assessments need to take account of the specific work environment and needs of each employee, so a major consideration will be how you manage individual assessments for many remote workers over a wide geographic area. You may need to train remote workers to carry out their own assessments, with the manager or trained assessor only becoming involved when there are specific problems that the remote worker can't deal with.

Checklists and/or interactive computer-based packages can lead inexperienced staff through the risk assessment process. Asking the remote worker to provide a plan or photo of the workstation can help the manager check that the assessment is adequate.

Health and safety advisers can provide guidance on the best way to manage assessments, help with training and provide advice on specific issues. Our 'Feedback checklist for office remote workers' and 'Assessment checklist for remote working' can help with the risk assessment process.

The main risk assessment issues you need to consider are:

- work environment
- work equipment
- mental wellbeing
- travelling
- working alone
- fire.

As an employer, you should tell your employer's liability insurance company that you're arranging remote working for your staff. It's also a good idea to recommend that your employees discuss working from home with their home insurance provider.

## 3 Work environment

### Working from home

There's a fine line between taking reasonable precautions and invading personal privacy. But you do need to assess the risks of issues such as available space and lighting. As a minimum, there should be enough room for work to be carried out, including space for the workstation, other equipment (eg printers) and storage of materials. If the employee is working permanently from home, they should ideally choose one room as their office. This reduces physical intrusion into the home, helps keep domestic interruptions to a minimum and reduces risks to other people at home (eg young children). If the room is lockable, so much the better – this improves the security of your equipment and data.

Sheds and garages are not generally recommended for remote working because it's often impossible to control security and the working environment. You should also be careful about letting your staff choose attics and

cellars, because these spaces often have limited access, poor temperature or ventilation control and a lack of natural light.

General health and safety hazards need to be considered by both the employer and the worker because employers have little direct control over the home workplace. There should be suitable access to the work room and the employee needs to ensure good standards of housekeeping, including adequate lighting, removing trailing leads and not using the floor or high shelves for storage.

Remote workers must make sure they use equipment correctly and take reasonable care of their own health and safety. They must also be aware of the risks their work poses to other people, such as family members (including children).

If you specifically recruit someone for a remote working job, it's relatively easy to set minimum requirements for their

workspace. More often, however, employers try to free up office space by asking existing employees to spend more time working from home, or employees, equipped with portable computers, ask to work from home. If someone is working from home only part of the time, the assessment of whether the home provides a suitable workplace should take this into account.

### Working at other employers' workplaces

If your staff are working at another employer's premises as outsourced contract staff, the health and safety arrangements and responsibilities should be included in a contract. This agreement must ensure, as a minimum, that a suitable workspace is provided and emergency arrangements are clear, and it must specify who is responsible for carrying out risk assessments and providing workstation equipment.

## 4 Work equipment

You should apply similar furniture and equipment standards to a home workstation as you would in an office. A suitable desk and adjustable chair will normally be needed. These should be ergonomically designed to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal problems. Allowing employees some choice in style will enable them to choose equipment that suits the décor of their house.

You may need to provide accessory equipment, such as task lighting to supplement domestic lighting. Some work or office equipment (eg certain types of shredder) is not suitable for domestic situations where young children are present. In these cases it may be more appropriate to supply equipment intended for domestic use.

If employees only occasionally work from home, it's generally fine for them to use their own equipment to log in to work networks.

### Computer workstations

Permanent computer workstations need to be competently assessed and legally compliant as a minimum. Accessories such as footrests and document holders may be necessary – this will be determined by the workstation risk assessment.

If the employee is travelling from place to place, their equipment needs to be light and portable. In such cases a laptop is typically provided. Laptops can themselves present a hazard, as they have limited adjustability. Minimising the amount of time spent using a laptop, and taking regular rest breaks, will help.

If an employee is based at home and uses a laptop regularly for long periods at the same workstation, you'll need to provide accessories, such as a mouse, keyboard, screen (or laptop riser) or docking station. The specific details should be determined through the workstation assessment, taking account of the user's needs, space restrictions and how long they spend at the computer.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has produced guidance on computer workstation assessment – see our further reading section.

### Maintaining equipment and electrical safety

You need to consider how you'll carry out scheduled and breakdown maintenance of work equipment. You can help reduce frustration and wasted worktime by providing:

- good instruction and training on how to use software and manage minor equipment failures
- a dedicated helpline
- a procedure for returning items via a courier
- a supply of spare items to replace faulty equipment temporarily.

Alternatively, it may be possible for an IT service group to visit employees at their homes to carry out maintenance and repairs.

Portable electrical items – from laptops to mobile phone chargers – require regular inspection to check that they're still safe. Some equipment may also need combined inspection and testing. IT equipment often requires only visual inspection by a competent person. This could be done by the employee (after suitable training) or during monitoring

visits. Choosing low-voltage or double-insulated equipment means the need for regular electrical testing can be minimised. The HSE has published guidance on electrical safety in offices – see the further reading section.

Clearly you can't be responsible for the whole domestic electrical system at your employees' homes. Nevertheless, if you have concerns about electrical safety or the availability of sockets (leading to trailing leads or over-use of extension leads), you'll need to agree with the employee how these hazards will be controlled.

### Transporting equipment

Manual handling hazards are an important consideration when you assess the suitability of work equipment for mobile workers. The advantages that smaller, lightweight equipment may have in reducing manual handling risks need to be balanced against potentially increased ergonomic risks in using such equipment. To reduce the need for staff to carry unbalanced loads by hand, consider providing backpacks or wheeled trolleys. You should always give your employees some say in the type of equipment chosen.

Workers may need to transport additional items, such as brochures and files. Manual handling risk assessments will be necessary to determine how to control any risks. Depending on the assessment, you may need to consider:

- reducing loads
- using a wheeled case or trolley
- training your staff in good lifting techniques.

The HSE has published extensive guidance on manual handling assessment – the most relevant ones are listed at the end of this guide.

# 5 Mental wellbeing

Remote working hazards extend beyond the physical work environment. Working arrangements are also important. For example, some employees may find it difficult to adapt to working in an environment with limited social contact, while others may find it harder to manage their time or to separate work from home life. For these reasons it's important to consider competence in areas such as time- and self-management at the recruitment and selection stage, or before allowing existing employees to work from home.

Employees need to be aware of issues of time management and social isolation and they must realise that working from home isn't always an easy option. Those who apply to work from home thinking that it will give them an opportunity to juggle their work around a busy home life may find that the opposite is true, as it can be difficult to turn off the computer and close the office door at the end of the day, especially when deadlines are looming. Remote workers may be tempted to work longer than normal hours, due to the lack of direct supervision.

In some ways, '24/7 availability' is a curse of the modern age. The insistent ring of a mobile phone is difficult to ignore. The sheer volume of email can mean that workers feel they have to deal with it all the time, even when they're not officially working.

Give your staff some practical training and tips on how to separate their work and home lives. Simple things like installing a dedicated telephone line for work, which is switched to an answer phone at the end of the working day, can help. It may be appropriate to negotiate a 'lifestyle contract' with remote worker. This involves formally agreeing ground rules relating to childcare, hours of work, access to the office and use of mobile communications. You should monitor this – for example, managers could check during one-to-one meetings that their staff are managing their work-life balance effectively.

'Lone working' is also a major consideration for employees working at home and while travelling. All remote workers (including those working at another employer's premises) risk feeling isolated, and some people can find this stressful. They may also have concerns about what happens if they have an accident or become ill while working alone. Workers who travel on their own may be worried about their personal safety, particularly if they're carrying valuable equipment.

It's important to maintain good communication systems and formal means of contact with remote workers to minimise feelings of isolation. How you do this will depend on the number of remote workers you're dealing with and what they're doing, but you should consider:

- regular one-to-one meetings between remote workers and their line managers, either at the employee's house or an agreed location

- regular meetings between remote workers and their co-workers – these give employees the opportunity to network and get to know each other. They can also be used to deliver training or reinforce the organisation's standards
- requiring remote workers to come into the office once a week to make sure they stay up to date with corporate systems and with staff at the office
- good access to information, such as policy documents, internal contact directories and essential files. This can usually be achieved through connecting online to the organisation's server
- access to the organisation's intranet site or a secure area of the internet for employees
- access to helplines for support in dealing with software problems and equipment failures
- procedures if information technology systems fail
- online meetings or virtual discussion forums, tele- or video-conferencing
- identifying people as key contacts who have specific responsibility for routinely contacting remote workers and acting as their first port of call
- providing contact details of key people such as employee representatives, health and safety advisers and human resources officers
- including remote workers in out-of-work social occasions and celebrations and in the circulation of company newsletters and updates.



## 6 Travelling

### Using mobile devices

Tell your employees to avoid prolonged work in unsuitable environments or where they could be vulnerable. Also encourage them to set up their workstation as ergonomically as possible and to take frequent breaks from using mobile equipment.

### Driving

You have little control over public transport systems, but you can take steps to reduce the risks when your employees are driving.

- Where practical, encourage your staff to use trains and planes – they're safer than being on the road.
- Make sure your employees are competent and capable drivers by regularly checking their driving licences and, where necessary, providing driver training or health checks.
- Make sure that vehicles are safe for work use, and especially that:
  - they're suitable for the task, taking account of the driver's comfort, the vehicle's safety features and the need to carry additional work equipment
  - there are suitable arrangements for maintenance, including requiring drivers to carry out regular safety checks
  - an emergency breakdown service is provided
  - safety equipment (eg first aid kit, fire extinguisher, reflective jacket and warning triangle) is provided
  - the insurance policy covers work activities.
- Plan journeys thoroughly and set work schedules that are realistic and flexible, so that employees don't feel under pressure to drive too fast, for too long or in bad weather.
- Make sure that employees are clear about your expectations in relation to safe driving standards – such as your policy on using mobile phones or drinking and driving (some companies insist their staff drink no alcohol at all before driving).

Employees can't concentrate on driving while they're on the phone, and it's illegal in the UK to use hand-held phones when driving. Even hands-free sets can cause distraction, and using them should also be avoided or kept to an absolute minimum. Your policy should be crystal clear: employees are only expected to make or receive phone calls when they're stationary.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has published extensive information on occupational road risk – have a look at its website. The HSE and the Department for Transport have produced joint guidance on driving at work (see our list of further reading).

## 7 Working alone

You also need to assess the risk that an employee might suffer an accident, illness or assault while they're working alone. In many cases there won't be much difference between the risk while travelling and the risk while working alone in other ways. However, sometimes employees may have to visit people or places where they feel more vulnerable or may be at greater risk. Make sure that all of these team members have information on how to stay safe when working and travelling alone.

It's important to have a system for checking the whereabouts of workers who travel alone. As a minimum, the employee should record full details of where they're going and their expected

travel time. At the end of the working day, either the employee should ring or text an agreed contact or 'buddy' to say they're home, or a family member should have details of who to contact if they have any concerns. There are mobile phone systems available that monitor lone workers' whereabouts. These can be easier to manage than systems based on 'buddy calls', but their use needs to be weighed against the loss of human contact, which may be important in avoiding feelings of isolation.

The HSE has produced guidance on risk assessment for violence and lone working. The Suzy Lamplugh Trust also provides information and resources on personal safety.

## 8 Monitoring remote workers' health and safety

Putting in place clear, consistent management systems will reduce risks to remote workers, but it's only through regular monitoring that you can be sure risks are being controlled adequately and the systems are effective. Remote workers' managers or an appointed assessor should make regular enquiries to make sure the employee is following safe practices and not experiencing aches or symptoms of stress. You should review risk assessments regularly and involve the employees affected. If it's not practical for managers to visit remote workers, the employees could complete a regular self-assessment of risk, which their line manager would check and discuss with them.

It's important to make sure that remote workers don't feel divorced from decision-making about their work and workplaces. Consultation, involvement and representation of remote workers should also be encouraged because they're effective ways of determining whether health and safety arrangements are good enough, and of making improvements.

Consider setting up a regular forum where employees can discuss their work and any concerns. Some employers hold regular 'conferences' for their remote workers, mainly to provide training but also to give them an opportunity to feed back their views and experiences. In some cases, the line manager or another appropriate person may need to visit employees at home to provide advice and support.

Employees need to know the procedures for reporting work-related accidents and ill health or any health and safety concerns. All reports received should be investigated by the line manager, with competent health and safety or occupational health support where necessary. It's good practice for the manager to enquire proactively about the health and safety of employees and it's also advisable for organisations to monitor staff turnover and sickness rates. If these are higher than average, it may indicate that staff aren't happy with working arrangements.

Remote workers should be included in company occupational health services such as health surveillance. If they use computers, they should receive free eye tests as appropriate.

The health and safety adviser should also monitor the organisation's health and safety arrangements for remote working and their effectiveness. The 'Audit checklist for remote working' and 'Feedback checklist for remote workers' may help with this.

# More information

More detailed information on health and safety risks associated with remote working is available in the publications and on the websites listed here.

## HSE publications and website

The HSE website ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)) contains topic pages on a number of key risk areas, including stress, road safety and musculoskeletal disorders. They give guidance on good practice and links to more detailed guidance.

The following HSE publications are available from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2WA. Many are free guides which you can download in pdf format from the HSE website.

- *Driving at work: managing work-related road risk* (INDG382), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf)
- *Getting to grips with manual handling* (INDG143), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf)
- *Health and safety of homeworkers: good practice case studies* (RR262), [www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtml/rr262.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtml/rr262.htm)
- *Homeworking guidance for employers and employees on health and safety* (INDG226), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg226.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg226.pdf)
- *Maintaining portable electrical appliances in offices and other low-risk environments* (INDG236), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf)
- *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: Approved Code of Practice and guidance* (L21), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l21.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l21.pdf)
- *Managing the causes of work*

*related stress* (HSG218).

[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg218.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg218.pdf)

- *Manual handling assessment charts* (INDG383), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf)
- *Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. Guidance on Regulations* (L23), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l23.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l23.pdf)
- *Memorandum of guidance on the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989* (HSR25)
- *Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998* (L22), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l22.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l22.pdf)
- *The law on VDUs: An easy guide – making sure your office complies with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002)* (HSG90), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg90.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg90.htm)
- *Working alone in safety* (INDG73), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf)
- *Working with VDUs* (INDG36), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf)
- *Work with display screen equipment: Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002* (L26), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l26.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l26.pdf)
- *VDU workstation checklist*, [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/vdu-workstation.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/vdu-workstation.pdf)
- *Violence at work: a guide for employers* (INDG69), [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg69.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg69.pdf)

## Business Link

Business Link is a government site with a guide to managing employees who work from home.

[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

## Other useful websites

- [www.gilgordon.com](http://www.gilgordon.com) – a US remote working site
- [www.rosopa.com](http://www.rosopa.com) – the RoSPA site contains information and resources on occupational road risk
- [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org) – the Suzy Lamplugh Trust's website contains information on personal safety when working and travelling alone

## Useful contacts

The Telework Association (also known as TCA)  
61 Charterhouse Road  
Orpington  
Kent  
BR6 9EN  
+44 (0)800 616008  
[www.telework.org.uk](http://www.telework.org.uk)

Working Families  
1–3 Berry Street  
London EC1V 0AA  
+44 (0)20 7253 7243  
[www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)

The Work Foundation (previously the Industrial Society)  
21 Palmer Street  
London SW1H 0AD  
+44 (0)8701 656700  
[www.theworkfoundation.com](http://www.theworkfoundation.com)

# Assessment checklist for remote working

Name of remote worker:		Address, location, phone number:	
Work activity:			
Name of assessor:		Date:	
		Date of next review:	
<b>General working environment</b>	<b>Yes/ No</b>	<b>Management action required?</b>	<b>Done?</b>
<b>1 Environment</b>			
Does the employee need additional task lighting?			
Do lighting or windows cause glare on the screen?			
If windows cause glare, are curtains or blinds provided?			
Does the employee find the heating and ventilation acceptable?			
<b>2 Electrical</b>			
Is the fixed electrical system in good condition (eg no damaged sockets or wiring)?			
Are there enough sockets?			
Does the employee know the arrangements for ensuring portable appliances are maintained safely and how to check them visually for faults?			
Are there any faults on existing portable electrical equipment?			
<b>3 Fire</b>			
Are flammable materials (eg paper) and ignition sources (eg cigarettes) kept to a minimum?			
Do you have an escape plan in case of fire?			
Is there a smoke detector or fire alarm that is regularly checked?			

General working environment (continued)	Yes/ No	Management action required?	Done?
<b>4 Workspace and storage</b>			
Is there enough space for the employee to work comfortably?			
Does the work area provide enough privacy and freedom from disturbances?			
Does the employee have enough storage space?			
Is there adequate segregation from non-workers (eg children, pets)?			
Are there any slip or trip hazards?			
<b>5 Miscellaneous</b>			
Are there any concerns about managing working hours, workload or work–life balance?			
Is the employee aware of arrangements for managing road risk?			
Is the employee aware of arrangements for lone working?			
Is the employee aware of arrangements and requirements for communication and reporting to the office base?			
Is the employee aware of how to get help on using computers or other equipment?			
Does the employee have to carry out significant manual handling? (If yes, you need to carry out a manual handling assessment)			
Are there any security concerns?			
Are there any other concerns? (Please specify)			

Computer work	Yes/ No	Management action required?	Done?
<b>6 Workstation and computer use</b>			
Does the employee know how to set up the workstation and chair for safe use?			
Is the screen clear, readable and flicker-free?			
Are the brightness and contrast adjustable and does the employee know how to adjust them?			
Are the employee's eyes level with the top of the screen?			
Is the keyboard tiltable and is there space in front of it to rest hands when not typing?			
Are the screen, computer and keyboard kept clean?			
Is the chair adjustable and has it been adjusted to suit the employee's needs?			
Does the employee need a footrest? (Are the feet not flat on the floor when the chair is adjusted to the right height for typing?)			
Is there enough legroom for free movement?			
Are equipment and papers within easy reach?			
Is there enough space on the desk for work?			
Is the mouse or input device suitable?			
Does the employee need a document holder?			
Does the employee take adequate breaks from computer work?			
When using the computer, does the employee get aches, pains, tingling or pins and needles in the hands, arms, shoulders, neck or back?			
Do the symptoms persist after the employee has stopped working on the computer?			
Does the employee regularly suffer from blurred/poor vision, red/sore/dry eyes or headaches while using the computer?			

Computer work (continued)	Yes/ No	Management action required?	Done?
<b>7 Laptops</b>			
Does the employee need a screen, keyboard, mouse or docking station? (These will be needed if the laptop is regularly used for long periods)			
Does the employee need a rucksack or trolley bag to transport the laptop?			
Is the employee over-reliant on handheld devices or smartphones for written communication? Do they need a full-size laptop or desktop computer?			
Are there any other concerns? (Please specify)			

If the employee fills in this form and the supervisor does not personally see the office, it's a good idea to attach a photograph or plan of the room showing the workstation and where the windows, doors and sockets are.



# Feedback checklist for remote workers

Name of remote worker:		Address, location, phone number:	
Work activity:			
Line manager:		Date:	
Feedback from remote worker	Yes/ No	Management action required?	Done?
Have you read and understood your organisation's policy and safe working procedures relating to remote working?			
Are you happy with the arrangements for communicating with your manager or other team members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- face to face?</li> <li>- by telephone?</li> <li>- by email or post?</li> </ul>			
Do you have good access to organisational information (eg by email, intranet, newsletter)?			
Have you been trained or instructed on the health and safety risks associated with remote working?			
Has a risk assessment been done for your workstation, work environment and activities?			
Have you been given guidance on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- health and safety when working at home?</li> <li>- safe set-up and use of your workstation (including laptops)?</li> <li>- how to use appropriate software?</li> <li>- troubleshooting and maintenance of equipment?</li> <li>- safe lifting and handling of work equipment?</li> <li>- working alone?</li> <li>- safe driving?</li> </ul>			
Do you take regular breaks from computer work?			
When travelling alone, do you regularly contact the office or a 'buddy' to let them know you are safe?			
Do you regularly inspect the safety of your workstation and equipment and provide feedback to your manager?			
Do you have any concerns about managing your working hours, workload or work-life balance?			
Do you know how to report work-related accidents or ill health?			
Do you know how to report health and safety concerns?			
Please detail any health and safety concerns you would like to raise now.			

# Audit checklist for remote working

Location of audit:		Auditor:	
		Date of audit:	
		Date of next review:	
General issues	Yes/ No	Management action required?	Done?
Are there adequate recruitment and selection criteria for appointing people suited to remote working?			
Are there up-to-date records of remote workers (eg who they are, where and when they work, what they do)?			
Are records of risk assessments, monitoring and feedback for remote workers maintained?			
Do line managers understand their responsibilities for the health and safety of remote workers under their control, and are they competent to undertake them?			
Are there suitable arrangements for communicating with and consulting remote workers?			
Are there suitable arrangements for providing remote workers with information, instruction and training?			
Are supervision arrangements adequate?			
Are there written standards for the health and safety of remote workers covering the associated risks?			
Do arrangements for procuring work equipment take account of the needs of remote workers?			
Are there suitable arrangements for maintaining remote workers' work equipment in a safe condition?			
Are arrangements for local risk assessment adequate?			
Are arrangements in place for monitoring the health and safety of remote workers?			
Are policies and procedures on remote working reviewed regularly, taking account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- outcomes of monitoring?</li> <li>- feedback from remote workers?</li> <li>- changes in law and best practice?</li> </ul>			

<b>Working at home: do you have suitable arrangements for:</b>	<b>Yes/ No</b>	<b>Management action required?</b>	<b>Done?</b>
assessing the suitability of the home environment?			
purchasing and providing suitable work equipment, taking account of ergonomic risks and the home environment?			
assessing computer workstations?			
inspecting and maintaining work equipment, including setting 'write-off' periods?			
controlling the risk of work-related stress, including isolation or poorly managed work-life balance?			
<b>Working at another employer's workplace</b>	<b>Yes/ No</b>	<b>Management action required?</b>	<b>Done?</b>
Is there a formal agreement specifying the responsibilities of each employer for health and safety arrangements?			
Does the agreement specify standards and responsibilities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the work environment?</li> <li>- work equipment, including provision of accessories?</li> </ul>			
Are there suitable arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- controlling ergonomic risks from the computer workstation?</li> <li>- controlling work-related stress?</li> </ul>			
Are the aspects covered in the 'General issues' checklist also adequate in the host employer's organisation?			
<b>Travelling</b>	<b>Yes/ No</b>	<b>Management action required?</b>	<b>Done?</b>
Do you have suitable arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- purchasing and providing suitable work equipment, taking account of manual handling and ergonomic risks?</li> <li>- inspecting and maintaining work equipment?</li> <li>- controlling the risk of work-related stress, including isolation or poorly managed work-life balance?</li> <li>- control of road risks?</li> <li>- control of manual handling risks?</li> </ul>			
Have employees been given guidance on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- setting up computer workstations ergonomically?</li> <li>- safe manual handling?</li> <li>- lone working?</li> <li>- safe driving?</li> </ul>			
Is there a system for monitoring the whereabouts of remote workers who are travelling?			

## **IOSH**

The Grange  
Highfield Drive  
Wigston  
Leicestershire  
LE18 1NN  
UK

t +44 (0)116 257 3100

f +44 (0)116 257 3101

[www.iosh.co.uk](http://www.iosh.co.uk)

IOSH is the Chartered body for health and safety professionals. With more than 40,000 members in over 85 countries, we're the world's largest professional health and safety organisation.

We set standards, and support, develop and connect our members with resources, guidance, events and training. We're the voice of the profession, and campaign on issues that affect millions of working people.

IOSH was founded in 1945 and is a registered charity with international NGO status.