

Working from home tips and checklist:

For some people working from home is already part of their working week, for others it is a new concept, we have therefore listed some tips and checklists that you might find useful:

1. Create your own “no-fly” zone:

It will help to have a room, a workstation or at the very least a desk/table in a quiet area in your home. Have your laptop, phone, work documents and stationary in this area, it may be good to let other people in your home know that it's your “work” station.

2. Communicate expectations with anyone who will be home with you:

Of course, you might be working from home but still have “company.” Make sure any roommates, siblings, parents, spouses, and dogs and cats (well, maybe not cats and dogs) respect your space during work hours. Just because you're working from home doesn't mean you're “home”.

3. Have a routine and take regular breaks:

The morning commute to work helps us get into work mode, after all you do it every day, working from home changes that routine so do try to get yourself into work mode and set yourself a start (and finish) time. In lieu of our fellow workers, packing up and leaving the office at the end of the day that reminds you to do the same, set an alarm if you find it useful to indicate your normal work day is coming to an end. You don't have to stop at exactly that time but knowing the work day is technically over can help you in starting the process of saving your work, calling it quits for the evening and closing down your computer.

During the day make sure you take a lunch break and regular coffee / tea (chocolate!?) breaks.

4. Put some background music on:

Without the buzz of our fellow co-workers walking around the office, talking on the phone and chatting across the desk, working from home can get pretty quiet and can make you feel isolated. This can feel quite draining from a personal wellness standpoint. Having music in the background can help while you work and can be a great way to ease your restless mind throughout the day. Choose whatever music works for you.

5. Security:

If you have other people around you at home or if people drop in, keep to the same routine as when you leave your desk, lock your computer and ensure that you don't leave any confidential or personal information laying around.

If you do need to save any information to your computer you must make sure it is deleted as soon as possible once your routine returns to normal: remember your GDPR requirements! If you do have to save data to your personal computer it might be useful to create a work directory to save this information so that you can delete the directory when no longer needed. You must not print any personal or commercially sensitive data at home.

6. Some useful checks before you leave the office:

1. Your laptop AND your computer cable(s) e.g. electric cable and mouse
2. Your mobile phone and phone charger
3. Any files / folders that you may need – although scan files where possible to ensure security of any data
4. Pen and paper
5. Look around your desk, what else do you need?

7. Things that you can do at home if you have no other work:

If we end up working from home for a long period some of you may not enough work to fill your working day. For this reason we are putting together a list of tasks, such as on-line training, or that project we never got round to but always wanted to, and your Manager will be able to brief you on these. On-line training can be found on the SU Staff Portal

8. Maintaining Contact:

Email will be the main way that we will keep in contact with all staff. The SU Staff Portal will also contain important updates and resources which we will link to from email.

Your manager will keep in regular contact with you so please keep your phone close by at all times, that you have notifications switched on in case they message you or you miss a call. Managers will also be putting measures in place for remote team meetings.

9. Useful links:

The following link provides advice and guidance for the following:

- Accessing your work PC from home (VPN)
- How to use Zoom (for remote team meetings)

- Link to Webmail
- How to access BOX

<https://www.essexstudent.com/dev/staffportal/IT/>

Service	VPN Required	Access
Moodle	No	http://moodle.essex.ac.uk
HR Organiser	No	essex.ac.uk/staff
Email	No	email.essex.ac.uk
BOX	No	essexuniversity.box.com
MSL	No	essex.su/msl
U: / Q: / J: Drives	Yes	N/A
Exchequer	Yes	N/A
People Manager	No	essex.ac.uk/staff
AgentOS	No	agent.letmc.com

10. Reporting absence while working from home:

You should report all sickness absence as usual to your manager however you should also send an email to SU HR Team at suhumanresources@essex.ac.uk to allow for the collation of daily stats.