



Working from Home

Trim Location*:	09/M23/5
Document Type*:	Policy
Purpose:	Ensures all employees are aware of the requirements and conditions associated with approval to work from home.
Scope and Application:	Applicable to all employees of the University whose authorised workplace is their place of residence. An authorised workplace refers to the place where the employee is based to perform work with the agreement of the University. Employees who elect to work from home without prior approval are not covered under this policy and procedures.
Responsible Officer*:	Chief Operating Officer
HR Contacts:	Manager, USQ Safe

1 Policy Statement

In accordance with the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (Qld)* and USQ Health and Safety policy, the University will ensure that:

- authorised home workplaces and systems of work are safe, consistent with legislation and covered by University policies and procedures;
- employees working from home are provided with information, training and supervision to enable them to perform their work safely; and
- all incidents are investigated, hazards are reported and practical control measures are implemented at authorised home workplaces.

(Approved by Council June, 1998)

2 Procedures

The *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (Qld)* requires the University to protect the health and safety of people at work. This includes employees working from home.

2.1 Approval to work from home

Work from home may only be entered into by mutual agreement between the University and the employee, and must be approved by the Category 3 Delegate or above as appropriate.

The Category 3 Delegate or above together with the employee, will determine what equipment is necessary, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); which equipment will be provided by the University; and where and how the authorised work area will be set up. Agreement on working conditions must be reached prior to approval to work from home being granted.

Approval to work from home may be granted if:

- the employee's duties are suitable for work from home;

- the work carried out from home does not contravene any local or state government regulations;
- the approving delegate has confirmed that a risk assessment has been carried out, and is satisfied that appropriate control measures are in place to ensure the authorised work area is safe prior to work being undertaken;
- suitable equipment has been provided either by the University or the employee;
- hours of work, rest breaks and a suitable work area have been agreed to;
- reporting and performance management processes have been arranged; and
- the employee has sufficient information, experience and training to undertake work safely and with a minimum of assistance and direction.

Procedures for undertaking a risk assessment can be found in the [Risk Management](#) procedure in the Workplace Health and Safety Procedures.

2.2 University obligations of approving delegates

Category 3 Delegates or above must ensure that the functional areas of the University under their responsibility comply with the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (Qld), all applicable standards and University policies.

The Category 3 Delegates or above are obligated to:

- ensure that a copy of the USQ Health and Safety Policy is provided to the employee;
- ensure that a copy of the Working From Home Policy is provided to the employee;
- integrate health and safety responsibilities into position descriptions for employees working from home;
- ensure that suitable equipment has been provided either by the University or the employee;
- provide the employee with any information, instructions and training required to use the equipment in the correct and safe manner;
- provide the employee with the appropriate information and checklists to enable the employee to carry out a risk assessment of the authorised work area;
- ensure risk assessments are undertaken within the employees authorised work area of the residence used for working from home;
- establish consultative mechanisms and avenues for assistance between the employee and the University;
- ensure that all work related incidents are reported, investigated and appropriate steps are taken to prevent a recurrence;
- ensure that all health and safety issues are resolved; and
- monitor the work output of the employee.

2.3 University obligations of supervisors

Supervisors have an obligation to ensure the workplace health and safety of all employees and others under their control by preventing or minimising their exposure to risk.

To meet this obligation, managers and supervisors of authorised employees working from home are expected to:

be the first point of contact for employees with workplace health and safety concerns;

be familiar with University and legal requirements, regarding working from home and ensure employees are operating within these requirements;

include health and safety information in all employee inductions;

ensure that all required information and instruction has been provided and that all necessary training has been undertaken;

ensure risk assessments, using the appropriate checklists, are undertaken within the authorised work area of the residence that is to be used for working from home;

ensure equipment provided by the employer is adequately maintained, and defects reported;
ensure that all work related hazards and incidents are reported;
investigate the circumstances surrounding all incidents and take corrective action; and
seek assistance in the resolution of health and safety issues from USQSafe.

2.4 University obligations of employees working from home

All employees, including those authorised to work from home, have an obligation to comply with the University's workplace health and safety policies, procedures and instructions and any relevant legislative requirements to ensure a safe workplace. This means that employees are required to:

- comply with workplace health and safety instructions;
- take corrective action to eliminate hazards within their authorised work area, or report those hazards which cannot be immediately corrected;
- seek appropriate first aid or treatment for injuries and illnesses and report on the appropriate form;
- use any personal protective equipment provided by the University;
- not wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse any health and safety equipment;
- not wilfully place at risk the health and safety of anyone at the home workplace; and
- not wilfully injure themselves.

2.5 Procedures for employees working from home

Prior to commencing the working from home arrangement, an employee must undertake the following:

provide written assurance of having read and understood the requirements of the Working From Home Policy;

comply with relevant legislative requirements (eg. local council/ shire regulations regarding working from home, insurance requirements);

carry out a risk assessment of the area to be used for working from home using the 'University's Risk Assessment' checklist;

arrange their own Public Liability insurance;

ensure that any personal equipment used meets the relevant minimum workplace health and safety requirements (eg. the workstation used should be ergonomically correct, electrical equipment inspected as required);

provide detailed information to the Supervisor, of the authorised area to be used for working from home;

ensure that no member of the public is put at risk in the authorised home work area;

provide a relevant First Aid kit as per the First Aid Code of Practice 2004 (Qld);

provide a hard copy of the completed risk assessment record to the Supervisor and USQSafe; and

undertake any and all necessary training regarding working from home requirements.

Information relating to the First Aid Advisory Standard and Electrical requirements is available from USQSafe.

2.6 Incident reporting

University policy and the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (Qld) requires that any individual who suffers an injury or illness at a University workplace must inform their supervisor and USQSafe as soon as possible.

If an employee working from home sustains an injury or illness while at work, or travelling for University purposes, the employee must report the incident to USQSafe using the 'Incident Investigation' Form available from the Human Resources website, the Faculty/Department administration sections or from USQSafe or via the University Hazard and Incident Reporting and Tracking System (UniHIRTS) on the University's website.

Further information in relation to Incident Reporting is available from the [Incident and Injury Reporting](#) procedure in the Workplace Health and Safety Procedures.

2.7 Workers' compensation

Workers' compensation provisions apply to all employees who are injured during the course of their employment. This applies if the employee is undertaking University business whilst working from home, at another site or travelling for work purposes, subject to satisfying legislative requirements.

The usual sources of evidence, such as reporting processes and medical evidence would be sought to determine whether an employee based at home was actually working at the time of an injury.

Further information in relation to Workers' Compensation is available from the [Rehabilitation and Workers Compensation](#) procedure in the Workplace Health and Safety Procedures.

2.8 Rehabilitation

Guidelines regarding workplace rehabilitation apply if the employee was injured while working from home, or at any other workplace. Contact USQSafe for advice if necessary.

Further information in relation to Workers' Compensation is available from the [Rehabilitation and Workers Compensation](#) procedure in the Workplace Health and Safety Procedures.

3 Other Policy Information

Peak Approval Authority:	USQ Council
Committee Owner*:	Vice-Chancellor's Committee/Staff Planning and Policy
Division/Department/Office*:	University Services Division/Human Resources/Workplace Health and Safety Office
Development Pathway:	1. Staff Consultative Committee Executive Workplace Health and Safety Committee Staff Policy and Planning Committee Vice Chancellor's Committee
Approval Pathway:	1. Executive Workplace Health and Safety Committee Staff Policy and Planning Committee Vice Chancellor's Committee Governance and Legislation Committee USQ Council
Related Legislation / guidelines:	Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (Qld) Queensland Government Workplace Health and Safety Working from Home Guide 2000 USQ Certified Agreement 2005 - 2008
Strategic Plan/Goal & Objectives:	Goal 5/Objective 1
Supporting documents, forms:	
Associated USQ policies:	Working From Home
Policy Category*:	Operational/Workplace Health and Safety
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Approval Delegation:	Approver	Level of Delegation
	USQ Council	Policy Approval
	Vice-Chancellor or Chief Operating Officer	Procedure Approval
	Category 3 Delegate or above	Approve an employee to work from home
	Category 4 Delegate or above	Ensure that the functional areas of the University under their responsibility comply with the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (Qld), all applicable standards and University policies Ensure the workplace health and safety of all employees and others under their control by preventing or minimising their exposure to risk
	Manager, USQ Safe	Administration and coordination of arrangements for workplace health and safety