**Tips to help you if you are working from home**

**Set up your workstation properly:**

* Complete the “Working with VDUs” eLearning course which is available on My Online Learning
* Complete your [DSE self-assessment](https://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/downloads/file/5077/dse_self-assessment_form_laptop) form

**Utilise conference/skype calls:**

* Conference calls can hard to handle, if you are not used to them. To stop people from taking over one another, it’s vital that someone is chairing the meeting. This can determine the speaking order and call people to speak, as well as pick up again when the speaking is finished;
* Get changed out of your PJs every morning. It'll help get you in the right headspace for work and allow you to take Skype calls without embarrassment
* Use headphones and mute your microphone during conference calls (unless you're speaking) to minimize the amount of audio feedback and times that random sounds interrupt the conversation.

**Have a space to work in:**

* Pick one or more dedicated workspaces, ideally with a decent chair that will support your back.
* Try to keep your bedroom as a sacred space for sleeping and relaxing where work is banned. It'll help make the work-life divide a little clearer.
* Get into a normal working routine. Making sure you get up and dressed and creating a space to work in is crucial for your state of mind, not just in terms of being in a ‘working’ mindset, but also so you’re able to turn off when the working day is over;
* Most of the essentials for working from home are things people have already; a desk, a laptop, a work phone.
* Avoid using your sofa/armchair when using your laptop: please try to use a desk and adjustable chair, along with your external keyboard and mouse. Where you can, please use a separate screen too.

**Have time to work in:**

* Creating time between when you are on shift and when you are off shift is important, so try and get into a habit of ‘clocking on’ and ‘clocking off’. This means turning off your methods of communication with your team outside working hours, to ensure they don’t merge into one.

**Remember to eat:**

* Maintaining a healthy and nutritious diet is key to being productive. Having access to your fridge, crisp cupboard and biscuit tin all day, every day, is not always a good thing.

**Remember to take breaks:**

* When in the office, we are more likely to take longer breaks to go to the toilet or to go out for lunch, these tasks can be quicker when at home, so it’s easy to work for longer periods than it is healthy to do so. Get into the habit of taking a bit of a longer break to make the lunch, for example, will really help.

**Remember to work:**

* Whilst putting yourself under additional undue pressure is not good, at the same time, remember that you are still working. Experts suggest working in short bursts in order to maintain your sanity, this means regular breaks, but it requires working too.

**Keep in contact with your managers, and ask them to keep in contact with you:**

* The worst aspect of home working can be feeling ignored. Employers should focus on putting in place lines of communication between managers, colleagues and subordinates;
* There should be clear expectations about how performance will differ from a normal day, whether because the office processes are a bit different or because particular jobs are going to be delegated to different teams;
* One of the tactics to avoid loneliness (although some workers could well crave it) is to set up a skype call with a colleague while you’re working on a shared project.

**Keep active**

* Even if you can't go to a fitness class or to the gym, there are plenty of effective workouts you can do at home.