

St Antony's College

Tips to help you adjust to home working

If you have limited experience of home working, it is different to working in an office. There is a lot of information available online about how to work from home effectively. Below are some tips that may help you:

- Try to have the right set-up - specifically a table and a comfortable chair – balancing a laptop on your knee isn't advisable and your health and safety is still paramount. If possible, you should site your work station in a space that works for you.
- If systems are slower than usual or you find it difficult to get a connection at home, this can be stressful especially if you are working to deadlines. If this is your experience, speak to your line manager and share this. Please do not worry about it alone.
- You may need to flex work time to accommodate carer needs. If something comes up that takes you away from work during office hours, make sure you contact those who may need you know your whereabouts – particularly your line manager and, if relevant, your broader team – and let them know when you will be available again.
- We know that many people working at home cannot deliver 'business as usual'. Managers and staff will need to adjust their expectations accordingly. Don't be afraid to talk to your manager about this – and seek advice from the HR Manager if you need it. You may need to agree a work plan which has some flexibility in it, and to make sure you review it regularly with your manager.
- Try to have regular check-ins with your manager at least weekly, even if they are very short. Managers are asked to ensure these take place at times that work for both parties (whether within or outside core hours).
- Aim to keep work time and home time separate if you can, and switch off at the end of the day. People who work from home are thought to be more productive because they don't experience so many interruptions from colleagues, but the downside is that you work extra hours, especially to compensate if you take 10 minutes out to put the washing out! Don't fall into this trap – be sensible about it and talk to your line manager if you find you cannot manage your workload within reasonable hours.
- Put your contact number (ideally using the [Chorus app](#) for a work number if you can) in your diary or make it available to colleagues. You may also find it helpful to mark your availability in your diary in other ways e.g. if you will be taking regular breaks because you have school-age children at home who will need your attention periodically. Or let people know that this is the case so that, should they try to contact you and fail, they know to try again later.
- It can be easy to lose perspective when you are not able to bounce things off colleagues, particularly if you've always worked in an office environment. Make sure you keep in touch with your colleagues in a way that works for you and your team – this may include via [Microsoft Teams](#) or by telephone if that is easier. If you feel particularly isolated from your team and you are feeling anxious as a result, speak to your line manager in the first instance and to the HR Manager if you need more support.

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