

WORKING FROM HOME POLICY

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Approved by (Name, date, signature)

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Omnia Foundation Website

POLICY FOR WORKING FROM HOME

Mission

We believe in investing in people. As professionals in the teaching and training professions, we strive to provide a better future for the children, young people and home settings we work with. Success for us means unleashing the potential of each individual so they can grow, develop and reach the potential of which they are capable. Our values are grounded in our determination to be the change we want to see in the world, through passion, commitment and integrity. We strive to plant a seed of kindness and compassion in a generation that will produce resilience and hope and enable them to aspire and achieve productive and fulfilled lives. Our success is measured in the lives we changed.

At the Omnia Foundation, we create a secure and safe environment that encourages communication, self-belief, mutual respect and success. We provide a rich and balanced curriculum that develops every child, allowing them to achieve their true potential.

Aims of the policy

This policy aims to

- Set out the Omnia Foundation's approach to homeworking and homeworking requests by those who work for us
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the policy with a view to preventing de facto and ad hoc working practices developing
- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of their "task" within the organisation and how the organisation expects that task to be carried out

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct, Induction Policy, Sickness Absence Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy and Annual Leave Policy.

This policy is not part of an employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

This policy applies to all employees of the Omnia Foundation.

What is working from home?

Since the global pandemic in 2020, when employees across a range of businesses were required to "work from home" where possible, the Omnia Foundation has become significantly more aware of the benefits that working from home can bring, where the full circumstances of business requirements and individual staff member's particular situations and roles and responsibilities can accommodate this.

For the purposes of this policy, 'working from home' means:

Occasional planned time working from home to complete a particular task, relevant to role, when working away from the business may assist in facilitating an environment where uninterrupted focus on tasks or duties can be better achieved and promote better productivity.

However, the Omnia Foundation is a school and therefore the task of all members of staff is to provide a face to face education for the students on roll. The nature of the business therefore requires all staff to be present on-site in accordance with the terms of their contract in order to be effectively deployed by the Head of Foundation or their senior leaders or hub leads.

What working from home is not:

- A response to a family emergency (for example where a dependant, such as a child or other relative needs care at short notice)
- where a temporary injury (e.g. a broken leg) makes travel to and from our usual place of work difficult
- where recovery from an operation or protracted illness means extended time out of the business

Working from home may include working from other remote locations, such as hotels where a trip is required for the nature of the business or where appropriate and in the ordinary course of your contractual duties, there is a need to meet with customers and other business parties in such locations and at their request.

Where the Omnia Foundation makes provision for staff to work from home, employees must comply with this policy. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to action being taken against you, under our Disciplinary Policy, which in the case of serious breaches, may result in your dismissal from the business on grounds of gross misconduct.

When can you work from home?

You may work from home when permitted to do so by:

- a) the terms of your contract with Omnia Foundation and/or
- b) the Head of Foundation and/or the People Team agreeing that you may do so, where, in their view:
 - i) you have work that can properly be carried out by you at home
 - ii) you working from home is cost-effective or cost-neutral for Omnia Foundation
 - iii) there is minimal to no disruption caused to your colleagues or to Omnia Foundation by you carrying out this work at home, and
 - iv) there are no factors relating to your performance or conduct that might cast reasonable doubt on the appropriateness of you homeworking in the requested circumstances, and
- c) the conditions set out in this policy

Permission to work from home may be granted in relation to a specified time period, trial period, or indefinitely, and while we will carefully consider all requests to work from home, there is no obligation on Omnia Foundation to say yes to any request for homeworking. Any request for homeworking must be compatible with the needs of our business as well as your needs and not all roles or tasks relating to them are suitable for homeworking. You must comply at all times with the terms of this policy.

Requests for home working will not be granted if:

- a) your role and duties necessitate a physical presence on our premises. As already stated, the business of the Omnia Foundation is education so the role of every member of staff necessitates a physical presence on site.
- b) you are physically unwell to the point where you are unable to attend work on-site: if you are not well enough to attend work, you are not well enough to work
- c) you are unwell, feel well enough to work but want to reduce the risk of spreading infection. Unless there is a legal requirement to 'work from home where possible', eg in the event of a pandemic, if you are unable to attend work due to sickness, then you should report a sickness absence in the usual way
- d) the nature of your role or your level of experience in relation to it is such that it is reasonable, if not necessary, to require you to work under the supervision of other on-premises Omnia Foundation personnel
- e) you have not performed according to the required standards of work for your role, you've not achieved your targets, or you've have been issued with performance or other conduct-related warnings in the last 12 months

The Head of Foundation and members of the Senior Leadership Team have the opportunity to work from home at specified and pre-arranged times in order to complete particular tasks that are essential to the rest of the business.

Where professional development must be completed online, this may be undertaken at home, at the discretion of the Head of Foundation in liaison with the People Team.

Where severe weather conditions make travel onto site hazardous, supplementary non-compulsory online training may be completed at home, at the discretion of the Head of Foundation in liaison with the People Team.

Obligations and responsibilities when working from home

It is your duty to ensure that you comply with the obligations and responsibilities set out in this policy if the Omnia Foundation consents to you working from home.

General obligations

- a) You must not work from home unless you have specifically been authorised to do so by your employment contract or by our express permission, according to the terms of this policy. In exceptional cases, the Head of Foundation and/or the People Team may agree to 'emergency', short term and one-off cases of homeworking too. These situations are still covered, to the greatest extent possible, by the terms of this policy.
- b) If you are ever unsure about the scope or terms of this policy or any permission to work from home that we have granted to you, please contact the People Team as soon as possible, so that they can assist you.
- c) Unless you have been specifically authorised to do so, you must not deviate from the terms of our consent, including, for example, your working hours, the circumstances of your required attendance on our premises for particular purposes, your treatment of equipment, data and confidentiality, your insurance and health and safety commitments and your availability to Omnia Foundation personnel and others with whom we work, who rely on you to perform your duties so that they can successfully perform theirs.
- d) Where two members of staff are working together on a project and are working off-site, they should make every effort to avoid working within the home environment and arrange to work in a neutral space
- e) All employees who are working from home must be available for communication by both telephone and email

Confidentiality and data security

- a) You must keep secure and inaccessible to others, all data and materials used by you while working at home for the Omnia Foundation. We are entitled to request evidence of your security arrangements and to visit your home, if we consider it to be necessary, to satisfy ourselves of the suitability of your security arrangements. Not keeping our data, materials and any equipment on which they are stored secure and protected is likely to be treated by us as a disciplinary offence in accordance with our disciplinary policy
- b) Unless you have been expressly permitted to do otherwise, you must only use equipment which we have provided, or authorised you to use
- c) You have read, understand and agree to comply at all times with our policies covering data protection and social media and you agree also to ensure that you regularly refresh yourself on their most current content and requirements
- d) If you have any concerns or suspicions about the security of any of our data (or data belonging to our stakeholders, employees or anyone else working with or connected to us), or if you discover an incident that compromises the security of these data, you must immediately report this to the Data Protection Officer.

Equipment

- e) If we agree to provide you with any equipment as part of your homeworking arrangements, you must:
 - i) use that equipment to perform your contractual duties to Omnia Foundation only
 - ii) take proper and reasonable care of that equipment, treating it as it is intended to be handled and in accordance with any relevant operating instructions and/or our policies and procedures
 - iii) not leave it unattended in any state where it could be used, removed or accessed by anyone else except for persons authorised by Omnia Foundation
 - iv) keep it secure and in conditions appropriate to its optimum operating state, and
 - v) hand it over for collection by us when requested to do so.
 - f) You are responsible for ensuring that you have all the right equipment and conditions for homeworking, so that you are able to do your job properly, efficiently, on a timely basis and in line with Health & Safety requirements. We will not be responsible for the maintenance, replacement or repair of any equipment if you do not take care of it or handle it as set out in paragraph 2(d) immediately above.
 - g) We will also not be responsible for any loss or damage to any of your personal equipment that you decide to use when working for us. You should check your personal insurance arrangements to provide for appropriate levels of cover before your homeworking arrangements start.
 - h) Your associated costs of homeworking, such as utility bills for electricity, heating, telephony and internet access are not our responsibility and you will be expected to cover these costs yourself.
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Health and safety considerations

- i) When you are working at or from your home, according to the arrangements that we have agreed with you and in compliance with this policy, you will be covered by our accident insurance policy. Any accidents that occur while you are homeworking must be reported by you immediately according to the procedure contained in our Health and Safety policy.
- j) Your duties in ensuring health and safety compliance are the same at home as they are on our premises. This means that:
- i) You must take care of your own health and safety and you must take care of the health and safety of anyone else who might be affected by your homeworking activities, including anyone who visits your home during the course of you performing your duties
 - ii) You must ensure that you have read and understood our health and safety at work policies and procedures so that you are equipped to safely maintain your home and your equipment responsibly at all times and you are working sensibly, (including in relation to your hours) so that you do not place your own health at risk
 - iii) If we ask to visit your home to conduct a health and safety risk assessment, you must permit us reasonable access to ensure a proper assessment can be undertaken. (Our need for any such inspection will depend on the arrangements that we have agreed with you.)
 - iv) You must not provide stakeholders, suppliers or any other external parties to Omnia Foundation with your home address or home telephone contact details.
 - v) You must report immediately to the Head of Estates Management any health and safety concerns or queries regarding your home working arrangements.

Monitoring & Review

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed every three years by the Chief Operating Officer with the People Manager.
