Hybrid Working Handbook

The management board has provisionally approved this handbook.

The handbook will be updated to reflect the *Right to Request to Remote Work Legislation* once it is enacted.

Table Contents

Appendix 1: Hybrid Working Procedures and Guidelines

1. Introduction

The following procedures and guidelines provide essential information relating the *Hybrid Working Policy*.

Employees Guidance: Assessing the Home Office / Workstation Requirements[1]

Employees must identify a suitable space within their home for homeworking. When identifying a suitable space, they need to establish with their line manager what equipment / resources they need to work from home and agree if this can be facilitated.

Line Managers ahead of approving the hybrid working request will collaborate with the relevant stakeholders regarding IT and other requirements to establish if the request can be facilitated.

For the purpose of effective communications, desk phones can be forwarded to mobile phones where deemed necessary, however, MS Teams will be the primary tool used for calls.

This will be done in conjunction with the *Risk Assessment* (*Appendix 1.12*).

2. Home Office / Workstation Requirements

Employees must identify a suitable space within their home for homeworking. When identifying a suitable space, they need to:

1. ensure that there is suitable light, heat, and ventilation to be able to work comfortably;

2. keep the workspace tidy;

3. keep the work area free from loud noise interruptions and distractions;

4. make sure the floor is clean, dry, and free from slip, trip and fall hazards;

5. provide suitably located power sockets to avoid trailing cables and overloading of sockets; and

6. ensure the availability of adequate broadband/phone.

7. work desk and adjustable chair,

8. IT equipment, for example monitor, keyboard mouse, printer,

9. a headset if dealing with frequent phone calls,

10. adequate stationery

NB: The College are required to do a home inspection to ensure the home workspace is set up in compliance with health and safety legislation.

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[1] https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/remote_working/homeworking_guidance_9mar21_v8.pdf

Appendix 1.1: Working Securely when away from Carlow College

Introduction[2]

1. Mobile devices and laptops can present a serious security risk if lost or stolen. Make sure to keep your devices with you and in sight at all times when travelling and hybrid working and never leave them unattended in public locations or visible in cars.

2. Mobile devices such as phones and tablets should be protected by an auto-locking pin at all times.

3. You should ensure that you lock your laptop screen when taking a break or finishing work for the day.

4. At home, lock devices securely away when not in use and avoid accidental damage by keeping devices out of reach of children or pets.

5. Staff should not share devices, which are being used to store sensitive College data with other family members or friends.

Using College Devices

Staff should ideally work on computers and devices provided by the College and securely managed by IT Services. Where a staff member is using a device not managed by IT Services, they should at a minimum, ensure that any laptop or desktop computer that is used to work on College data is:

1. Protected by McAfee Anti-Virus software or equivalent software and that it is up-to-date and working correctly. This will protect your computer and data from viruses, malware and ransomware.

2. Running an up-to-date operating system with all security updates applied to make sure it is not vulnerable to attacks.

3. Avoid retaining duplicate copies of data. Check that downloaded files are deleted from your computer's Download Folder / Hard Disk once saved to OneDrive / Teams or SharePoint / Network folders and not retained on devices where they may be visible to unauthorised individuals.

4. Only use an up-to-date operating system with all security updates applied to make sure it is not vulnerable to attack.

5. Do not use computers running Windows 7 for work purposes, including accessing Office 365.

6. Guard your passwords and always change them if you suspect that they have become known to others.

7. IT Services advise against using public computers / laptops such as in cafes or hotel foyers to access Carlow College services or data.

8. IT Services has the capability to loan, on a temporary basis a laptop to a user requiring access to onsite network services. These designated loaner laptops must be requested/booked and are reset to factory default settings on return before reallocation to the next user.

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[2] Reference: https://www.tcd.ie/itservices/working-remotely/staff/

Onsite Services

The Virtual Private Network (VPN) service allows Carlow College staff to make a secure, encrypted connection to the Carlow College data network from a remote location.

If working remotely, you will only need a VPN to access the following services:

- To receive Windows security updates remotely, you are required to be connected to the VPN for at least one hour each working day.

- Network files and file storage

- You will not need a VPN to access lots of other services that are hosted in the 'cloud'. An example would be your email, OneDrive, Teams, Moodle, Turnitin, etc.

- VPN is only available to be setup on Carlow College-owned computers that are networked and fully compliant with our network security policies including being added to the COLLEGE domain.

- If you believe you need the VPN, please contact itsupport@carlowcollege.ie.

Office365

All Carlow College Staff are provided with an official Carlow College email account with Microsoft Office 365, which you can access, using your web browser or Outlook app. Once logged in from the browser click on Outlook to view your mail and calendar.

As part of Office 365, all staff have access to Microsoft's cloud-based file storage, OneDrive. Working with OneDrive feels the same as working with the files stored locally on your computer, except the changes you make are instantly saved online, and can be viewed and edited in real time by anyone you share the document with, allowing for collaboration with colleagues.

MS Teams

Teams is a collaboration app available through Office 365, which has been designed for groups of people who work together regularly. Its greatest benefit is instant communication amongst the group and the ability to share information and files easily all in one centralised place. Finally, Staff should report any suspicious activity to itsupport@carlowcollege.ie for investigation.

Appendix 1.2: Data Protection

- Controllers such as Carlow College are responsible for the security of personal data processed during business activities.

- Remote working protocols [click here], which are included in the *Data Protection Policy* are particularly relevant to hybrid workers, however, it is important to understand that the *Data Protection Policy* applies in full to hybrid workers (as defined by this Policy) as well as to all other situations where Carlow College personal data is processed.

- Employees must attend a training session that explains Data Protection Protocols associated with hybrid working. New employees are required to undertake additional general data protection training before their request for hybrid working is approved. The DPO will contact the employee if this is required.

- Line managers are responsible for familiarising themselves with the remote working protocols [click here] and considering them, the employee's access to personal data, and the employee's Self-Assessment responses when reviewing a request for hybrid working. Line managers should be particularly mindful of security considerations if the employee normally works with large amounts of paper records or special categories of personal data (e.g., health, disability, learning differences, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sex life or sexual orientation etc. See full definition at Article 9(1) here). It may be appropriate not to permit remote working for such tasks or to change current processes to secure the data. Line managers are welcome to seek advice from the DPO on any matter concerning the use of personal data. This also applies to IT Services and HR staff when they are considering the provision of equipment to employees. The DPO may review arrangements that are in place to protect personal data by contacting the Line Manager, HR and IT Services.

- Line managers are obliged to complete Data Protection Risk Assessment training prior to making a decision on any hybrid working application.

Appendix 1.3: Communication Guidelines

1. Introduction

Employees are working at various locations and times due to hybrid working, flexitime and other arrangements, and are using both personal and work devices.

The purposes of the Communication Guidelines are to assist employees to stay in touch with each other and achieve a work-life balance.

1.2 MS Teams Etiquette

When attending meetings via MS Teams, cameras must be on as far as reasonably practical. While this may not always feasible, it is the *expectation that when contributing verbally, cameras must be on.*

It is important that staff provide a professional etiquette when using MS Teams for online meetings and training etc. To assist with guidance on a professional etiquette to MS Teams, please see below:

a) Your physical environment should lend itself to conveying your professionalism in line with the purpose of the meeting e.g., networking focus vs formal feedback giving vs job interview.

b) Ensure your visible workspace is tidy and ensure you have the 'blur' background on and / or Carlow College logo on.

c) Respect the chair of the meeting. Wait a moment after the 'speaker /chair' finishes their response. Be mindful that sometimes, there may be a time lag. Be careful not to speak over colleagues or guests.

d) Ensure you take the time to understand the purpose of the meeting.

e) Do not cut a person off before you have heard the full extent of their point prior to responding.

1.3 Non-Verbal Communication

a) Self-monitor to ensure minimal unconscious communication disclosure e.g., avoid eye rolling, wincing, audible sighing, walking out of video shot or other unconscious reactions that could be perceived to be rude and disrespectful.

b) Consciously engage with speakers: Be authentic in your practice of visible active listening signals and participate when invited by the host e.g., nod, smile and keep eye contact with speaker.

c) Mute your microphone:

d) Avoid unconscious communication

e) Minimise background noise and protect privacy: In open office/shared spaces/busy environments use headphones

f) Adopt agreed video communication protocols: List when the host is sharing what is the preferred way to communicate effectively throughout.

g) Manage your airtime and maximise your impact: When speaking keep it focussed, sharp and concise, and relevant to the purpose/outcomes required

h) Limit unconscious physical movement: Do not walk out of camera shot, minimise distracting hand movements, tapping etc.

i) Be present: Minimise multi-tasking such as emailing or texting whilst online, you are on camera Build connection with other meeting participants: address your responses to other participants directly, using their name within the meeting

j) Working environment Protocols: The above are not all encompassing when it comes to professionalism within meetings, so it is also good to adhere to normal office protocols e.g., speaking in a respectful manner, no smoking/vaping etc.[3]

1.4 Communication Checklist for Line Managers and Staff

Working from home can result in employees feeling isolated, working longer hours, and blurring the lines between work and personal life. It is important that employees know they always have support during working hours.

To ensure they retain a strong connection with employees, employers should:

- Ensure all contact details for employees are on file and agree a means of contact;

- Schedule time for informal conversation at the beginning and end of video conference meetings;

- Provide employees with emergency contact numbers;

- Arrange IT support in the event of technical problems where relevant;

- Provide employees with information detailing when it is important for them to contact their employer;

- Make sure work is organised in such a way that the employees take regular breaks and can separate their work life and home life;

- provide employees with regular feedback on their work; and

- Encourage employees to maintain contact with co-workers for example virtual coffee breaks.

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[3] https://www.tcd.ie/hr/assets/pdf/tips-for-video-meetings.pdf

Appendix 1.4: Bullying and Work-Related Stress

Safety, health, and welfare at work also covers psychosocial aspects such as bullying and work-related stress. The HSA provides <u>information on the definition of bullying at work</u>, which also outlines the responsibilities of employers and employees in this area. Employers can access a course on <u>Managing Bullying Complaints at Work</u>, which is part of a range of free online courses on health and safety topics available on the <u>HSA's eLearning portal</u>.

The employer has a duty to have safe systems of work in place; he or she should ensure that the system of work for those working from home is reasonable. This includes supervision, communication, training, breaks, supports, and fairness, allocation of work and respectful behaviour and management. Please also refer to our *Dignity and Respect Policy* and *Handbook.*

What Can Cause Stress?

Stress can manifest itself in many ways whether work-related or not. There are physical, psychological, and behavioural manifestations; from increased heartbeat, raised blood pressure, digestive disorders, sleeplessness, anger or upset outbursts and secondary negative behaviours such as indulging in escape eating, drinking, or smoking,

Homeworking may lead to reduced or no social interaction with fellow workers or customers. This lack of social engagement can weigh heavily on people for whom a social connection is an important element to work.

This isolating consequence of homeworking should not be ignored as it can lead to depression or other mental health issues.

Longer working hours may also occur more frequently when homeworking, as the boundary between work and home is not fixed.

There may be a potential for a reduced work-life balance or a limited demarcation between work and home life.[4]

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[4] Guidance on Working from Home for Employers and Employees, https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/safety_and_health_management/guidance_on_working_from_home_for_employers_and_employees.html

How to reduce stress

- Define your boundaries, for example use of a dedicated office space away from family and other distractions.

- Ensure you have a clear role and know what is expected of you.

- Structure your day and set goals and timeframes for work-related activities and breaks.

- When you finish work for the day, don't bring your laptop or work into your home space, avoid reading work-related content for example emails on your smartphone in the evenings.

- Discuss issues face-to-face for example if you feel your workload is getting too much, talk to your manager. Use of video conferencing can make you feel closer to that person and they are able to relate to you more. This may give a manager the opportunity to visibly see if stress is affecting you.

- Check in on each other for example set up virtual lunches, tea breaks with co-workers for work and non- work informal and formal communication.

- Social interaction is very important – arrange periodic visits to the workplace and ensure social interaction outside work.

- Plan exercise into your daily schedule – ideally schedule it in at set times on a given day, interchanging various different types of exercise, some indoors, some outdoors, some strenuous, some restful.

- Plan other restful passive activities – watching, listening or reflecting – building in restful short periods into the day and week helps us 'wind down'.

- Take breaks away from work – use annual leave as before as there is still the need to disengage for substantial periods and switch off from work.

(Guidance on Working from Home for Employer and Employees (2020)

Appendix 1.5: Sensitive Risk Groups

It is essential that work tasks, working conditions and the work environment do not adversely affect the health of sensitive risk groups such as pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding employees, night and shift workers and young persons at work. In requesting an employee from a sensitive risk group, or an employee with a disability, to work from home, the employer should consider the suitability of the person to the work in the context of their homeworking space.[5]

It is essential that work tasks and working conditions do not adversely affect their health and safety. In consultation with the employee, the employer should consider:

- safe access to the workspace

- the equipment necessary to complete the work

- suitable workspace,

- adequate lighting, heat, and ventilation to allow comfortable working,

- adequate breaks,

- regular contact, and

- Emergency contacts and procedures.

Further information on sensitive risk groups can be found here.[6]

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[5] Guidance on Working from Home for Employers and Employees,
https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/safety_and_health_management/guidance_on_working_from_home_for_employers_and_employees.html

[6] Guidance on Working from Home for Employers and Employees,
https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/safety_and_health_management/guidance_on_working_from_home_for_employers_and_employees.html

Appendix 1.6: Health and Well-being

The College retains its responsibility for the health and welfare of staff. Employees also have a responsibility to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and colleagues/customers, not to engage in improper behaviour and not to be under the influence of drink or drugs at work.

At all times, employees must:

- Comply with our normal hybrid working policy and time recording requirements.

- Have a safe place to work, and work in a safe manner. *Please complete the necessary health and safety forms, which are available in this handbook.*

- Stay in touch with your line manager and colleagues to provide social engagement.

- Take regular breaks and build exercise into your daily routine.

- Know that the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available at all times.

How Can I Access the EAP?

- You can free-phone 1800 995 955 or

- Email an enquiry to the specialist information service: eap@vhics.ie or

- Access the following link www.livewell.optum.com (username Vhicarlowcollege).

Appendix 1.7: How to Apply for Hybrid Working

1. General Principles

- Carlow College endeavours to reply to requests for hybrid working within four weeks of receipt of an application, however, this is dependent on the availability of relevant personnel.

- All forms must be completed in full. Incomplete forms will not be processed.

- Where possible, forms should be sent as email attachments.

- Scanned or ink signatures may be used to sign forms. Simple typed signatures are not accepted.

- Data relating to the administration of hybrid working is processed under the Privacy Notice for Employees.

- Professional Services staff must use Timesheets or Blip to be approved for Hybrid Working.

- Offices should be open during business hours and there must always be cover.

2. Workstation Equipment

- The applicant must have:
    - A reliable and fast enough internet connection to facilitate efficient hybrid working.
    - A suitable desk, chair and laptop/PC. Carlow College may not at this time be able to provide these items.
    - A webcam and microphone.

- Carlow College will provide items required to complete your workstation if you do not have them e.g., laptop riser, mouse, keyboard and footrest only.

3. Steps in the Application Process

The following table lists basic steps in the application process that result in a successful application.

STEP 1	- Initial conversation with line manager. - The employee completes a **Hybrid Working Request Form** and an **Employee Self-Assessment Form** and sends them to their line manager.
STEP 2	The line manager contacts the employee to arrange a meeting. During the meeting, the line manager reviews the forms submitted by the employee in Step 1 and completes a **Hybrid Working Viability Checklist**.
STEP 3	The line manager considers the employee's request against the Hybrid Working Policy. This may include liaising with relevant personnel about requested/required equipment. - The line manager then makes a decision as to whether hybrid working is or is not viable. - The line manager sends the completed **Hybrid Working Request Form** and the **Hybrid Working Viability Checklist** to HR and the employee.

	- If hybrid working is deemed viable, the line manager writes to the employee stating [from General Scheme of Bill] (a) Exact details of the proposed remote working arrangement (b) Proposed Start Date for Arrangement (c) Where approval is for a trial or temporary period the proposed end date. (d) Where is it is to be for an indefinite duration, details of any ongoing review requirement. (e) Details of any equipment to be provided by the employer or allowances payable to the employee to cover costs associated with remote working. - The employee accepts the offer. 1. If the role is not viable, the line manager must put in writing the reason to the employee. 2. If the role is viable, the employee moves to Step 4 **Please see Hybrid Application Flow Chart**
STEP 4	- If the role has been approved as viable for Hybrid Working, the Employee undertakes a risk assessment using the **Hybrid Working Risk Assessment / Checklist Form** which is done by the Assessor. The assessor may be external. **Note: Employees should familiarise themselves with this form in preparation for the Assessment with the Assessor in terms of requirements.* - The Assessor will send the form back to hybridworking@carlowcollege.ie - Hybrid Working Risk Assessments will be carried out on a phased basis. - The Assessor will decide on whether the home assessment is successful or not successful. The Assessor will notify HR and the line manager of the decision. The Line Manager will then notify the employee of the decision. - Should the assessment be successful, the employee can move to the next step, which is completing the requisite training. - Should the assessment not be successful, the Line Manager will meet with the employee to discuss this and assess whether amendments can be made to the working area. - Once amendments have been made, the line manager will notify the HR Office via hybridworking@carlowcolleg.ie who will then arrange and additional assessment with the Assessor to sign off. The employee can then move to the next step, which is completing the requisite training.

	Ideally, the employee will have use of both their laptop/PC and smartphone during the Risk Assessment so that they can move around freely, and the Assessor has a good view of the workstation. The assessor will advise the employee and line manager of any necessary changes to the workstation.
STEP 5	The employee begins to complete required training.

STEP 5 — continued:

1. **Health & Safety Training**

   - All employees must complete online training by clicking on the following links:

     a. [Display Screen Equipment Training](#) (online)

     b. [Fire Safety Training](#) (online)

     c. Manual Handling Training (onsite)

   - The employee sends the Health & Safety training certificates to hybridworking@carlowcollege.ie.

2. **Data Protection Training** (Online)

   a. Employees must attend an online training session that explains Data Protection Protocols associated with hybrid work and how line managers will assess hybrid-working applications in terms of Data Protection law. The Data Protection Protocols are available for viewing [here](#)

   b. New employees must complete additional, general Data Protection training. The Data Protection Officer will contact the employee to arrange this, if relevant.

3. **IT Training** (Online)

   - Cyber Security Awareness

   - MS Teams

   - Office 365

   - One Drive

   - VPN

4. **HR and Hybrid Communications Training** (onsite and online)

   - Hybrid Application Process

   - General Information on Hybrid

	• Communications Guidelines • Timesheets / Blip • Overall training on Hybrid to staff and Line Managers
STEP 6	1. When all training has been completed, HR will contact the employee and line manager confirming that hybrid working can commence. 2. The employee will submit applications for hybrid working via BrightHR. Applications are to be submitted by **2.00 p.m. on Thursday** for the following week. 3. Where possible, the line manager should indicate to the employee at this point if they will be required to attend onsite the following week.

4. Tax Relief

1. Tax relief on utilities may be claimed by the individual employee, directly with the Revenue Commissioners.

2. The Revenue Commissioners will identify if the employee qualifies for such a relief. Employees will need to provide supporting utility bills / receipts.

3. Ahead of contacting the Revenue Commissioners, a letter can be obtained from Human Resources confirming your hybrid working.

5. Accessing Revenue Personal Account

1. Staff can complete the relevant form(s) on the Revenue website: revenue.myaccount

2. You can click on 'Review your tax' link in PAYE Services;

3. Select the Income Tax return for the relevant tax year;

4. select 'Other PAYE Expenses' in the 'Tax Credits and Reliefs' page and insert the amount of expense at the 'Amount Claimed' section.

As a claim may be selected for future examination, all documentation relating to a claim should be retained for a period of six years from the end of the tax year to which the claim relates. Please check the revenue website for details on how such relief is calculated.[7]

6. If Your Request is Declined

If your request has been declined and you are of the view that the reason(s) for refusal provided by your line manager are unreasonable, you may address the complaint through the G*rievance Policy and Procedures.*

7. Abuse of Policy

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[7] https://www.tcd.ie/hr/assets/pdf/procedure15b-blended-working.pdf

Employees found to be abusing this policy and it's subsequent and related practices and procedures will be subject to the organisations disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Please refer to the *Staff Disciplinary Policy* for further information.

Human Resources will work collaboratively with line managers and staff to ensure that consistency and fairness in the application of these procedures have been applied. HR will ensure regular communication and obtain and collate regular feedback from all staff in relation to these guidelines.

Appendix 1.8: Hybrid Application Flow Chart

FLOWCHART: APPLICATION FOR REMOTE WORKING

Steps 1 & 2

- Start
- Initial Conversation (Employee / Line Manager)
- Employees submit the *Hybrid Working Request Form* (Appendix 1.9) and *Employee Self-Assessment Form* (Appendix 1.10) to Line Manager
- Line Manager Responds (within one month)
- Line Manager / Employee complete *Role Viability Checklist Form* (Appendix 1.11)

Step 3

- Decision
  - No → **Not Viable** Line Manager must provide reasons in writing
  - Yes → **Viable** Forms sent to HR and employee / Line Manager writes to employee stating terms of remote working / offer accepted by employee
- Employee activates *Grievance Policy (Staff)*
  - Not Upheld
  - Upheld → End

Step 4

- Review the Sample Risk Assessment Form using the *Hybrid Working Risk Assessment / Checklist Form* (Appendix 1.14)
- This form is completed with the Assessor who may be external
- Assessor will contact employee to arrange / conduct Home Assessment
- Assessor to send Home Assessment Report to HR and Line Manager *Line Manager notifies employee
- Decision
  - Yes
  - No → Line Manager meets with Employee to discuss report and assess possible ammendments

*This is only for reference purpose. The Assessor will use their own form which is similar to this. This is a guidance for employees I preparation for the Assessment

Step 5

- Employee completes Health & Safety Training
- Employee completes Data Protection & Records Training
- Employee completes IT Training
- Employee completes HR & Communications Training

Step 6

- Employee submit weekly request to Line Manager via Bright HR System
- HR confirms to employee and Line Manager that all training is completed
  - Yes

15

Appendix 1.9: Hybrid Working Request Form

Formal Request for Hybrid Working Form		
Section 1: Hybrid Working Information		
Employee Name		Employee Department	
Employee Home Address Ensure this matches your address listed on BrightHR			
Proposed Hybrid Working Arrangement (i.e. number and timing of days proposed to be worked remotely. Your line manager will assess your initial request in line with principles of the Hybrid Working Policy and Handbook)			
Proposed start date for hybrid working arrangement			
Employee Signature:		Date:	
Section 2: Line Manager Approval			
Manager Signature:		Manager Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)	
Date:			
Section 3: HR Sign-Off for File			
HR Signature		HR Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)	
Date:			
Employees: send this form via email to your line manager. **Line managers: send the completed form via email to hr@carlowcollege.ie.**			

Appendix 1.10: Self-Assessment Checklist

Employee Self-Assessment			
(To be completed by the employee before meeting line manager)			
Name of employee (BLOCK CAPITALS)			
Section 1: Workstation		**Yes/No**	**If you answer No, provide further information**
1	I have a reliable and fast enough internet connection to facilitate efficient hybrid working.	Yes No	
2	I have suitable accommodation for hybrid working i.e., I am the only person in the workspace, it is free from distractions.	Yes No	
3	I have a laptop that I intend to use for hybrid working.	Yes No	
4	I have a pc that I intend to use for hybrid working.	Yes No	
5	I have a keyboard, mouse and separate monitor connected to my laptop.	Yes No	
6	I have access to other suitable accessories such as a webcam, microphone, laptop stand, which allows the laptop to be connected to the keyboard and positioned at a suitable height.	Yes No	
7	My workspace is set up to allow me to view the monitor at a height, which avoids bending of the neck for sustained periods.	Yes No	
8	I take regular short breaks from sitting by standing up and moving about for 1-2 minutes every thirty minutes.	Yes No	
9	My workspace is set up to allow space in front of the keyboard to provide support for the hands and the arms.	Yes No	
10	My chair is adjustable in height.	Yes No	
11	My chair has a backrest that is adjustable in height and tilt.	Yes No	
12	My chair has back support (for example a backrest or cushion).	Yes No	
13	There is adequate lighting to allow comfortable working.	Yes No	
14	I am aware that it is my responsibility to ensure that my home insurance permits home working	Yes No	
15	List any IT or other equipment or furniture already supplied by Carlow College for hybrid working.		
16	List any equipment that you believe you need.		
Section 2: College / Personal Devices		**Yes/No**	
This section should be completed in line with Appendix 1.1: Working Securely when away from Carlow College in the Hybrid Working Handbook			
17	Are you using a personal Laptop / PC? (If yes to using a personal laptop / pc, please confirm the following (questions 18 – 23)	Yes No	
18	Confirm you have sole use of laptop or pc for hybrid working	Yes No	
19	Confirm you have Anti-Virus on your personal laptop /PC	Yes No	
20	Confirm you have Windows 10 or higher	Yes No	
21	Confirm that your device has the latest updates	Yes No	

| 23 | Confirm that If you purchase a new PC / Laptop, you will complete questions 17-23 again | Yes No | |

*Note: Line Managers should notify IT Support at itsupport@carlowcollege.ie if a personal device is being used to ensure it meets the requirements of the handbook before signing off on this form

1. IT Support will confirm with the Line Manager and the employee if the device meets the requirements outlined in Appendix 1.1: of the Hybrid Handbook
2. Should the device not meet the requirements, justifications will be emailed to both the line manager and the employee by itsupport@carlowcollege.ie

Section 2: Part B - IT General Information		Confirm Acknowledgement
Loan Laptops	IT Services has the capability to loan, on a temporary basis a laptop to a user requiring access to onsite network services. These designated loaner laptops must be requested/booked and are reset to factory default settings on return before reallocation to the next user.	Yes / No
Using VPN or One Drive	For personal devices, continue to use One Drive For college laptops, you will use the VPN	Yes / No

As a longer-term project, the College hope to provide laptops for roles suitable for Hybrid Working.

Section 3: Keeping Information Safe		Yes/No	
24	I need to use paper records at home.	Yes No	If you answer Yes, provide details:
25	I have lockable storage for paper records at home e.g., office, filing cabinet	Yes No	
26	I need to use paper records containing sensitive information about people at home (e.g., health, disability, trade union, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, sex life).	Yes No	If you answer Yes, provide details:
27	I have sole use of laptop or pc for hybrid working.	Yes No	If you answer No, provide details:
28	I can adhere to all of the Data Protection Protocols and Keeping Information Safe Protocols	Yes No	If you answer No, provide details:
29	Are you satisfied that you can adequately protect the security and confidentiality of personal data and other confidential records while hybrid working?	Yes ☐ No☐	Explain your answer:

Section 3 - PART B (to be completed by line manager during meeting with employee)		
30	Review of replies provided by employee:	
31	Corrective actions recommended, including required equipment:	

Section 4: Signatures
I declare that the information given by me above is true, accurate and complete in all respects and I both understand and accept that if that is not the case, whether knowingly on my part or otherwise, following due investigation by my employer, I may be denied Hybrid Working and / or will be subject to the College's disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Employee signature	Date
Line Manager Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)	
Line Manager Signature	Date

Section 5: HR Sign-Off for File	
HR Signature	Date

Employees: send this form via email to your line manager.

Line managers: send the completed form via email to hr@carlowcollege.ie

Appendix 1.11: Role Viability Checklist

	Hybrid Working Viability Checklist		
NAME OF EMPLOYEE (BLOCK CAPITALS):			
	Operational requirements	**Yes / No**	**If you answer No, provide comments and required actions**
1	Can service and student needs be met during hybrid working?	Yes No	
2	Can the efficiency of the office/service be maintained during hybrid working?	Yes No	
3	Is it possible for the employee's work to be done during hybrid working?	Yes No	
4	Can all of the employee's current activities be done while working remotely?	Yes No	
5	Can the employee's work be supervised effectively?	Yes No	
6	Can the employee engage effectively in team and cross-functional work during hybrid working?	Yes No	
7	Are sufficient arrangements in place for you to contact the employee easily?	Yes No	
	Health & Safety	**Yes/No**	
8	Can the employee's safety and wellbeing be maintained during hybrid working?	Yes No	If you answer No, provide further details:
9	Does the employee want/is suitable for hybrid work?	Yes No	If you answer No, provide further details:
10	Are reasonable accommodations required for the employee? Note: consult with HR about this.	Yes No	If you answer Yes, provide further details:
	Data Protection / Business Confidentiality		
11	Are you satisfied that personal data and business confidentiality are adequately protected to permit the employee to work from home? Note: please consult with the Data Protection Officer if you require advice.	Yes ☐ No	Explain your answer:
Line Manager Decision			
Is hybrid working viable? Yes No If your answer is YES, list any criteria or conditions: If your answer is NO, provide a reason: 			
Signatures			
Employee signature		Date	
Line Manager Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)		Date	
Line Manager Signature			
Line managers: send this form via email to hr@carlowcollege.ie			
HR Sign-Off for File			
HR Signature		Date	

Appendix 1.12: Health and Safety Risk Assessment Guidance for Managers and Staff

1. Introduction

Each employee's homeworking environment will be different whether it is the individual, the type of work to be carried out, workstation location or equipment required. Employers are required to ensure that a competent* person carries out a risk assessment of an employee's workstation in the home.

The risk assessment will identify possible issues that could cause injury or ill health. Having suitable controls in place through the provision of appropriate equipment, training and effective communication will help reduce future problems.

NB: A competent person is someone with sufficient training, experience and knowledge who can carry out the Display Screen Equipment risk assessment of an employee's workstation. These risk assessments will be carried out by the College's Building Services and or an external Health and Safety Assessor Team.

2. Homeworking Risk Assessment / Checklist

When risk assessing the employee's homeworking environment the Homeworking risk assessment/checklist in Appendix 1 can be used. The process is broken into a two-step process;

3. Equipment / Resources Required

The homeworking risk assessment/ checklist will be sent to all employees who work from home on a full/part time basis. Line Managers in consultation with employees will identify equipment and resources required to work effectively from home. When all equipment/ resources identified have been provided and set up in the homeworking environment then the Line Manager can proceed to the next step of the process.

4. Homeworking Risk Assessment Checklist *(non-exhaustive list)*

When the equipment/resources checklist have been agreed, then the Line Manager must engage with the Building Services Teams who can carry out the homeworking assessment/checklist in consultation with the employee.

The assessment can be done online for example through the use of video calls ideally with a smartphone so that the employee can move freely around the specific work location so as to help the assessor identify and direct the employee to areas that need to be assessed.

The assessor must record any specific issues identified at an employee's home workspace and agree on corrective actions with the employee. Once any corrective actions have been actioned then the homeworking assessment/ checklist can be signed off by the assessor and employee.

Appendix 1.13: Home Office Environment

1. Lighting

Lighting is a factor that needs to be considered in the work environment. When setting up a homeworking space the employee should consider whether:

- Sufficient natural light is available along with artificial light to enable viewing and reading of documents; and the location of a laptop/monitor is placed to reduce glare, which can change throughout the day due to external factors and from the use of indoor lighting.

2. Housekeeping

Keeping a home office organised and tidy will help in managing your day-to-day activities. Employees should consider some of the following items:

- Wipe down your desk surface, keyboard, mouse, desk lamp, and any other high-touch hotspots frequently;

- Manage your cables and route them away from any areas where there is frequent footfall;

- Look at dedicated storage solutions and organise your desktop;

- Create/store as few paper records as possible; only bring records home from the office if necessary and

- Dispose of rubbish regularly and securely. Work records are not to be disposed of in domestic refuse.

3. Temperature

Temperature is especially important to workplace productivity. Working conditions that are too hot or too cold have been shown to have an effect on concentration and work performance. Unlike working in a shared office, home workers have the option to regulate the temperature that best suits them. Employees should consider some of the following when regulating the temperature of their home office:

- The best temperature for an office and will vary depending on many factors such as age, sex, clothing, season, and humidity. It is suggested that for most people an acceptable temperature for office work lies within the range of 18°c to 23°c. Find the right setting that suits your needs and comfort and adjust accordingly;

- If you decide to use temporary heaters, care needs to be taken so as to prevent burns from contact with hot surfaces or fire. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that portable heating equipment

- That is used is in good condition and suitable for the purpose; and

- Use natural ventilation for example opening a window to regulate temperature.

4. Electrical Safety

Electrical equipment in the home/home office should be maintained in good working order and be free of any obvious damage. In general, such equipment can be broken into two categories:

4.1 Category A – Employers' Responsibilities

Electrical equipment provided by the employer for example computer, monitor and printer:

- Should be suitable for the job;

- Ensure employees are advised to take out of use immediately if an electrical appliance shows any scorching or significant damage and report it;

- and then arrange to either get it repaired by a suitably qualified person or get it replaced.

4.2 Category B – Employees' Responsibilities

Household electrical supply and equipment provided by the employee for example sockets, lighting, heaters not provided by the employer should also be checked by the employee on a regular basis to ensure that:

- All circuits supplying socket outlets are protected by an RCD (Residual Current Device). An RCD protects you against serious electric shock if there is an electrical fault in your home; and

- The operation of the RCD is checked and tested regularly.

- phones or laptops should not be left unattended and charging for extended periods for example overnight due to possible risk of fire; and

- equipment provided by your employer which has gotten damaged should be taken of use and reported to your employer

Note: If you have any concerns about the electrical installation in the home you should immediately contact a registered electrical contractor to ensure the safety of the installation.

5. Fire

Minimising the risk of fire in the home or home office, should be managed as part of the day-to-day running of any home. Fitting passive equipment like smoke and carbon monoxide alarms will give advance warning of potential issues. Ensuring that suitable firefighting equipment is available for example fire blankets and extinguishers should be available and suitable for fighting a range of different fire types that could occur in the household.[8]

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[8] Guidance on Working from Home for Employers and Employees,
https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/safety_and_health_management/guidance_on_working_from_home_for_employers_and_employees.html

Appendix 1.14: Hybrid Working Risk Assessment / Checklist Form (SAMPLE)

STEP 3 - Homeworking risk assessment / checklist[9] (This is done by the Assessor with the employee)	
Employee Name:	Address:
Work Activity:	
	Role:
Assessor Name:	Manager Name:

Step 1 Equipment / resources required

Dedicated Room	☐	Keyboard	☐	Wrist Rest	☐
Workstation	☐	Mouse	☐	Broadband	☐
Chair	☐	Task Lighting	☐	Mobile Phone	☐
Laptop	☐	Docking Station	☐	Printer	☐
Desktop Computer	☐	Document Holder	☐	Headset	☐
Monitor	☐	Footrest	☐		

Further Information:

Step 2 – Homeworking risk assessment/checklist

Control	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/ follow up actions
1. Workstation				
The workstation has adequate space for equipment including mouse, keyboard, laptop, laptop stand, monitor and allows the employee to find a comfortable position.				
Is there a dedicated workspace that can be setup in the home that is safe, suitable, and free from distractions?				

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[9] Guidance on Working from Home for Employers and Employees,
https://www.hsa.ie/eng/publications_and_forms/publications/safety_and_health_management/guidance_on_working_from_home_for_employers_and_employees.html

Is there enough knee clearance underneath theworkstation?				
Is there enough space to allow the employee tochange position and vary movements?				25
Is the area clutter free so that the employee canfocus easily on the task?				
Is a document holder required to read documents?				

2. Chair

Control	Yes	No	N/A	Comments/ follow up actions
Is the chair provided stable, adjustable in height, allows freedom of movement, and provides lower back support?				
Is the chair set up so that the forearms are level with the desk?				
The chair has a back rest which is adjustable in height and the employee has been advised to sit back in their seat in order to get good lumbar support?				
Is the chair provided adjustable to allow feet to rest flat on the floor or is a footrest supplied?				
Is a footrest required?				

3. Screen

Control	Yes	No	N/A	Comments / Follow Up Actions
Is the screen positioned to avoid glare and reflection (for example sit at 90 degrees to a window to avoid glare)?				
Can the screen swivel and tilt easily?				
Is the screen positioned so that the top of the screen is at eye level or slightly below and avoids sustained bending of the neck?				

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments / Follow Up Actions
Is the screen free of reflective glare and are reflections liable to cause discomfort?				
Is the screen set up at a comfortable distance (for example arm length away)?				
Is the image on the screen stable with no flickering?				
Are the characters on the display screen well defined, clearly formed of adequate size and with adequate spacing?				
Has the employee been informed that they should relax their shoulders when viewing the screen?				

4. Communications

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments / Follow Up Actions
Is a headset/speaker or microphone provided for communication?				
Are arrangements in place to consult with employees and for them to report issues for example accidents, health related issues, workload, faulty equipment, working hours?				

5. Keyboard/mouse

Control	Yes	No	N/A	Comments / Follow Up Actions
Is the laptop/PC connected to an external keyboard and mouse?				
Is a neutral wrist posture maintained when typing (for example no bending of the wrist)				
Slope angle of the keyboard can be adjusted so as to allow the employee to find a comfortable position.				
Are the mouse and keyboard within easy reach with space provided in front of the keyboard?				
Are wrist rests required?				

6. Lighting

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments / Follow Up Actions
Employee checks suitable lighting (for example natural, task lighting) is available to take account of the type of work being carried out and their vision.				
Is task lighting available if required?				

7. Health				
Control	**Yes**	**No**	**N/A**	**Comments / Follow Up Actions**
Are eye and eyesight tests provided as needed?				
Is the employee required to carry out manual handling (If the employee must carry out manual handling activities make sure that employee is trained)				
Has the employee been advised to report any musculoskeletal discomfort?				
Has the employee been advised to change posture frequently and to stand/move at least every 30 minutes?				
Has the employee been advised to avoid back-to-back video calls/online meetings so that they do not sit for extended periods of time?				
Are workdays planned so that work can be varied if possible (for example write up notes, take a call away from desk)?				
Are there arrangements in place for monitoring and keeping in contact with the home worker?				
8. Heating/ventilation				
Employee checks the room is warm enough and has adequate ventilation.				
9. Electricity				
Control	**Yes**	**No**	**N/A**	**Comments/ follow up actions**
Household electrical supply and equipment for example sockets, lighting, RCD, heaters that are not provided by the employer are checked by the employee on a regular basis.				
Is the area around the workstation kept clear of trailing cables and trip hazards?				
Is there an adequate number of sockets available?				
Is portable electrical equipment provided by the employer checked regularly and is unsafe equipment taken out of use (check for frayed wires, signs of burns or melting)?				
1. Fire				
Homeowner checks firefighting and detection equipment regularly and emergency plan is in place in case of fire (Fire detection and firefighting equipment is the responsibility of the homeowner).				
11. Additional information				
Findings				

Employeename:		Signature:		Date:	
Assessorname:		Signature:		Date:	
			Reviewdate:		

Appendix 1.15: Contact Details

Human Resources

- Email: hr@carlowcollege.ie
- Telephone: 059 9153293 / 059 91 53288

Building Services (Health and Safety)

You can also contact the Building Services Department on policy related queries:

- Email: maintenance@carlowcollege.ie
- Telephone: 059 9153230
- Telephone: 0599153294

IT Services

- Email: itsupport@carlowcollege.ie
- Telephone: 059 9153272
- Telephone: 059 9153267

Appendix 2: Health and Safety – Guidelines and Practices

1. Legal Duties and Responsibilities

1.1. Carlow College Responsibilities

Employers have extensive occupational health and safety duties under the Act. A link to the full requirements is <u>here.</u>

1.2. HR Responsibilities

Human Resources manages and coordinates practices and procedures with Building Services, Line Managers, and staff.

1.3 Line Manager Responsibilities

The Line Manager is responsible for ensuring that the activities undertaken within the relevant department / function are carried out in a safe manner without undue risk to the health and safety of College employees, students or any third parties. This duty extends to home/lone/hybrid workers.

1.4 Employee Responsibilities

All employees have a duty to cooperate with the College in all matters of health and safety at work and not to endanger the safety of themselves, their co-workers or any other parties through any act or omission that they may undertake. This cooperation is essential to the effective management of safety within the College. In accordance with safety legislation, the College expects all employees to take responsibility for their own safety whilst at work and to perform their duties in a safe manner and in accordance with all relevant safe working procedures. This extends to those employees who may be engaged in remote working. These guidelines are drafted in line with the Health (Preservation and Protection and Other Emergency Measures in the Public Interest) Act 2020.

In the event of a remote working arrangement (regardless of location), it is important that employees fully understand, consider, and comply with the following requirements.

The following list is from Part 2, Section 13 of the Health, and Safety Act. Further details can be found by clicking <u>here.</u>

- Co-operate with the College so far as is necessary to enable compliance with the relevant statutory provisions, company policies and the College's remote work policy requirements. This applies despite the informal surroundings such as a person's home.

- Not engage in any improper conduct or dangerous behaviour and be aware that all the College policies and procedures continue to apply while they are working remotely.

- Take reasonable care to protect their own safety.

- Ensure they are not under the influence of an intoxicant or in such a state that they might be a danger to themselves or others while engaging in working remotely. This applies during the (agreed) normal work hours while working in the home.

- Before the arrangement commences (or retrospectively) attend training and undergo and/or conduct such assessment as may be necessary.

- Make correct use of any article or substance provided for use or for the protection of the employee, including protective clothing and equipment.

- Report to Building Services as soon as practicable: any work being carried out which might endanger themselves or others; any defects in the place of work, the system of work, any article or

substance which might endanger themselves or others; any contravention of the relevant statutory provisions of which he/she is aware.

- Notify the Line Manager and/or HR if they become aware that they are suffering from any disease or physical or mental impairment which affects their performance of work activities that could give rise to risks to the safety, health, and welfare of persons at work. The duty is on the employee to protect themselves and others.

- Employees should refer to the Health and Safety folder on the Staff Gateway for information relating to reporting accidents or email healthandsafety@carlowcollege.ie

Appendix 2.1 Display Screen Equipment

Introduction

The use of display screen equipment (DSE) or visual display units (VDU) is associated with health problems such as upper limb disorders (including pains in the neck, arms, elbows, wrists, hands, and fingers), backache, fatigue, and stress, temporary eyestrain, and headaches.

DSE equipment includes workstations where there are monitors and keyboards on machinery and process equipment as well as personal computers, both desktop and portables (laptops).

Moving and handling the equipment may also result in injury to the back or soft tissues (musculoskeletal) due to poor handling techniques and the unpredictable centre of gravity of the equipment and there is also the risk of increased stress levels due to the use of computer software that is incompatible with the employee.

1.1 Legal Duties

Health and safety legislation relating specifically to DSE requires that employers assess risks to individual employees at their workstations and that measures are taken to reduce the risk of injury or ill health to each employee arising from their use.

The law requires that workstations should meet specified minimum standards and the work activities should be planned so that employees are allocated breaks from the workstation, usually resulting in changes of activity.

The law also requires that eye tests are provided for DSE users (employees) and, where necessary, basic glasses to correct vision problems are provided by the employer.

Employers also have duties under other legislation, which requires:

- Maintenance of the equipment;

- Information, instruction, and training for employees;

- Provision of adequate heating, lighting, and ventilation in workplaces.

1.2 Recognised Control Measures

Employers should identify individual workers who regularly use DSE at work. The specific legal requirements apply to those who:

- Normally use the equipment for continuous spells of more than one hour at a time.

- Use the DSE in this way daily.

- Require high levels of concentration and attention where errors could be critical.

- Are required to interact with the equipment at speed e.g., data input processors.

- Have no discretion as to the use, or non-use, of the equipment.

- In addition, where the individual needs specific training or skills in the use of the DSE to do the job.

1.3 Risk Assessment

Risk assessments of DSE workstations should be carried out in order to ensure that basic legal requirements are being met and that the risk of ill health relating to the design and layout of the workstation is being effectively reduced.

1.4 Employees Role in Undertaking the Assessment

Employees are required to comply to Risk Assessment checklist and procedures.

1.5 The role of the Assessors

Assessors need to be competent to carry out assessments. They must understand the assessment process, know the requirements of the legislation, and understand how the employee's posture relates to the conditions in the workplace. The assessment will begin with the employee collecting information about the work activities undertaken. Please follow the relevant training guide and form below.

The follow up assessment, undertaken by the aforementioned relevant personnel, will include observation of the employee whilst carrying out their normal tasks on the computer. This observation will enable the assessor to consider whether the set up and the way the employer works are satisfactory or whether there are issues that need to be addressed. In this latter case, an action plan will be prepared setting out steps necessary to reduce risks to the employee. A subsequent review will be required to ensure that this plan has been implemented and that the risks to the employee have been eliminated.

In every case, similar considerations will need to be taken into account and the College have prepared a checklist that can be used by a trained assessor to record the details of each assessment made and their recommendations. If the assessor is not empowered to take, the action recommended they must report their findings to a manager so that the appropriate action can be taken.

1.6 Hardware VDU Guide

The keyboard should be separate from the base unit and able to tilt, there should be enough space in front of the keyboard to provide support for hands (approximately 10cm) and the user should be comfortable and able to reach all parts of the DSE with ease.

Desks should be a suitable height and have a matt surface to reduce glare and reflections and chairs should be stable. The height of the seat and backrest and its angle should be fully adjustable and, if requested, a footrest should be provided to ensure comfort, and similarly in situations where the feet cannot be placed flat on the floor, with the chair height adjusted to achieve the correct typing position for the forearms and wrists (i.e., level with the desktop). There should be sufficient room on the desk for the DSE monitor, keyboard, and mouse to be used comfortably and not be obstructed by papers, files, telephones, and the like. The mouse should be in easy reach so that it can be used with a straight wrist.

Laptop users should be provided with accessories such as separate keyboards, monitors, docking station, etc. assessed as necessary to reduce the risk of injury when the equipment is used as a fixed workstation for any extended periods. Older style laptops with small screens and keyboards were not designed for regular desktop use and are not suitable for regular use at home or in an office. Newer laptops with large screens and larger keyboards may be suitable. Best practice is to provide a standard desktop computer for people who work at a fixed location. For peripatetic workers who carry a laptop, make occasional use of it whilst away from their base and spend a day or more at home using the laptop on administrative work best practice is to provide a separate keyboard, mouse and stand, or a laptop docking station with a full-sized display screen and keyboard.

The screen should be centred at eye level or slightly below. The top of the screen should be at eye level or ≈50-75mm above the eye level for larger screens (>18 inch). The monitor should tilt and swivel and be adjusted to a comfortable position.

Similarly, the contrast and brightness should be adjustable, and the image should be stable and free from flicker. Monitors should be free from glare or reflections and should be kept clean.

A height and backrest adjustable chair should be provided. When seated the user should assume a comfortable position. The shoulders should be relaxed, wrists straight and the posture altered from time to time. The seat height should be adjusted to accommodate placing the feet flat on the floor. The calves should be perpendicular to the floor and the user's thighs. The chair should be adjusted to allow the user to lean back about 5-10°. The chair should be tilted so thighs are slightly higher than knees and there should be no obstacles under the table to restrict postural changes.

The work environment in which the workstation is located should be managed in order to minimise the risk of ill health.

- Adequate natural lighting should be provided.

- The workstation layout should be altered to avoid glare or reflections from windows etc. (this may require the provision of blinds to the window areas).

- Noise levels in the area should be reduced to the lowest level possible to prevent distraction from the work being carried out.

- The temperature should be adequate and comfortable.

Suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training should be provided for DSE users to ensure that they understand the associated hazards and enable them to make suitable and safe adjustments to their workstation or posture.

1.6 Software Guide

Software and systems should be designed to minimise the number of keystrokes and mouse movements required by the operator. The fewer that are required the less the demands and strains placed on the muscles of the wrist and forearm.

1.7 Eye Tests

Employees are entitled to ask their employer to provide an eye test if they habitually use DSE as a significant part of their work.

A full eye and eyesight test by an Optometrist is required. Employers should arrange for the test and may make arrangements with a particular Optometrist; it does not have to be the one the employee wants to visit. Employers will need to pay for glasses shown to be necessary for work at a display screen (that is glasses prescribed for the distance at which the screen is viewed). If the employee already uses glasses and the prescription is suitable for DSE work the employer does not have to pay towards the glasses.

Many high street opticians offer employers special arrangements to carry out DSE eye-tests, provide written reports on the eyesight of those tested and supply glasses if specifically required for work at DSE, for a set price per employee. The College is aware that in Ireland the Specsavers chain operate a financially attractive voucher scheme.

Following the initial eye and eyesight test further tests at intervals specified by the Optometrist or when a DSE user is experiencing eye problems should be arranged. These tests will be at the employer's cost.

Where employees are found to require glasses solely for work at DSE the employer is required to pay for the prescription lenses and basic frames only. There is no requirement to pay for designer or special frames. As a goodwill gesture some employers choose to contribute the cost of basic frames where employees want to wear more expensive frames.

1.8 Training, Instruction and Information

The employee by means of the outlined mandatory training above should undertake training, instruction, and information. Thereafter, a competent person will undertake a follow up assessment, adequate supervision should also be included, and areas to consider or monitor should include the following: (Please note that employees need to ensure they are these areas also).

- The importance of good posture and changing position.

- How to adjust furniture to help avoid risks.

- Organising the workstation to avoid awkward or frequent repeated stretching movements.

- Avoiding reflections and glare on or around the screen.

- How to adjust and clean the screen and mouse.

- The importance of organising work activities to allow changes in work activity or breaks.

- Who to contact for help and to report problems or symptoms.

- How to use the equipment and software provided.

Users should be advised to sit directly facing the screen, not at an angle and users who key continually should be advised to refocus their eyes every 5-10 minutes by focusing on an object in the distance for a second and then back to the screen or to blink often.

Further provision should be made for users to take regular breaks or change activities. This can be achieved through other work or duties such as photocopying, retrieving a file etc.

The DSE equipment should be regularly maintained and cleaned to minimise the risk of injury from fire or electrocution. Consideration should be given to employing the services of an office equipment-cleaning contractor to undertake specialist-cleaning services.

Eating and drinking should be prohibited at work areas in order to reduce the risk of fire and damage to equipment should a spillage occur.

Equipment, which is lightweight, should be selected where possible. The movement of equipment within work environments should be restricted to trained staff and mechanical aids such as trolleys should be provided to minimise the manual movement required.

Users of portable devices such as laptops should be provided with lightweight equipment and a suitable carry case to protect the equipment from direct sunlight or wet conditions etc., which may cause damage and subsequently pose a hazard to the user. You should also take into account the safety of the holder of the equipment, during its transportation, and the possibility of aggravated assault in the event of the equipment's attempted theft.

Appendix 2.2: Manual Handling

1. Legal stuff

There are specific regulations about manual handling that we must follow. They require us to assess the risk of injury from manual handling and eliminate or reduce the risk.

The law requires the elimination of manual handling but where that is not reasonably practicable the risks must be reduced, and people involved in manual handling tasks must be instructed and trained.

2. Information

Injuries from manual handling are among the most common causes of injury at work; they account for around 30% of those reported to the Health and Safety Authority. Injuries caused by manual handling are often referred to as Musculoskeletal Disorders. They include damage to spinal discs, nerves and muscles, joint pain, and repetitive strain injuries all to the upper body.

3. What is Manual Handling?

Manual handling is any activity that involves the lifting, carrying, moving, pushing, or pulling of a load. Pushing or pulling a heavily loaded trolley will put your back under the same strain as lifting a load vertically or moving it horizontally.

4. What is the Maximum Load that is Safe to Lift?

There are no definitive safe limits. Much depends on the person lifting the load and the task itself. For example, a tall person might easily lift a load and place it on a shelf at their waist height while a short person would struggle to lift the same load to the same height. So, when we assess the risks from manual handling, we must consider the people doing the lifting, what is involved, the weight of the load and how the one affects the others.

Having said that there is official guidance that says a man should be able to lift a load of 25 kgs. (56 lbs.) to waist height once every 2 minutes, 30 times an hour, without risk. At the same rate, a woman should be able to lift a load of 15 kgs. (33 lbs.) to waist height without risk.

If you must lift loads above waist height, bend down to place them or hold them away from your body the safe limits are much reduced. Lighter loads lifted very frequently can also put you at risk of a musculoskeletal disorder.

5. Do

- Know the weight of the load or carefully assess its weight before lifting it.

- Plan ahead, know where the load is going and check that it can be placed without difficulty or awkward movement.

- Be aware of your capacity to lift the load, if it cannot be done by one person, ask for help. However, remember that the load two people can safely carry is always less than double what a single person can carry.

- Keep your back straight, bend your knees and do not jerk upwards. Make your movements as smoothly as possible.

- Keep the load close to your body; avoid bending, twisting, and stooping.

- Once the lift has been completed, put the item down slowly, adjust if necessary and gently reposition yourself.

- Remember that your ability will be reduced in cold and wet conditions.

- Use trolleys, pump trucks and other mechanical aids.

- Tell us if you think mechanical aids could replace or make a repetitive job less demanding.

- Tell us if you have an issue concerning manual handling, ignoring the signs could be disastrous. Prompt action could prevent long-term musculoskeletal problems.

6. **Don't**

- Cut corners. Always plan your handling tasks so that they are done so safely and securely.

- Overestimate your abilities.

- Rush into moving an unfamiliar load.

- Ignore aches and pains that occur after manual handling tasks. Tell us about them.

7. **Discussion Questions**

1. What can be done to prevent manual handling injuries in the workplace?

   Where heavy loads are lifted or moved always, consider whether mechanical handling arrangements could be used. Consider pump or pallet trucks, conveyers, forklift trucks, load balancers, lifting tables, etc. Where loads are moved on trolleys could they be mechanised, would larger wheels make them easier to move.

2. Are there any statutory weight limits for manual handling?

   The law does not impose a maximum weight limit. People's abilities vary with age, health, height, and other factors such as the size and weight of the load and where it is being. Therefore, employers must manage and control the risks on a person-to-person basis and the circumstances of the task. The guidelines for maximum loads shown on the poster apply to straight lifts of a regular sized load.

3. As an employer, what should a manual handling training course contain?

   Training is a crucial element to raising awareness and reducing the risks from manual handling. It should relate to the workplace and the load or loads being moved. An offsite session involving boxes of regular shape is not suitable training for workers who are moving drums or irregular sized loads whether they are heavier or lighter. Good manual handling training will be tailored to the individual workplace and workforce.

4. Should PPE be provided for manual handling operations?

   PPE can be of benefit where the work is taking place in cold or wet weather or in cold stores. Your ability to lift is reduced in cold and wet weather. Where the load being moved has a coarse or rough texture gloves will be required. Where there is a risk of injury to the feet from a dropped load protective footwear will be required. Every situation needs its own assessment.

5. What is the correct lifting technique that should be used?

   There is no single correct way to lift. The technique for lifting things will depend on a number of things such as the weight and size of the object being lifted. It is, for example, easier to pick up a box that has handholds than something that is awkwardly shaped, or a package where the weight is not evenly distributed.

6. Should packages and loads be labelled with their weight?

   The regulations say that where it is reasonably practicable, packages and loads should be labelled with their weight. You will see the weight marked on many of the boxes and loads we receive. Objects that have to be moved as part of our processes will not be labelled; we know the weight and the correct, safe way to move them.

If it is reasonably practicable to do so and there is a risk of injury from handling the load, we should show their weight. Loads that are unbalanced should be marked clearly with their weight and centre of gravity.

8. Manual Handling: Quick Steps to remember

Manual Handling

Tasks involving the regular lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling of heavy loads must be assessed for risks to the health and safety of workers. Routine and frequent tasks involving manual handling should be eliminated, wherever possible, by providing mechanical aids, adapting the workstation or redesigning the work process.

Employees should always be trained in specific workplace procedures and the general principles of manual handling described in this poster.

Do not lift more than you can safely push or carry. Carefully assess each load before you lift it. If you consider it beyond your ability, ask your managers for advice. Figure 1 shows recommended maximum weights when standing; figure 2, whilst seated.
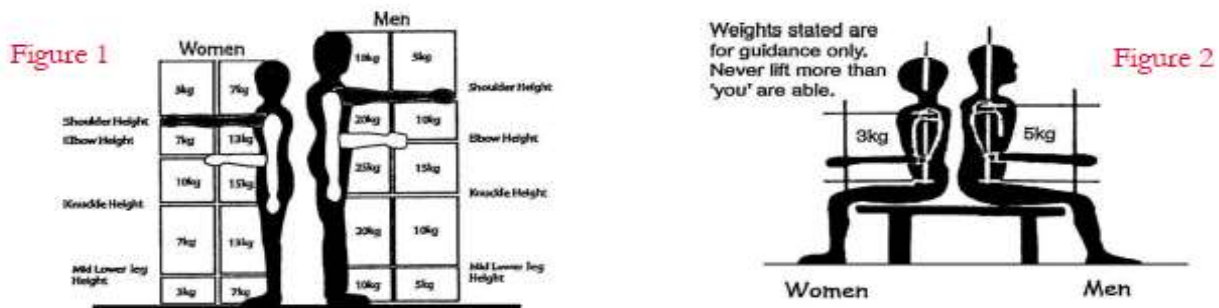
STOP AND THINK – Plan work that involves manual handling. How heavy is the load? Where is it going to be placed use appropriate handling aids where possible. Will assistance be required? Remove obstructions, such as discarded wrapping materials. For long lifts, such as from floor to shoulder height, consider resting the load mid-way on a table or a bench to change grip.

ADOPT A STABLE POSITION – Stand with feet apart, one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load if it is on the ground). Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain a stable posture. Do not wear over-tight clothing or unsuitable footwear; it may make the task more difficult.

KEEP THE LOAD CLOSE TO YOUR WAIST – While lifting keep the load close to your waist for as long as possible. The distance of the load from the spine at waist height is an important factor in the overall load on the spine and back muscles. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it

KEEP YOUR BACK AS STRAIGHT AS POSSIBLE – Slightly bending your back and knees at the start of the lift is preferable to either fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (full or deep squatting), but it should be avoided wherever possible.

DON'T FLEX ANY FURTHER WHILE LIFTING – This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.

AVOID TWISTING THE BACK OR LEANING SIDEWAYS, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOUR BACK IS BENT – Keep your shoulders level and facing the same direction as your hips. Turning by moving your feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

Appendix 2.2.1: Manual Handling: Guide

MANUAL HANDLING
The Correct Lifting Technique

STOP & THINK

Plan work that involves manual handling. How heavy is the load? Where is it going to be placed? Use appropriate handling aids where possible. Will assistance be required?

Remove obstructions, such as discarded wrapping materials. For long lifts, such as from floor to shoulder height, consider resting the load mid-way on a table or bench to change grip.

ADOPT A STABLE POSITION

Stand with feet apart, one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load if it is on the ground). Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain a stable posture. Do not wear over-tight clothing or unsuitable footwear; it may make the task more difficult.

ENSURE A GOOD HOLD ON THE LOAD

Where possible keep the load as close to your body as possible. Use any handles or devices already fitted to the load. Keep the load in balance.

KEEP THE LOAD CLOSE

While lifting keep the load close to your waist for as long as possible. The distance of the load from the spine at waist height is an important factor in the overall load on the spine and back muscles.

Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.

KEEP YOUR BACK STRAIGHT

Slightly bending your back and knees at the start of the lift is preferable to either fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (full or deep squatting), but should be avoided wherever possible.

DON'T FLEX ANY FURTHER WHILE LIFTING!

AVOID TWISTING OR LEANING SIDEWAYS

Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways especially while the back is bent. Keep your shoulders level and facing in the same direction as your hips. Turning by moving your feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

6 STEPS TO REMEMBER

Tasks involving the regular lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling of heavy loads must be assessed for risks to the health and safety of workers. Routine and frequent tasks involving manual handling should be eliminated, wherever possible, by providing mechanical aids, adapting the workstation or redesigning the work process.

Employees should always be trained in specific workplace procedures and the general principles of manual handling described in this poster.

Do not lift more than you can safely push or carry. Carefully assess each load before you lift it. If you consider it beyond your ability, ask your managers.

PENINSULA

Appendix 2.2.2: Workstation: Set Up Guide – Display Screen Equipment Guidance

11

Guides for Managers and Staff

    A. Display Screen Equipment Guidance

    B. Work Related Stress A Guide for Employers

    C Work Related Stress Information Sheet for Employees

    D. Further information on Sensitive Risk Groups

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[10] Peninsula Health and Safety Services, documentation, https://www.peninsulagrouplimited.com/ie/services/health-and-safety/24-hour-health-safety-advice/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=DSA&adgroup=&utm_content=&utm_term=&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIhov5rLrS-AIVQuDtCh2BoQOUEAAYASAAEgKtZvD_BwE

[11] Health and Safety Authority, https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/besmart_ie/

Appendix 2.2.3: Display Screen Equipment: Set up Guide

1. Arms

Ensure your elbows are level with the keyboard when sitting at your desk. This will position your wrists at the correct angle.

2. Getting Comfortable

Ensure your feet are flat on the floor with your knees at a minimum angle of 90 degrees. If you cannot place both feet flat on the floor whilst sitting right back in your chair, you need a footrest. Adjust your chair to support your back .

3. Head and Neck

The very top of the screen should be level with your eyes, in your line of sight. The screen should be directly in front of you; it should be an arm's distance away when you are sitting in an upright position.

4. Keying In

Leave sufficient space in front of the keyboard for hands and wrists. Your keyboard should be positioned towards the front of your desk to avoid overreaching and your mouse should be on the same platform (at the same level -next to your keyboard).

5. Reviewing Documentation

Any documents being used in the course of your work should be at the same level as the screen, on the same side as your dominant eye.

6. Overreaching

Items in frequent use, such as telephone, stapler, pens, etc. should be placed within easy reach.

Ensure that the equipment, the contrast, brightness and colour, is correctly set. Alternate your tasks to avoid stressors such as eye strain and fatigue.

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[12] Peninsula Health and Safety Services, documentation, https://www.peninsulagrouplimited.com/ie/services/health-and-safety/24-hour-health-safety-advice/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=DSA&adgroup=&utm_content=&utm_term=&gclid=EAIaIQobChMIhov5rLrS-AIVQuDtCh2BoQOUEAAYASAAEgKtZvD_BwE

Appendix 2.3: Required Employee Signature Confirmation

I acknowledge receipt of the Hybrid Working Checklists, Guides and Information of Carlow College, St. Patrick's and acknowledge that I have read and been given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the content. I undertake to observe the policies and procedures set out in the Guidelines and further accept that these guidelines together with my offer letter and written terms and conditions of employment, form part of my contract of employment or contract for services as the case may be with Carlow College.

It is my responsibility to read and understand the document. It is also my responsibility to ensure that I read and keep up to date with changes to remote working policies and procedures as they occur.

Name in capitals: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____