



The University of Manchester

General Risk Assessment

Date: 1, July, 2025	Assessed by:	Approved by:	Building / Location: Nancy Building (MECD), Main Library	Assessment ref no:	Review date: One year from issue or if significant changes
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Task/Premises:

Working from home

Working in general workspaces and offices, including working out of hours

This is a generic risk assessment for working in a general office / workspace environment. It applies to FSE staff, students and their sponsored visitors.

Activity	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing measures to control risk	Risk rating	Result
Working on campus	COVID infection through close contact or the contact with surfaces which may have been contaminated by previous users	Staff, students, visitors Infection of respiratory illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">COVID restrictions have ceased in the UK.Face coverings and hand sanitisers remain available at main entrances of University buildings.For the latest University's COVID guidance, please see StaffNet https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/campus-management	Med	A

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Working on campus	Building fire	Staff, students, visitors If present within the building during a fire Burns, Smoke inhalation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction arrangements cover security and fire awareness and include how to locate and use a fire door to exit the building and the location of the fire assembly point(s). • All new staff should complete fire awareness e-training TLCF100. • Fire Action notices are displayed around the building • Fire alarm system are in place and tested weekly on day at time to enable users to identify the sound of the alarm, see fire action notice at entrance to buildings. • Fire evacuation practices are carried out annually as a minimum • Building users are empowered to activate the fire alarm if a building evacuation is necessary during an emergency • Induction covers the importance of maintaining clear fire exit routes and keeping the doors closed unless essential. Induction also covers the need for high general housekeeping standards. • Ready access to fire extinguishers is available for use by trained users. • Staff 'hosts' are responsible for the safety and evacuation of visitors. • Evacuation marshals attend suitable training and assist where possible during evacuations during normal working hours. • Requests to work out of hours include emergency action in case of fire and use of fire routes and doors. 	Med	A
Working on campus	Injuries or ill health	Staff, students, visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aiders are available and First Aid Notices are displayed around the building • All Campus Security staff are first aid trained. Security contact details are 0161-306-9966. This telephone number can be found on the back of staff/student ID cards. • AEDs/ Defibrillators are located throughout campus, please see map for nearest location 	Med	A
Maintaining building security	Suspicious people/ activities in and around campus	Staff, students, visitors Difficulty in contacting help/assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If using a swipe card to access a building, do not allow anyone to tailgate • If you see any suspicious activities in and around the premises, get yourself to a safe place and call Campus Security immediately on 0161 306 9966 	Med	A

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not enter into any area unauthorised for your use, lone working or out-of-hours Do not prop doors open When entering and exiting the building, keep to well-lit area and be extra vigilant of surroundings 		
Working on campus and traversing around the buildings	Building defects and poor housekeeping	<p>Staff, students and visitors.</p> <p>Discomfort while working and physical injuries if building defects cause an accident</p> <p>Slips, trips and falls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defects or concerns can be reported to Estates Helpdesk by calling 0161 275 2424 or using the on-line reporting form Estates Helpdesk Reasonable standards of housekeeping should be maintained and checked on regularly. Floors kept clean, dry and clear of obstructions particularly exit routes. Spillages to be cleared immediately Cabinet drawers and doors are kept closed when not in use. Items should be stored securely to avoid items falling or people colliding with protruding items. Trailing cables must be positioned neatly away from walkways or secured and highlighted with hazard tape. Fan heaters or air conditioning units should not be brought into the space unless facilitated by Estates. Waste bins are supplied for general and recyclable waste reducing the build-up of rubbish in corridors and spaces. All communal spaces should be treated with respect and House services will be conducting regular cleaning of these spaces. Adequate lighting is based on identified activities/tasks in the areas as deemed sufficient during building design specification. Emergency lighting will turn on if standard lighting system is faulty to ensure there will always be light in the areas. 		
Allocation of workspace	Lack of space impacting safe access and egress	<p>Staff, students, visitors</p> <p>Physical injuries and obstruction of access and egress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriately sized furniture. Reasonable standards of housekeeping are maintained and checked on regularly by users. Adequate space should be maintained between furniture and/or items to permit easy access and egress. Stairwells, corridors, fire escapes and circulation routes are not to be used as storage space and must be kept clear at all times. 	Low	A

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Using kitchen facilities	Inadequate maintenance of water cooler or water dispenser giving rise to Legionella	Staff, students, visitors Legionnaires disease could be contracted from inhalation of water aerosols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estates maintain the mains fed water coolers and local areas oversee the stand-alone water coolers. In both cases above regular maintenance should be carried out and records kept. This is usually achieved via service contracts. 	Low	A
Using kitchen facilities	Poor waste management/disposal	Staff and students, visitors. Discomfort from poor housekeeping and odours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of waste bins/streams are supplied for recycling and disposal needs. House services staff dispose of general waste regularly. Food waste should be disposed of immediately to maintain hygiene and avoid vermin. Food items should be stored correctly to avoid vermin. Clean up spillages. 	Low	A
Use of kitchen appliances	<p>Kitchen appliances such as kettles, fridges, microwaves and dishwasher</p> <p>Misuse of electrical equipment, hot food and liquids, microwave radiation leakage, poor hygiene</p>	<p>Staff, students, visitors</p> <p>Electric shocks, fire, burns, scalding, treatment for microwave radiation leakage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appliances are PAT tested regularly. If faulty, stop use immediately and report it. All kitchen users are responsible for keeping these appliances and kitchen areas clean and free from spillages. Cleaning materials should be stocked in the kitchens. <p>Kettle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When using a kettle, check the water level is correct. Do not overfill. Do not let it boil dry. Position the cups so they are near the kettle to reduce the distance required to pour the hot water. Pay attention when pouring the hot water to avoid spillage. <p>Microwave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only use microwave-safe containers in a microwave When using a microwave, ensure the correct temperature and duration are used. Do not leave food heating unattended in microwave. Be mindful of steam when opening the microwave door. Keep a safe distance. Protect your hands when taking hot food out of the microwave, e.g. use a tea towel <p>Fridges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All kitchen users are responsible for disposing of their own unwanted food items. Do not leave food and drinks to go out of date or become rotten in the fridge If possible, place loose food items in secure containers 	Low	A

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			Dishwasher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the user manual Only put dishwasher-safe items into the dishwasher Only use dishwasher tablets and wash hands immediately after touching the tablets. Do not overfill a dishwasher Place items in a secure position in the dishwasher. Do not allow fragile items to fall over Only open the dishwasher once the washing cycle has finished and it has cooled down Be mindful of steam when opening the dishwasher door. Keep a safe distance 		
Use of office electrical equipment, both Personal and University Owned	Electric shocks Fire Damage to other electrical equipment Misuse of electrical appliance, faulted electrical appliance.	Staff, students, visitors Burns, Smoke inhalation,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All University electrical equipment will undergo Portable Appliance Testing. Staff are discouraged from bringing in own electrical equipment as maintenance cannot be assured. Personal Equipment will also need to undergo portable appliance testing before use within UoM buildings. Any damaged equipment should be taken out of service and either replace or repaired. All equipment whether personal or UoM owned must comply with relevant standards such as the British Standard or EU standards. All equipment should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Liquid spills near electrical equipment should be cleaned up immediately. Extension cables should be avoided as much as possible. Daisy-chaining is not permitted. Visual checks before use to make sure equipment, cables and free from defects Defective plugs, cables equipment etc. should be taken out of use and be reported for repair/replacement. 	Low	A
Use of display screen equipment Repetitive/prolonged use of equipment or tasks	Incorrect posture whilst using DSE Incorrect workstation set up	Staff, students, visitors Musculoskeletal injuries/disabilities Limb disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to the DSE policy, guidance and poster for more information on how to set up your workstation properly 	Low	A

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	Prolonged use without breaks Electrical hazards	Eye strain Headaches Back pain Repetitive strain Fatigue Electric shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete DSE Self-Assessment for a Safety Advisor to review and report back with any recommendations or actions. Seats should be stable and adjustable to provide comfort Set up workstation to a comfortable position with good lighting and natural light where possible Take regular breaks away from the screen. Regularly stretch your arms, back, neck, wrists and hands to avoid repetitive strain injuries. Refer to workstation exercises here Provision of adjustable equipment and furniture available following DSE assessment Refer to use of electrical equipment. Any work of a repetitive nature must be subject to a separate risk assessment in consultation with a Safety Advisor 		
Manual Handling Carrying, lifting, pulling, pushing heavy loads e.g. furniture, PCs, stationery.	Manual Handling Damage to equipment	Staff, students, visitors Back pain bruises, sprains, strains, fractures. Improper manual handling-incorrect posture/lack of awareness. Carrying or moving heavy items can cause pain, sprains, strains, fractures and if dropped, fractures / bruises may result.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are trained via SLD courses (TLC0510 or TLCA500 as appropriate), and familiar with correct handling technique and seek assistance when needed. Any manual handling that falls outside of the scope of the manual handling training or is particularly complicated must be specifically risk assessed. Some items may need more than one person to handle. Loads can be broken down into smaller, more manageable weights and sizes where possible; journeys are planned to minimise the time an object is handled. Additional staff are used to open doors and assure clear passage. Lifts used rather than stairs when possible. Adequate rest breaks are taken; handling activities are distributed throughout the team; staff with known health conditions are not asked to do tasks that may aggravate an existing condition Perform kinetic lifting with feet apart, load held close to body and in front of individual Plan route to avoid uneven or poor-quality surfaces Identified manual handling equipment is inspected at least annually and records kept locally. 	Low	A
Work at Height	Falls	Staff, students, visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid storing items high up. All heavy objects should not be stored high up. 	Low	A

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	Falling objects	Users fall from ladders or other height or drop items which can injure others through direct impact or indirectly through damaging equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users who are required to use steps, ladders or other access equipment must complete the working at height training course available through SLD TLC0500. • Following training, users must read sign and follow the specific working on ladders risk assessment • Any work at height that falls outside of the scope of the working at height training must be specifically risk assessed • Identified working at height equipment is inspected at least annually and records kept locally. • Pre-use visual checks must be done by the user every time especially if locking mechanisms are needed. • Different types of working at height equipment e.g. access steps, ladders, foot stools, are available to allow users to choose the most appropriate for the task. 		
Activity on your own	Lone working	Staff, students, visitors Isolated, unable to summon assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please refer to the University Lone Working policy and guidance for more information • Please refer to the new University Working at Home guidance • Please refer to the new University Wellbeing Support website • Please refer to the FSE Personal Safety Guidance • Staff to remain in regular contact with line manager or colleagues via Teams, Zoom, phone or email etc. 	Low	A

Activity	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing measures to control risk	Risk rating	Result
Working out of hours	Potential for lone-working Changes to the environment during evenings and weekends	Staff, students, visitors More vulnerable. Difficulty in contacting help/assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of hours working to be approved by line manager/ Academic Supervisor beforehand. Minimise the duration and frequency of working out of hours. Carry a charged up mobile phone on person at all times. Be aware of out of hours safety protocols, including security contact telephone numbers, evacuation and first aid information. General building and campus support will be reduced out of hours. Inform someone beforehand of the planned lone working (time, location and duration). Set up a buddy system so you contact someone at regular intervals (within the building if possible or by telephone /emails/ Teams etc.) Accompanied buddy is for high-risk activities = Work with another person in the same area in close proximity Remote buddy is for low-risk activities = Regular contact with another person via visits, phone, texts or emails SafeZone app can be set with a check-in timer during out of hours use. Should the timer not be switched off, security and/ or remote buddy will be alerted to call occupant. In an emergency or if in need of first aid call Campus Security on 0161 3069966 	Med	A
Work pressures	Stress	Staff, students, visitors Stress related illness (causes may include: pressure of work, insufficient support from colleagues/line management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to Stress Prevention and Management toolkit for policies and guidance Please refer to Guidance for Managers and Guidance for Staff Complete training Work Related Stress: Identification, Prevention & Management (Online) The University Stress Assessment tool can be used to highlight the main factors for an individual that are recognised as having the potential to lead to work-related stress Projects, work plans and objectives to be discussed and agreed at annual PDR or more frequently if required. Refer to full FSE Stress Risk Assessment Regular contact meetings with manager and peers, Skype, Zoom, Phone 	Low	A

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define working hours, set a start & close daily routine, and prioritise your tasks. Individual may self-refer to Occupational Health Service or to the Counselling and Mental Health Service 		
Working from home	Lone working	Home working staff Isolated,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to the University Lone Working policy and guidance for more information Please refer to the new University Working at Home guidance Please refer to the new University Wellbeing Support website Staff are able to have regular direct contact with line manager and colleagues via phone, Teams, Zoom or email 	Low	A
Working from home	Poor posture, repetitive movements, eye strain, from long periods looking at DSE (display screen equipment)	Staff, students, visitors Back strain (due to poor posture). Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) to upper limbs. Eye strain.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to the DSE policy, guidance and poster for more information on how to set up your workstation properly Complete DSE Self-Assessment for your home working at least every 2 years but sooner if any changes or pain is experienced. Complete Homeworking self-assessment checklist Set up workstation to a comfortable position with good lighting and natural light where possible Take regular breaks away from the screen Regularly stretch your arms, back, neck, wrists and hands to avoid repetitive strain injuries. Refer to seated exercises Set up a desktop working space where possible and try to avoid working on a laptop without a docking station, separate keyboard or mouse Small equipment purchases of up to £50 to assist with working from home, contact local administration for more details. If experiencing ill-health issues contact your local DSE assessor or local safety advisor who will perform a full DSE assessment. Occupational health referral where issues cannot be resolved from full DSE assessment. DSE users should have regular eye tests, follow guidance FSE run monthly DSE awareness sessions on Teams 	Low	A
Working from home	Stress / Wellbeing	Home working staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Please refer to Stress Prevention and Management toolkit for policies and guidance Please refer to new University guidance for Managing teams working from home 	Low	A

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		Psychosocial effects Work / Life imbalance Anxiety Poor performance Fatigue & Tiredness	3. Please refer to Seven rules of home working published by AMBS 4. Please refer to Guidance for Managers and Guidance for Staff 5. Complete training Work Related Stress: Identification, Prevention & Management (Online) 6. The University Stress Assessment tool can be used to highlight the main factors for an individual that are recognised as having the potential to lead to work-related stress 7. Projects, work plans and objectives to be discussed and agreed with line manager regularly 8. Refer to full FSE Stress Risk Assessment 9. Regular contact meetings with manager and peers via Teams, Zoom, email and phone 10. Define working hours, set a start & close daily routine, and prioritise your tasks. 11. Individual may self-refer to Occupational Health Service or to the Counselling and Mental Health Service 12. Manager / Employee consultation, wellbeing focused		
Use of electrical appliances	Misuse of electrical appliance, faulted electrical appliance.	Home working staff Electric shock, burns and fire	1. All office equipment used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions 2. Visual checks before use to make sure equipment, cables and free from defects 3. University IT equipment brought home should already be PAT tested, small electrical items can be tested through the FSE I&F team 4. The domestic electrical supply and equipment owned by the employee is the responsibility of the employee to maintain 5. Liquid spills cleaned up immediately 6. Defective plugs, cables and equipment should be taken out of use	Med	A
Moving around the home office	Obstructions and trip hazards	Home working staff Slips, trips and falls causing physical injury	1. Floors and walkways kept clear of items, e.g. boxes, packaging, equipment etc 2. Furniture is arranged such that movement of people and equipment are not restricted 3. Make sure all areas have good level of lighting 4. Reasonable standards of housekeeping maintained 5. Trailing cables positioned neatly away from walkways 6. Cabinet drawers and doors kept closed when not in use	Med	A

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Working from home	Fire	Staff Home Working Risk of burns, smoke inhalation, asphyxiation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the event of a fire evacuate out of the building and call the fire brigade on 999 2. All waste, including combustible waste, removed regularly 3. Heaters located away from combustible materials and switched off when not in use, don't leave heaters unattended 4. Avoid daisy chaining and do not overload extension leads 5. Test smoke alarm routinely and replace batteries every 6-12 months 6. Please refer to fire brigade Home Fire Safety and Smoke Alarms 	Med	A
Working from home	High risk activities	Staff Home Working Personal injuries / accidents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only office activities with IT equipment and associated peripherals are carried out without further specific risk assessment 	Low	A
Working from home	Manual handling	Staff Home Working Back pain bruises, sprains, strains, fractures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When ordering goods the intended recipient must first check the weight and dimension of the delivery. Please use page 7 of the HSE weight guide to help determine if the item is too large, bulky or heavy to be received at home by the recipient. Item should only be delivered to a home address if it is below 25kg and can be comfortably carried by the recipient 2. Staff are trained via SLD courses (TLC0510 or TLCA500 as appropriate), and familiar with correct handling technique and seek assistance when needed 3. Use kinetic lifting techniques e.g. feet apart, load held close and in front of the body. If lifting off the floor, bend knees and keep the spine neutral. 4. Ensure there is a firm grip on the item whilst moving 5. Ensure trip hazards are removed on route from the front door to where the item is to be located. 6. Do not store large, heavy, fragile or cumbersome items at height (e.g. on high shelves or on top of cabinets/bookcases etc.) 	Low	A
Working from home	Accident / Incidents	Staff Home working	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you suffer an accident / incident whilst working at home in relation to your workstation, please report the event to your line manager and the School Safety Advisor and 	Low	A

Name (please print)	Signed	Line manager /PI countersignature	Date