

## Homeworking checklist

Before you start your home-based business there are certain things you'll need to check.

Work through the actions below. Tick them off as you do each one (or cross out the ones that don't apply).

- ☐ Think carefully about the advantages and disadvantages of working from home. Make a list of how you'll overcome the disadvantages. Remember that you could feel lonely and isolated so consider how you'll stay in touch with the business community. You may find it difficult to share ideas or hold meetings and could face distractions from family and friends.
- ☐ Check with your mortgage provider - or your landlord if you're a tenant - that you can use your home to run your business. There may be information about this in your mortgage or tenancy agreement.
- ☐ Contact your local Valuation Office to find out if you'll be paying business rates on the part of your home you'll be using for business purposes.
- ☐ Talk to an accountant or send yourself on a HMRC training session to find out about income tax and VAT. It's a good idea to check on the Capital Gains Tax position if you plan to sell your house later on.
- ☐ Get in touch with your insurance provider - your household insurance may not cover things like loss of office equipment.
- ☐ Check with your local planning department to see if you need planning permission. You might do so if the use of the building will change a lot, or your business activities will have a big impact on your neighbours or your area.
- ☐ Check that your home has enough space for your proposed business - and think about security arrangements too. A crime prevention officer could give you helpful tips on how to keep things safe.
- ☐ Identify the business equipment and services you'll need, like a work station, computer, printer and online access. Make sure that all electrical equipment is safe and suitable and that your location has access to adequate broadband.
- ☐ Carry out a risk assessment to make sure your business activities and business equipment are safe, not just for you but also for anyone else in your household and any visitors or customers.
- ☐ Plan for emergencies - it's a good idea to install a smoke alarm and make sure you know how to escape quickly if there's a fire.
- ☐ Prepare for the unexpected. What will you do if you can't work for any reason? Find out about income protection and critical illness insurance.