Advice for Managers – Considering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
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Managers are encouraged to consider the impact the current situation may be having on the teams they manage, in particular any specific EDI related considerations. Employees may have different needs during this period and good open conversations will help managers to establish what those needs are. The unusual situation that we currently face means that people will be dealing with many challenges that may affect their physical and mental health. Many employees will have strong support from their personal social networks, but others may not. As a priority managers should assess and identify any higher risk employees and take steps to support them during this time.

Throughout this resource click on the blue links – they may open in a separate browser.

If you are using a laptop track pad you may need to curser hover over the link, right click the link then select 'open link'.
Remote Working Considerations:

Ensure employees have the right equipment and technology to enable them to work remotely. If they do not have access to equipment which enables them to work comfortably or safely, discuss with them what additional needs they might have, or how they can prioritise different work tasks to help them to manage their health.

Review health and safety arrangements and work with your colleague to make any changes to their work to ensure they are able to work safely. It may be useful for them to conduct a risk assessment.

Visit the remote working webpage for more information - [remote working](#) and the Leadership and Management Academy Hub - [remote working](#)
Remote Working Considerations:

Consider whether you need to make reasonable adjustments for any employees with protected characteristics. Remember that when working remotely issues of loneliness, issues with self-confidence, pressures from caring responsibilities or absence of a close friendship network at work may be felt particularly acutely. Discuss with your employees how they can balance their needs with being able to work as much as they are able.

Remember that for some employees, particularly those with disabilities, moving to delivering teaching material online, and communicating online may be particularly challenging and could feel overwhelming. Encourage colleagues to raise any anxieties they have, and provide them with as much support as you can.

Visit the remote working webpage for more information - [remote working](#) and the Leadership and Management Academy Hub - [remote working](#)
Communication

Make sure there are opportunities for regular catch ups with employees (by telephone or using video conferencing technology/Microsoft Teams etc.,) to ensure they are coping with any extra demands or workloads.

Make the effort to particularly contact employees who may be finding working at home particularly difficult – even a short phone call or a quick email could make all the difference.

Encourage regular remote social interaction within your team (Microsoft Teams may be helpful here).

Many teams sites are being implemented around the University e.g. staff are holding virtual coffee breaks, helping each other out with learning new technologies, or even hosting virtual evening book clubs and quizzes.
Communication

Consider how you will communicate and engage with employees who have learning differences, for those who have English as a second language and for those who may find remote communication methods harder to engage with/use.

Use accessible language, avoid jargon or long words that might be hard to understand, be prepared to use different communication tools, follow the lead of the employee and go at the pace of the employee you’re communicating with. Most of all, emphasise that there is no such thing as a stupid question – if people are struggling with working remotely, encourage them to voice their concerns. It may be useful to consider all team members having a ‘buddy’ who can particularly look out for them.

Further information about communicating with employees with disabilities can be found [here](#).

Clearly outline expectations over work plans and objectives to ensure employees know what their work priorities are, recognising that flexibility may be required for employees who are self-isolating and/or have caring responsibilities due to school closures/caring for others.
Supporting Mental Wellbeing

- Be aware that some employees, understandably, may be very worried about catching the virus, while others will have concerns about their family or friends, which may cause increased anxiety.

- Listen to employee’s concerns and reassure them that any measures taken are to protect people and there is no need to panic.

- Communicate regularly with your team and ensure employees are regularly informed about the University’s contingency plans.

- Signpost employees to further advice or support, such as employee assistance programmes (EAP) and any other wellbeing resources.
Supporting Mental Wellbeing

- Keep checking in on employee’s workloads and stress levels and offer support where possible.

- Remember that normal networks, such as religious groups, are not currently able to meet in person.

- Regularly communicate how much you value everyone’s contribution. If some people are taking on additional responsibilities to bridge gaps, make sure they feel appreciated and remind them that this unusual situation is for a relatively short time.

- Make sure that you are not putting unacceptable levels of demands on employees and that they have the support and resources in place to fulfil their tasks, particularly any additional duties.

- Employees from diverse backgrounds may be fearful of experiencing hate crime or harassment. Anxiety around this, or experience of harassment, may lead to increased fear or anxiety. Ensure that employees are aware of harassment reporting mechanisms, and reassure them of the support they have from the University community.
Further information about supporting employees with disabilities including reasonable adjustments can be found here. Some reasonable adjustments which are routinely applied when working in the University setting may be difficult to apply at home please discuss any of these directly with the member of staff to see if alternatives can be found.

Consider how work can be managed flexibly, building in regular breaks. Discuss with your employees what reasonable adjustments might be necessary to enable them to continue working effectively.

If needed seek advice and guidance from the Employment Relations Team.
Practical Considerations

- Remind employees that they remain entitled to their annual leave, and encourage them to continue to agree leave dates with you. It is important that colleagues have time away from work, even whilst working at home.

- Encourage those who work part-time to clearly signal (e.g. through a shared calendar or a note on a teams site) when they have non-working days, so that their colleagues do not unintentionally contact them or ask them to work on a non-working day.

- Some employees may not have home internet, or may have poor connections. Work through with them what can be done, and that once employees are allowed again to work in the office they can be prioritised.
Looking After Yourself

We recognise that managers will also have diverse EDI related issues and that in supporting others in this period they may experience their own wellbeing issues that they hadn’t experienced before or recognised previously.

Managers are encouraged to also prioritise their own wellbeing and discuss the support networks/opportunities identified within this document with their own manager.
Additional Resources

- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) confidential and free on-line counselling and telephone information service - (access via the Employee Hub)
- Resources including; effective remote working, equality, diversity and inclusion toolkit and wellbeing programme - Leadership and Management Academy Hub
- Information about the University’s wellbeing provision - Wellbeing Hub
- For advice and help - Human Resources Helpline
- Contact the Employment Relations Team hrer@Nottingham.ac.uk
- Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CPID) - Getting the most from remote working
- Mind – resources on Corona Virus and Wellbeing
- Mind – resources on Mental Wellbeing
- University Guidelines - Equality Diversity and Inclusion
- No Place for Hate campaign and blog
- Staff networks
- Chaplaincy and Faith Support