



The Robert Carre Trust

Remote Working Policy

1. Definition

Remote working is a work arrangement that permits an employee to conduct all or some of their work at an approved alternative worksite such as the home or another school site. It should also be applied as far as possible to Members, Trustees and Governors in respect of data security practices.

2. Purpose

This policy has been developed to protect sensitive or valuable data and maintain the overall security of the Robert Carre Trust's (RCT) data and equipment whilst employees are working remotely. In addition, this policy recognises and defines the duty of care of the RCT to the remote working employees in regard to their health and safety and fair treatment.

Employees must ensure security of information and systems accessed through mobile and remote working arrangements are given due consideration. This policy emphasises the importance of staff understanding the RCT's current ICT and Acceptable Use policies and procedures and each individual's responsibilities in relation to these which must be adhered to at all times.

Information that is related to and can identify an individual is called personal data and is protected by the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 (and GDPR from 2018).

Staff that are working remotely are reminded of the importance of complying with GDPR procedures and should extend on-site working practices to their remote locations.

This policy and procedure do not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It may be amended from time to time with appropriate consultation.

3. Eligibility and Process

In principle, most roles across the RCT cannot be considered for remote working. Nevertheless, it is clearly the case that some activities can only be adequately carried out off-site (e.g. Outreach), whilst others may be carried out equally or even more effectively at a remote location – usually the employee's home.

A proposal to conduct remote working needs to be carefully reviewed in terms of: the cost of providing equipment; health and safety and communications considerations; security, data protection, and other legal issues; working and reporting relationships and any requirements to attend work to perform the duties of the post.

For a role to be considered for ad hoc remote working, the employee must make a request, with reasonable notice, to their line manager who will consider the effectiveness of the role being performed off site and the impact on the RCT site.

The Remote Working Policy should not be used as an alternative to caring for dependants. For dependency leave, please refer to the RCT leave of Absence Policy.

4. Security

4.1 Personal Security

For the maintenance of personal security, the RCT strongly advises against any external work contacts visiting an employee when they are working at home and that such visits should take place on the RCT premises wherever possible.

For the employee's own security, it is also recommended that employees who are remote working should:

- Not release any personal data or information to external contacts such as home address or personal telephone number
- Always ensure that colleagues are aware of the remote working employee's whereabouts and that you are able to be contacted within your contractual working hours.

4.2 Security of Equipment and Data

To ensure safety and security is maintained at all times, a separate allocated room should be used for remote working, where possible.

RCT provided IT equipment has a range of security measures enabled to make home working safer. Do not use personal devices for storing, accessing or transmitting personal or commercially sensitive information. Further information around the rules and guidance can be found in the RCT ICT Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) and ICT Acceptable Use (Staff) policies

The RCT Acceptable Use Policy should be adhered to when remote working; this includes locking a device when not in use and ensuring that passwords are not disclosed. It is the responsibility of the remote worker to safe-guard and protect any RCT information that they hold. Remote workers must have an understanding of digital risks, use secure working practices and apply back-up procedures as appropriate. If the remote worker is not confident in this area, they should seek assistance from the ICT department prior to working remotely.

Digital information must only be downloaded or uploaded over a secure connection. WiFi networks offered to travellers at airports, hotels, coffee shops and on public transport are generally insecure and extra measures must be taken to safeguard against information loss. The use of Foldr (via the school website), Microsoft 365 applications or Remote Desktop, provides a secure channel for data transfer over insecure networks and should be used by remote workers when interacting with RCT resources. This includes but is not limited to use with desktops, laptops, tablets and smartphones.

5. Health and Safety

The underlying principle of this section is that the standards of care towards remote working should be equivalent to that of employees working on the RCT's premises. Therefore, it is essential that the conduct of RCT business from an employee's home, partner school or elsewhere does not adversely affect the health and safety of the individual or others.

It is the duty of the RCT and the employee's line manager to ensure the equipment and working practices meet the standards as defined in the Work with display screen equipment: Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002. To ensure this is met, the remote

worker should conduct a Display Screen Equipment checklist via the school intranet.

While the RCT has a reasonable duty of care towards an employee's health and safety, the employee undertaking remote working, is expected to take primary responsibility for ensuring safe and healthy working conditions whilst working offsite.

The RCT has the right to refuse to allow remote working on grounds of Health and Safety.

6. Equipment (ICT, Sports, etc)

The line manager will discuss and agree with the employee prior to commencing remote working, what equipment and IT requirements will be needed to enable the individual to work effectively off-site. Any equipment necessary will be provided by the RCT who will bear the full cost of delivery and installation. The equipment will remain the property of the RCT at all times.

In the event of RCT equipment malfunctioning or inoperability, the remote worker should cease use of it and report it to the relevant department.

With regard to the equipment, the remote worker will be expected to:

- Take reasonable care of the equipment;
- Take all reasonable steps to minimize the risk of theft or damage to RCT property and paperwork whilst these items are away from RCT premises;
- Use it only for work purposes and in accordance with any operating instructions
- Comply with software licensing Terms and Conditions;
- Return to the RCT, the equipment at the end of the Remote working arrangement.

7. Financial Matters and Insurance

Employees working remotely are responsible for the safekeeping and protection of RCT-owned equipment that have been issued or loaned to them and reasonable care and due diligence must be taken to prevent or reduce the possibility of loss or theft of RCT-owned equipment.

Remote working employees are required to be aware of the environment in which they are working and apply appropriate common-sense measures to protect RCT-owned equipment and RCT data on both RCT-owned and privately-owned devices in accordance with the RCT Policy.

Equipment in transit left in a stationary vehicle must be locked securely and anything of value must be out of sight. Remote Working employees will be responsible for the cost of equipment which is damaged or lost due to their own negligence. It is advisable, for this reason, that remote working employees clarify whether their personal insurance will cover them for damage or loss due to negligence.

Losses of, or damage to, RCT-owned equipment may be investigated in accordance with the RCT Disciplinary Policy.

The RCT will not reimburse any expenses incurred through remote working apart from items such as postage and packaging which can be reimbursed by using the RCT expenses system.

The RCT will not reimburse an employee for costs incurred whilst remote working through the use of electricity.

Employees will be reimbursed in full for travel expenses wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred in the course of the RCT's business, through the expenses system.

For further clarification on the reimbursement of expenses, please refer to the RCT Financial Regulations Policy and Manual and the RCT Members, Trustees, Governors and Staff Allowances Policy

Employees are advised to seek clarification and advice from their relevant mortgage/insurance provider with regards to Remote Working at home and the impact it may have on their insurance and cover / payments.

8. Terms and conditions

The underpinning principle is that Remote working employees will be no worse off than office-based employees when conducting their work. For example, remote workers will be eligible to attend all appropriate training courses in the same way as office-based employees.

Remote working employees maintain their existing terms and conditions of employment.

Prior to commencing Remote Working the employee and line manager should agree on the working pattern of the employee and the times they will be available for contact. The employee should be made aware by their line manager that they will be required to visit their RCT host site on occasion as required by their line manager or department.

If either party request the remote working arrangements to end, a reasonable period of notice (a minimum of one month) should be given and agreed to allow both parties time to consider and plan alternative arrangements.

To ensure the remote working arrangement is effective, an annual review will be conducted by the line manager to ensure the business needs are met and the arrangement is still efficient.

On an ongoing basis, Remote Working agreements will be reviewed at least annually by the Department to ensure the arrangement continues to meet any change in business demands. Remote Working agreements may also be reviewed as a result of any team or departmental changes.

Agreed by SLT September 2021

Next Review Date: October 2022 (Annually)