

# Working from home during the pandemic



# During the current crisis you're expected to work from home which means much of your work will entail use of digital devices such as a computer or phone. This guidance aims to provide you with a few tips to ensure you can work safely whilst working at home.

## **Workspace**

If you can, use a kitchen or dining room table to rest your digital device and try not to work for too long a period (say 30 minutes without a screen break) with the device sitting on a sofa or bed. Aches and pains to the lower arms, shoulders and neck will quickly manifest and become problematic.

Sitting on a chair can be made more comfortable using a pillow or cushion to support the lower back. Try and make sure your feet are planted flat on the floor, if not possible, use a book or similar to support them.

Viewing a screen on a tablet, laptop, phone or PC for long periods without a rest can be harmful to your eyes and cause headaches or eyestrain. If using a desktop computer the top of the screen should be level with the eyes but, for a laptop, tablet or phone then ideally the head will be slightly leaning forward and looking down at the screen in a comfortable position which doesn't cause pain to the neck and shoulder.

If using a Laptop, ideally a separate keyboard and mouse is best, however, if you have a separate keyboard and mouse the laptop should be slightly raised but not at a height where the head is raised. Often the cause of pain to the neck and shoulder is the height of the monitor that is located too high and increases the strain on the nerves in the neck.

## **Take a break**

The best way of preventing aches and pains from working at home on a computer is to take regular breaks – every 20 minutes move away from the screen for a few minutes, get up and move about, exercise or have a brew. If you have to do a lot of reading move away from the computer to a sofa or armchair.

## **Lighting**

If you can, try not to put your laptop/tablet directly underneath a bright artificial light. Try and use natural light as much as possible.

## **Safety**

You should ensure your temporary working space is safe and eliminate hazards which can cause harm for example, slip and trip hazards, precariously balanced hot drinks or, drinks falling on your equipment.

Do not let any work related problem fester or hesitate to discuss with your tutor.

*AUB Safety Officer*