A checklist for the pro-active management of remote workers

Working conditions

Physical circumstances:

❑ Is the remote worker safe?
❑ Do they have appropriate working space (e.g. are basic needs met like suitable light / temperature)?
❑ Can they work privately and keep data confidential (if necessary)?

Equipment and technology:

❑ Has there been a risk assessment of the suitability of their workstation (desk / display screen equipment?)
❑ Do they have access to the tools / software / databases they need?
❑ Are reasonable adjustments in place for workers with a disability?

Managing the home / work boundary:

❑ Have you discussed and agreed working / contactable hours?
❑ Have you offered the opportunity to supportively discuss any home / work boundary issues?

These are vital considerations for new remote workers, but it is also important to check these issues with others

Working relationships

Supportive management:

❑ Have you made time for regular contact (appropriate to the type of work and the worker's experience) for: work guidance, feedback, facilitating development and (if necessary) signposting to support?

Contact with co-workers:

❑ Have you offered workers ways to connect with each other, including informal chats and meetings?
❑ Have you encouraged or facilitated any (virtual) social sessions to allow workers to get to know each other better (particularly new employees?)

Feeling valued / collective purpose:

❑ Have you praised an aspect of the worker's contribution lately?
❑ Have you made it clear how their work feeds into the wider success of your organisation?

These are core activities of remote management – regularly check back to make sure these are fulfilled

Opportunities

Fair allocation of workload and benefits:

❑ Have you actively reviewed how you allocate workload and development opportunities, to ensure fairness, regardless of worker location?
❑ Have you discussed and dealt with any fairness queries from workers?

Appropriate feedback and appraisal:

❑ Have you offered constructive feedback to workers lately?
❑ Have you reviewed performance management systems to check appropriateness for remote working?
❑ Have you sought worker feedback to help you learn as a remote manager?

Opportunities to learn and network:

❑ Have you checked on work-related training and networking needs lately?
❑ Have you shown a commitment to regularly facilitating longer-term development needs and goals?

These are considerations that impact on the wellbeing and performance of the workforce in the longer-term

This checklist was developed at the University of East Anglia based on systematic review and qualitative research (with Cambridgeshire Constabulary). It offers ideas for the pro-active management of remote workers, drawn from evidence on the type of risk-mitigating activities that support worker wellbeing, performance and retention.