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# Support for Home Working during the Coronavirus pandemic

In the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, most of us are working from home for the first time, full-time. Even if you're used to it, working from home in these circumstances might feel like a whole new world. Therefore, it's important we recognise how it may affect our physical and mental health and wellbeing and ensure we are taking care of ourselves and our colleagues.

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104048, Imagery credit: freepik.com/istories



## Your workstation at home

If you have not already done so, complete the online [Working Safely with Computers training](#).

If you have a home office with a desk, chair and computer please, try and follow the [DSE checklist](#) as far as you possibly can.

If you don't have a dedicated space, you can still create a home workstation with a bit of creative thinking:

**Chair:** Use a chair with a stable base and cushion to achieve good lumbar support, and as needed, a cushion to sit on to adjust the seat base height.

**Laptop riser:** Use stacks of large books or box files to create a stable platform to mount open laptops, so that your eyeline can be level with the top of the screen.

**Foot support:** Use box files or similar, or cushions to achieve stable foot support.

Take a look at the ideal sitting position image to the right and mimic this as far as you can.

- Your desk should be as clear as possible, with sufficient light, ventilation and no trailing cords.
- Check your electrical equipment is still safe to use. Do not overload sockets or daisy chain extension leads.
- Make a conscious effort to spend time away from your screen at least 5 to 10 minutes per hour or 15 minutes every two hours.
- Let your manager know if you're having any issues.

Please visit the **Health, Safety and Environment** section of the website for more information: [aber.ac.uk/en/hse/emergency/covid19](http://aber.ac.uk/en/hse/emergency/covid19).



## Physical health

It is important to look after yourself, and there are a few simple things that can help with that.

**Think about your diet.** Your appetite might change if your routine changes, or if you're less active than you usually are. Eating regularly and keeping your blood sugar stable can help your mood and energy levels.

**Drink water regularly.** Drinking enough water is important for your mental and physical health. Changing your routine might affect when you drink or what fluids you drink. It could help to set an alarm or use an app to remind you.

**Build physical activity** into your daily routine, if possible.

The **University Sports Centre** is providing free health and wellbeing #FitTips and workouts to help you stay fit and healthy from your home. Just login to their Facebook page to access the free resource. You can also take a walk, run or cycle as your one form of exercise a day.



If traditional exercise isn't your thing, there are **other options** for all ages and abilities, including

- housework
- gardening
- dancing to music
- going up and down stairs
- sitting less - if you notice you've been sitting down for an hour, just getting up or changing position can help

Please visit the **Health and Wellbeing** section of the website for more information: [aber.ac.uk/en/staff/health-wellbeing](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/staff/health-wellbeing)





## Mental wellbeing

It is vital that we look after our mental health and wellbeing while working from home.

Mental health charity **Mind** have brought together some practical information including tips on ways to relax and be creative. These include

- arts and crafts, such as drawing, painting, collage, sewing, craft kits or upcycling
- DIY
- colouring
- mindfulness
- music
- writing
- yoga
- meditation

**Care first**, our employee assistance programme offers free confidential support for any workplace or personal issue over the telephone or online 24/7. You can access the service via **0800 174319** or follow the link from the HR page: [aber.ac.uk/en/hr](https://aber.ac.uk/en/hr)

Stay connected with current events, but be careful where you get news and health information from. Having **good, sound information** helps to diminish anxiety and helps us feel more in control. You can get up-to-date information and advice from

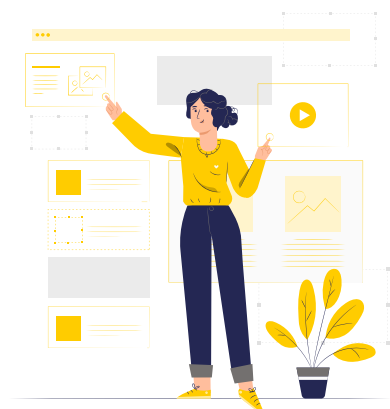
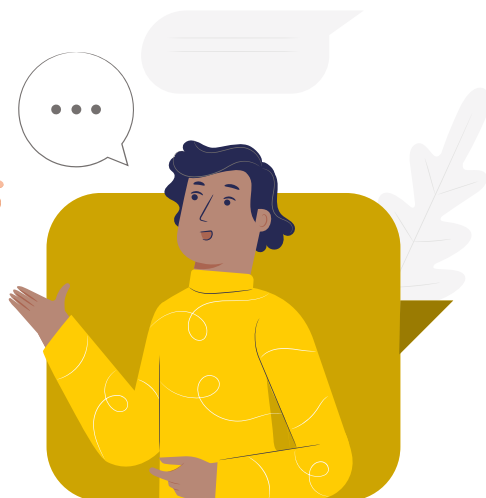
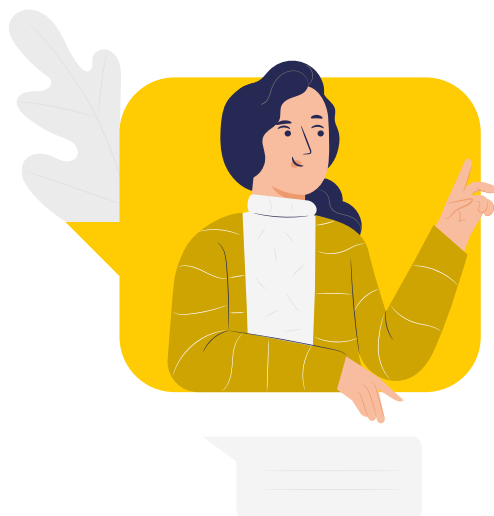
- [Welsh Government](#)
- [UK Government](#)
- [Public Health Wales](#)

Please continue to check our coronavirus information webpage: [aber.ac.uk/coronavirus](https://aber.ac.uk/coronavirus) for the latest information and [frequently asked questions](#).

## Keeping in touch

It is more important than ever we support each other as a community and take time to check on each other's wellbeing.

Whatever you do, please take time to chat to colleagues, share a virtual coffee or lunchbreak, whatever it takes to brighten up your day.



## Professional development

Many staff feel that this could be an opportune time to brush up on their skills and to perhaps look to complete some training that they have been meaning to get around to for a while.

The University have published a page that collates a vast range of training courses that can be undertaken online. The list of courses can be found here: [www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/online-training](http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/online-training).

## Any questions or queries?

If you have any other questions or queries, or can think of other ways in which the University can offer further practical assistance, please email [coronavirus@aber.ac.uk](mailto:coronavirus@aber.ac.uk) or contact the dedicated helpline on **01970 62 2483**, which is open 9am-5pm every day.

