

## PiPA Remote and Mixed Model Working Resource Part 2

### *Making Off-Site Working Work: A 'How To' Guide*

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#### INTRODUCTION

Since March 2020 remote working has been implemented in a multitude of ways, and with it, new ways of working have been introduced and lessons learnt. Successful, long term, sustainable remote working requires rigorous planning and support. It is important to evaluate the organisation's experience, understanding both the benefits and the challenges, to harness the full potential of remote and/ or a mixed model of working for your organisation and workforce.

This resource can be used by both the employee, line-manager or HR function within an organisation and used to facilitate positive and productive conversations around making remote and a mixed model of working work.

This resource is presented in 2 sections: **Planning** and **Assessing**.

- **Planning** - This section outlines the foundation steps managers can take to ensure a successful rollout of remote and a mixed model of working.
- **Assessing** - This section provides templates which outline key aspects of consideration that can support in identifying how a role can incorporate remote working. They can be completed by the person responsible for engaging or managing the role, or someone who has already done or is doing the work as they will be well placed to know details of the role and its responsibilities. It could also be done collaboratively with the person you are looking to engage.

*Some of the remote working considerations outlined will be relevant to freelancers (self-employed individuals), e.g. how you will communicate with the individual, whether any of the work needs to be done on-site, but some of the considerations will not be applicable. This document is for guidance and to be used in alignment with your organisations policies and procedures.*

**This guide and the accompanying resources are intended to provide general information only and should not be treated as a definitive guide or relied on as legal advice.**

## PART 1: PLANNING

### PLANNING FOR REMOTE WORKING

From consulting the workforce, to reviewing and updating policies, to begin trialling remote working, to establishing effective working practices, to reviewing and embedding innovative ways of working, the below plan will take you through it step by step:

Area	Considerations
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>The experience of remote working, or working from home during the pandemic, was for most organisations an emergency response to an unfolding situation. The sector deftly embraced and innovated around the extreme but temporary challenges that would not usually be a factor in remote working (e.g. closing of all childcare provisions, complete areas of the industry closing etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has remote working been successfully implemented in the past 12 months?</li> <li>• Where has remote working been more challenging over the past 12 months?</li> <li>• Which of these challenges may have been due to Covid?</li> <li>• Which of the non-Covid challenges could now be addressed and if so, how?</li> </ul>
<b>Consult Your Workforce</b>	<p>Understanding what the workforce would like and why will support your organisation to implement remote working most effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your workforce's preferences on moving forward with remote working?</li> <li>• How many of your workforce/ team would like to trial <i>Full-Time</i> or a <i>Mixed Model of remote working</i>?</li> <li>• What are the personal circumstances experienced by your workforce, which remote working could support? Requests should be treated consistently and fairly, taking into account individual personal circumstances, where appropriate, e.g. it may be a reasonable adjustment for a disabled employee to be able to work from home.</li> <li>• How can Remote Working support a successful re-opening of your business?</li> </ul>
<b>Remote Working Policy</b>	<p>This policy is the start of the communication of your remote working offer, informing your workforce of what it is, how it can be accessed, expectations of your team and how it will be managed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does 'Remote Working' mean for your organisation?</li> <li>• How can it be requested or accessed by the workforce/ your team?</li> <li>• What is the process for Remote Working requests?</li> <li>• How is this trialled and reviewed? What is the timescale?</li> <li>• What are the expectations for Remote Working? <i>(Check here for any exclusionary terminology such as 'neutral backgrounds are essential' or 'cannot have any interruptions or background noise').</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will Remote Working be managed?</li> <li>• Do you offer Remote Working at recruitment?</li> <li>• What is the technical support, device provision, or reimbursement for expenses?</li> <li>• There should be clear understanding of what has been agreed, preferably in writing and signed to show agreement. If a permanent change is made, the contract should be amended (with consent) where necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	<p>When remote working, a concern may be that the communication between individuals and departments will reduce. Remote workers may feel more isolated or disconnected from their team. It is therefore important to explore mechanisms to sustain effective communication. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling regular virtual team meetings and 1:1s.</li> <li>• Using software and digital platforms that support a variety of different communications (emails, calls, video calls, chats/direct messages, assigning and scheduling and tasks). Such platforms include Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Google Workspace.</li> <li>• Scheduling remote social engagement opportunities to enable social interaction ('watercooler moments') between team members to support team building, internal support and collaboration.</li> <li>• Collaboration and delegation of communication methods between team members gives the autonomy to decide the most effective way to carry out day-to-day operations and interactions, without putting all the responsibility on the manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Inventory</b>	<p>Making sure anyone who is working remotely has appropriate devices, software and broadband that is fit for purpose as well as a suitable remote workspace, is key to their success.</p> <p>The minimum requirements to enable remote working are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Laptop or Computer.</li> <li>• A reliable internet connection.</li> <li>• Online meeting facility such as Microsoft Teams, Google Hangout, Skype or Zoom.</li> <li>• Access to company emails and shared documents/files.</li> </ul> <p>The list above is not exhaustive and mainly considers office/desk based duties. Different conversations will need to take place in order to facilitate remote working for other roles (e.g. Will a person working remotely in wardrobe need courier or travel support for costumes, do they have the sufficient storage and sewing equipment?).</p> <p>The same responsibilities within an organisation's <i>Workspace Assessment</i> should apply to Remote Working. On page 8 of this resource is a <b>Resource Checklist</b> to support you with the logistics of this.</p>
<b>Supporting Working Practices</b>	<p>The working practices listed below will maximise the potential for a successful rollout of remote or a mixed model of working for individuals as well as managers and the organisation.</p>

- **Scheduling** – Team working or meetings need to be scheduled in advance to allow remote workers the opportunity to organise activity at the remote working location accordingly (e.g. childcare, other meetings in shared working settings etc). This could also include agreeing set days/times for meetings or ringfencing time where meetings don't happen to allow focused, uninterrupted working.

Establishing the days and times when people operating a mixed model of working are required to be on-site, will be helpful for the whole team. The same applies for those working 100% remotely who may be required for monthly meetings. It is likely that you will need to incorporate some flexibility into your arrangements.

- **Monitoring overtime and TOIL** – this supports an ethos which respects people's start and finish times at work, avoiding staff feeling they should be checking emails or accessing work out of hours. This is a tool for the employee to manage their workload rather than an employer to keep tabs on hours worked. It is important for the employer to set clear expectations about boundaries. Modelling behaviours will be crucial within this.
- **Integrating virtual 'social time'**- this can include regular coffee or lunch catch-ups, or short weekly team meetings to encourage social exchange, and mitigate feelings of disconnect or isolation.

#### Trial and Review

Any new form of remote or flexible working may benefit from a set trial period as it needs to work for both the individual and the organisation. Trials and regular reviews will support everyone to adjust to the new working practice. The success of embedding any degree of Remote Working will depend on both the individual and organisation taking equal responsibility in its implementation.

- Agree parameters and expectations.
- Agree on timescales for the trial.
- Conduct a review.
- Agree on new parameters for a trial or for its implementation longer term.

If employees are working remotely abroad you will need to consider your ability to contact them and potential issues for working outside of the UK, e.g. tax, social security.

## PART 2: ASSESSING

### ROLE ANALYSIS

When analysing a role for its suitability for remote or mixed model working, first consider the type of role and activity:

#### **Collaborative Roles:**

Are the duties within this role highly dependent on being able to work together as part of a team?  
Does this team work to short-term deliverables (such as productions)?

If so, there may be flexibility within certain elements of the role to be carried out remotely, but these will need to take into account the effects on other team members, shared deadlines and the need to be on-site for showtime.

Deconstructing the duties within certain roles can support in identifying elements which can be fulfilled remotely (e.g. a DSM could create and circulate rehearsal reports remotely).

#### **Independent Operational Roles:**

Are the duties within this role less reliant on other people and involve regular, repeated activity with longer deadlines?

This could be administrative or finance based roles where there is clear capacity for autonomous working, and therefore can be carried out remotely, in part or in full.

*See challenges outlined in [The Future of Remote Work – Flexible, Remote and Mixed?](#)*

#### **Management Roles:**

Does this role come with responsibilities to manage staff or freelancers?

Managing people can be done remotely as the pandemic has taught us, and will benefit from careful consideration around scheduling, communication and regular check-in moments.

Are there opportunities for other team members to deputise or job share when the manager is off-site?

#### **Public or Audience Facing Roles:**

Are the duties within this role connected to service delivery to the public or audiences at designated times or locations?

Elements of the rehearsal process can be planned to accommodate remote working for performers and the creative team, such as the readthrough taking place via a digital platform.

Front of House or Catering staff may struggle to work remotely, but there will be administrative tasks which can be completed remotely, such as rota creation.

Producers, programme managers and creative engagement roles which involve public facing duties, may benefit from working remotely (i.e. a producer working whilst traveling via train between venues).

## ROLE FLEXIBILITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

This is a step-by-step conversational tool for managers attempting to identify where the flexibility is within a role and workload for Remote or Mixed Model working.

CONSIDERATIONS		ANSWERS
<b>Role</b>	What is the role?	
	What are the key aspects of the role?	
	Which of these can be managed remotely?	
	What are the essential requirements (deadlines, times, locations) of the role?	<i>This should focus on the practical requirements of the role.</i>
	Which of these can be delivered remotely?	
	Other	<i>Think about the key aspects of the role in relation to the rest of the team.</i>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Is the role part of a team?	
	How many are in the team?	
	Who does the person work with?	
	Who do they report to?	
	Who do they manage?	<i>How much face time is required?</i> <i>What adjustments might be needed in relation to remote working?</i>
	How would this be affected by Remote Working?	<i>If this would incur negative impacts, how could they be addressed?</i>
	Other	<i>When, how and to whom does the role need to be accessible and available to, both internally and externally?</i>
<b>Time</b>	How many hours is the contract currently?	
	Is this role part-time, full-time or more than full-time?	

	Are there necessary core hours and any flexible hours?	
	Could some tasks be shared by, or split between two people to facilitate remote working?	
	Other	
<b>Location</b>	Where do the activities need to be carried out?	
	Which parts of the job could be carried out remotely?	
	Other	<i>Does doing the job differently require more space or different use of space?</i>

## RESOURCE CHECKLIST

When working off-site it is important that the individual has access to the equipment, software and resources they will need to successfully carry out their role, as well as ensuring their physical and mental wellbeing is supported too. What different roles require will vary, but below is a short checklist to support the conversations and preparatory steps when someone is moving to remote working.

It is also important to carry out a similar workplace assessment as you would if the person was working in your building. These guidelines may already exist in your induction packs/processes, health and safety guidelines, or you may already have Display Screen Equipment (DSE checklist). Areas covered include: positioning of equipment and furniture, viewing experiences of screens, and a review of the working environment. This is to check that they have sufficient space, work station setup and a configuration that will limit negative impacts on their physical health.

Equipment	
Laptop/Desktop/Tablet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keyboard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mouse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camera	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microphone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile Phone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Software	
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>
Calendar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to storage/server	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital Communication Platform	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources	
Sufficient and Reliable Broadband	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support with additional costs (e.g. higher broadband costs, printing)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workspace	
Desk/Workspace	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chair	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>