

### Health and Safety Guidance for Remote Meetings

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant shift to online working, and many meetings that would have been undertaken in a face-to-face capacity are now being held virtually on one of the various meeting platforms.

Although this shift was initiated by the pandemic, it is likely that many meetings will continue to be held virtually after the virus has passed, given the benefits of virtual meetings, such as reducing the need to travel. Whilst there are benefits to online meetings, there are also important health and safety considerations that must be taken into account to ensure the welfare of participants. The guidance is intended to provide some dos and don'ts around those considerations.

This guidance is aimed at online meetings. However, much of it will apply to remote learning. In this case, it should be read alongside the NASUWT's remote learning guidance.

#### Do

- Choose a location that will not be disturbed.
- Ensure you have a comfortable, ergonomic chair and appropriate desk, set to the appropriate height.
- Ensure your location is sufficiently warm and adequately lit, and be aware of glare from artificial and natural light sources.
- Request regular comfort breaks in long meetings – at least one break per hour.
- Ensure you have an adequate lunch break, away from your devices.
- Try to use a computer rather than phone.
- Have refreshments to hand, such as a drink, before starting the meeting.
- Remember to wear glasses if required.
- Take some light exercise between meetings and during breaks – walk around a little, outside if possible.
- Consider your background – if working from home do not have anything that could allude to your address, or which may be deemed inappropriate by others.
- Be in control – particularly on one-to-one calls. If the other person becomes abusive, do not be afraid to end the call.

#### Don't

- Schedule back-to-back meetings. Ensure you have a break in between sessions.
- Be tempted to undertake meetings from a sofa – make sure your body has adequate support.
- Undertake a meeting from a hand-held phone. Find a method to prop it up or use a computer.
- Conduct meetings whilst driving a car.
- Conduct meetings from a parked car, unless unavoidable – car seats are not ideal, especially if combined with a long period of driving. If you do participate in a meeting from a car, ensure it is parked in a safe location, preferably a busy car park. Avoid parking on-street, or stopping in a layby, due to the increased risk of collision. Likewise, avoid quiet areas and areas where a theft could be more likely. You may be on display using expensive equipment – if possible, keep all doors and windows locked and use the car's ventilation systems to keep cool.