Working Principles and Guidelines

1. Introduction

The University operates campus working as its normal practice. This ensures that student experience and research and knowledge exchange are at the heart of everything we do.

The need to operate as virtual campuses during the coronavirus pandemic changed how many employees at the University work. The university's intention is to be a modern flexible employer, allowing staff to work using mobile technologies on campus and in other locations, including at home, without the need to request a formal flexible working arrangement.

Our working practices will always support university requirements. These principles and guidelines will further improve our flexible working and complement the [flexible working policy](#) (which refers to any formalised change in contractual working hours and patterns).

The principles have been trialled and will be kept under review.

2. Definition of Flexible Working

There are a range of terms which support the principles of flexible working including agile and hybrid working. Hybrid working is a relatively new term where staff will consider their work location and another location, such as their home, as their usual places of work.

Flexible working allows employees to vary how they work, in agreement with their manager/s, and to have greater control to manage their working hours and location, aligning both service requirements and individual needs. Flexible work might include staggered start and finish times, rotas or working over standard hours if a member of staff would like time off to support a personal need.

Many staff at the university have reported that the use of remote working platforms has improved communication, information sharing and productivity. The university sees flexibility as a positive well-being and sustainability benefit and will maintain its commitment to this so we can be a competitive and effective employer.

Flexibility is a two-way approach which must meet university needs and should also be managed fairly and consistently. Each local flexible working arrangement relies on maintaining two-way communication. Staff are expected to support on-going

communications with their team and manager wherever and however they work and local working arrangements will be kept under review.

3. General Principles

Face-to-face teaching wherever possible is our main mode of delivery. Where employees teach, undertake research and knowledge exchange, or are in a student-facing role, or will deliver outcomes to support the university, they will be expected to deliver their roles in line with their duties as stated by their contract of employment.

Where a programme or service will be offered online to improve the student experience, remote working can be undertaken by staff (subject to line manager agreement).

The proportion of how much staff work from home must be agreed in advance with your manager/s. This will be affected by the nature of your work, the need to support collaboration where this is required, supporting the team/student experience and well-being, and to enable equity where you may be asked to contribute to campus duties as part of a rota with team members.

Teams will continue to work collaboratively and a key part of this will continue to be meeting as teams. We recognise this will require coordination and flexibility from all involved and additional guidance is available to managers and staff to support team collaboration within a flexible working approach (see below).

4. In practice

We recognise for many roles there will be an on-going requirement to be on campus. Where this is the case line managers will look to accommodate some flexibility for the team and individual/s through rotas, staggered starts or finish times. Where it is not possible to agree specific individual requests for a flexible working pattern, line managers will share the reasons why with the individual concerned.

In practice:

- We expect campus working to normally be 2 to 3 days per week (alternative patterns will be agreed for those staff working part time hours).
- Allocation of time on campus and working from home/another location will be agreed and coordinated with the team's manager and will consider both individual and team needs.
- Except where it is a requirement of the role (e.g. a pre-existing contractual agreement exists or for staff undertaking research), employees will be required to work in the UK.

- Employees adopting these working principles are subject to university policies, procedures, and standards. Staff in particular must adhere to the managing attendance policy and procedure for reporting sickness and managing leave.
- We will work collaboratively to deliver agreed services and will at times require individuals to be flexible on the days they will be on campus. Managers will work with their teams to agree any alternative or short-term arrangements as far in advance as possible.
- Where employees will work across the university campuses, we will look to provide flexible working spaces. Employees can also book rooms by emailing Room Bookings. Where staff require access to the campus for supporting administrative aspects of their role, they will be able to access their mobile devices on campus or at home.

5. DSE guidance

The university continues to work within HSE guidance for DSE users. When working from home employees will need to follow the university's working from home guidance. The specific DSE requirements for home workers will vary depending on the frequency, duration and nature of the work.

In all cases, those who use display screen equipment, regardless of the location, should complete the Hybrid DSE User Training, available via the Horizon platform. In addition, if you believe adjustments are required to your workstation, these should be flagged directly to your local DSE assessor, Health and Safety Manager and / or line manager, who can assist with completing a DSE Assessment of your workstation.

6. Additional guidance and supporting information

We have assessed the equality impact for introducing these working principles and guidelines and there is no evidence of adverse impacts on staff including those with any protected characteristics. For further information see the Equality Screening.
For guidance on communicating effectively whilst working flexibly, see the personal resilience hub. Additional guidance is available to support good practice for flexible working.
Information on Office 365 and MS Teams functionality for good digital management and inclusive practice can be found here.
The wellbeing of staff is a priority and sources of support for ensuring you maintain good health when working remotely can also be found on Wellbeing hub.

7. Next steps

Staff feedback played a key part in the development of these updated principles, and we continue to welcome feedback from all staff on our ways of working. These principles will be kept under review and further updates shared with all staff.

Version No.	Change	Date
V.1	First draft	July 2021
V.2		5 August 2021
V.3		June 2022
V.4	DSE guidance	September 2024