Hybrid Working

Framework

Introduction

Hybrid working across the Professional Services was successfully trialled between June 2021 and August 2022. During this period, the project board has reviewed and refined our approach to hybrid working taking into account extensive feedback from a wide range of colleagues.

What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working is a form of flexible working where colleagues spend some of their working hours or days at their contractual place of work and some of their time remotely, usually at their home. In this document, the term 'on campus' means your contractual place of work at the University, bearing in mind that some colleagues don't work on the University campus e.g. Jodrell Bank, Dalton Nuclear Institute, John Rylands Library etc. The term 'working remotely' usually means working from home.

Hybrid working can also be combined with other kinds of flexible working such as part-time hours or a job share, and is not meant to replace any other flexible working opportunities available to staff.

Why have we introduced hybrid working?

Through our pulse and sentiment surveys during the pilot, many of you said you would like to continue to work in a hybrid way to make the most of benefits such as being more productive, using time more effectively, feeling more empowered, using your time working on campus to connect and collaborate with colleagues in-person and having a better work-life balance.

Our University wishes to support you to work in a hybrid way where possible, so long as the University's core mission and priorities can still be delivered to the benefit of all colleagues, students and stakeholders. Hybrid working is optional – if you wish to work on campus 100% of the time, you can do this. Colleagues who have tried hybrid working during the pilot but want to return to 100% campus working are able to do so.

Managers are encouraged to consider how hybrid working can be implemented for their teams, taking into account the hybrid working principles set out in this document. Where colleagues believe their role is eligible for hybrid working they may ask their manager to consider implementing hybrid working. Guidance and support on putting hybrid working into practice is available in the University's Hybrid working Resources.

More information on other forms of flexible working is available in the University's Flexible Working Policy.

Eligibility for hybrid working

Before hybrid working can be considered, the role and the colleague undertaking the role must meet these criteria:

- The role does not exclusively require in-person contact or a physical presence on campus. Where roles require extensive or exclusive physical presence (such as Food on Campus colleagues or hygiene staff) hybrid working will not be an option, however other forms of flexible working will be considered.

- Colleagues carrying out the role can meet the obligations and responsibilities set out in this principles document.

- Colleagues are able to communicate and collaborate effectively with their team and manager whilst working remotely. Further details are in the Remote Working Environment section of this document.

- The role meets the definitions of one of the hybrid category types (detailed below).

Where hybrid working is agreed it will not be unreasonably withdrawn. Circumstances where hybrid working arrangements may be withdrawn include:

- Where a colleague is not meeting acceptable performance standards.

- Where a colleague is failing to meet the obligations set out in this document.

- Where there has been an identifiable operational impact of hybrid working arrangements including (but not limited to) a reduced student experience or poor team working.

- Where a colleague's role changes such that hybrid working is no longer suitable.

Hybrid categories

Agreeing which category of hybrid working a role falls into will not result in any contractual changes or changes to a colleague's terms and conditions of employment. The categories can be used to identify the most appropriate pattern of working for your role – the personas below have been created to help you with this. For each category, the suggested proportions of time on campus and remote working are based on full-time colleagues and these should be applied in whole day equivalence for colleagues working part-time.

The majority of roles will fall into one of the three categories. There will be a small number of roles which do not, for example, roles where a greater proportion of remote working may be possible. Where this is the case, managers are encouraged to discuss options with colleagues to ensure arrangements are put in place to balance the needs of the University, the team and the individual colleague.

100% remote working, or arrangements with very occasional on-campus working, are not within the remit of hybrid working and applications for this kind of working arrangement should be made through the University's Flexible Working Policy.

CATEGORY 1:
Campus based

These roles need to be carried out on campus. Remote working will only take place exceptionally if business needs allow, and with the agreement of the manager.

Example

Martin is a supervisor in a building maintenance team. His team is responsible for delivering planned and reactive services in a busy, fast-paced environment. His role mainly involves joinery skills however he does need to take on other maintenance functions from time to time. As a supervisor, Martin is responsible for a range of planning and reporting activities. He usually sets aside one day every month to complete these scheduled tasks and arranges the team's work roster to support this routine.

Martin could work from home occasionally when writing reports or planning work rotas, but he works on-site because his role often includes reacting quickly to unexpected issues.

CATEGORY 2:
Predominantly campus based - hybrid

These roles are eligible for hybrid working with approximately 60-80% of the work being carried out on campus and the rest remotely, as agreed with the manager.

Example

Felicity is a subject matter librarian. She provides research consultation services to students, researchers and academics, contributes to the management and development of collections and advises on a range of technologies and tools to support the requirements of library users. Part of her role is to foster student understanding of the scholarly communication process by working with appropriate colleagues in the Libraries to develop an awareness of scholarly communication issues and promote services offered by the Libraries. She also manages a range of library web pages and creates regular subject specific digests including extracts from a range of Journals and Periodicals.

Felicity has created a working together charter with her colleagues. This includes a baseline agreement that all team members will work on campus three days a week, on a rota they have agreed between them. There are times, for example when colleagues are attending training or taking annual leave, when additional days on Campus are required, and cover can be planned. However, colleagues are mindful that there may be occasional requirements to change plans at short notice when covering unplanned absences.

CATEGORY 3:
Hybrid

These roles are suitable for a mixture of on campus and remote work. For many roles this will typically involve working at least two days a week on campus and the remainder remotely. The days working on campus may vary week by week as required by the manager. Some roles in this category will be suitable for a greater proportion of remote working, as agreed with the manager. In all cases managers are encouraged to discuss options with colleagues to ensure arrangements are put in place which balance the needs of the University, the team and the individual colleague.

Example

Margo works in the workforce planning team. Her role is not student facing and requires a detailed focus on a wide range of data drawn from a range of different sources. She spends a lot of time in discussion with colleagues using both Teams and Zoom frequently. She also meets colleagues regularly in person developing plans and testing ideas.

There is no need for Margo to come into the office on specific days of the week, so she tends to arrange her days on campus to suit the meetings taking place during the week. The whole team has agreed that they prefer their weekly catch up meetings to be in person, so that requirement is a key element in their working together charter.

Policies and procedures

If you are carrying out hybrid working you still need to comply with the usual University policies, procedures and standards. Contractual obligations set out in your Contract of Employment also continue to apply. In particular colleagues:

· Must continue to adhere to the University Sickness Absence Policy and Procedures / including sickness absence reporting procedures.

· Are required to comply with all data protection and information obligations; this must include ensuring that no unauthorised person has access to University systems or data.

· Must continue to adhere to all policies relating to acceptable use of IT facilities and services and standard operating procedures.

Remote working environment

If you are carrying out remote working you must ensure that you have a suitable environment to work in. This should take into account health and safety and confidentiality and information security requirements.

·   You should not undertake caring responsibilities whilst working remotely and must have adequate arrangements in place. You are responsible for assessing your own needs and ensuring that you're able to fully undertake your work duties. If you experience temporary childcare issues you should use the University's Special Leave policy.

·   You are responsible for ensuring you have a good quality, reliable internet connection when working remotely. You should use Teams for communications and calls wherever possible to avoid having to use your personal phone for work related purposes.

·   Wherever possible you should have a dedicated workspace when working remotely with appropriate space, lighting and equipment to enable safe and comfortable working in accordance with University's guidance on homeworking and Working with display screen equipment at home- MSD - HSE. You should complete a Display Screen Assessment (DSE) of your home workstation using the University's DSE Self Assessment form.

·   You are responsible for assessing the personal implications of regular remote working, including with your mortgage provider, landlord or insurer if you are working from home. The University will not be responsible for any additional costs that this may incur.

· Under no circumstances should you hold meetings in person at your own home or provide your home address to third parties for work purposes. You should use University IT equipment for work communication.

· "You should use the outcome of your DSE assessment to help you decide what is needed to ensure that your remote working equipment is appropriate and sufficient for your circumstances. Whilst the University is not responsible for the provision, maintenance, replacement, or repair of any personal equipment, it may fund small items of equipment to facilitate remote working such as a separate mouse, keyboard and laptop riser or separate monitor. In line with Safety Services Guidance such items can generally be purchased through normal procurement channels by your line manager, if the equipment is not already available within the University.   You should also refer to [Safety Services Guidance](#) if additional items of equipment or furniture are indicated by your DSE assessment.

· You are expected to take reasonable care of equipment provided by the University for remote working purposes. Any equipment provided by the University must be returned if requested.

· You are not permitted to work remotely outside of the UK unless you specifically agree this in accordance with University guidance on [staff working abroad](#).

Obligations of hybrid workers

Colleagues who carry out hybrid working will still be required to attend their contractual place of work on a basis agreed between the individual and their line manager.

· You must make every effort to keep in touch with your team including using relevant technology and equipment.

· You are expected to comply with local/team rules for hybrid working such as attending team meetings and carrying out your agreed working hours. These are likely to vary from team to team across the University. You may be required to work on campus on different days of the week as required by your manager.

· You must ensure you are available and accessible whilst working remotely. This may include sharing calendars or agreeing methods for contact/signalling availability.

· You are responsible for keeping yourself up to date with news, information and events at the University.

· You will maintain all necessary standards of performance and attendance.

· You must follow all relevant health and safety expectations whilst working from home.

Responsibilities of managers

Managers are responsible for:

- Considering requests for hybrid working in accordance with these principles.

- Establishing effective communication and collaboration within a team which includes hybrid workers.

- Ensuring that colleagues who are working in a hybrid way are treated fairly in relation to performance review, reward and recognition, internal vacancy applications and opportunities for training and development.

- Working with their teams to establish local principles for effective hybrid working. Guidance is available to help support this conversation.

- When working in a hybrid way themselves, ensure that they are on campus regularly enough to provide full management support to their teams.

Costs and expenses

The University will not make financial contributions for normal household expenditure such as heating, lighting and broadband costs for hybrid workers. Hybrid working is optional, and colleagues may opt not to undertake it and remain working at their contractual place of work.

Hybrid workers remain responsible for costs associated with travelling to and from their contractual place of work in all circumstances.

Colleagues may, depending on their personal circumstances, be eligible to claim tax relief for working remotely: [HMRC-Claiming Income Tax Relief](#).