



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Hybrid Working Policy

Hybrid Working Policy

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1. Statement of Policy

- 1.1. Hybrid working is a type of flexible working that focusses on the location in which work is undertaken, with some work being undertaken on the University's premises and some work being undertaken in a remote working environment within the UK. Often this remote working environment will be a home-based office, enabling staff working in this way to reduce time spent travelling to the University and better balance work and personal responsibilities. Hybrid working has, in reality, been an autonomous form of working for many academic and research staff at the University for some time.
- 1.2. **This Policy aims to enable as many staff as possible to work in this way if they so wish.** Some roles will have tasks that can only be performed on University's premises, such as those that require a physical presence onsite to teach, support or protect others and those that require specialist equipment that can only be housed in the University's environment. However, consideration should be given to the possibility of occasional remote working even if only a small number of tasks in an individual's role can be performed in this way.
- 1.3. There is no expectation that staff must work in a hybrid way. Where roles do have tasks that can be performed in a remote working environment, each individual has a choice as to whether or not they would like to work this way. If needed and where possible, an appropriate dedicated workspace should be made available for staff who prefer to work entirely from their University workspace, whether this is a continuation of their existing arrangements or the consequence of ending a hybrid working arrangement.
- 1.4. Institutions are best placed to identify the most appropriate level of hybrid working for their staff in terms of the split between working on the University's premises and working remotely. This enables Institutions to ensure these arrangements are productive and beneficial both on an institutional and individual level. It is envisaged, however, that the majority of staff who are able to work in a hybrid way will regularly split their working time between University premises (either in their normal University workspace or somewhere else in the University) and a remote working environment. Decisions about the level of hybrid working and who can work in this way must be taken in a fair and consistent way to meet the aim of this Policy, and staff must have equal access to opportunities, support and training regardless of where their work is undertaken.
- 1.5. This Policy also recognises that the University's identity and culture are shaped by the benefits of staff being physically present at work. Some of these benefits cannot be replicated remotely, whether it be the especial nature of our student experience or the innovation that arises from casual conversation with colleagues. Only in certain circumstances, therefore, may staff be able to work

solely from a remote working environment within the UK under this Policy. This provision is intended to be used rarely and for specific reasons, including reasonable adjustments. The University's Global Mobility Policy and associated guidance should be consulted for temporary and permanent working arrangements outside of the UK.

- 1.6. This Policy is intended to complement and not replace the University's Flexible Working Policy, which provides the procedure for individuals exercising their statutory right to request flexible working, which may include other forms of working arrangements such as amended working hours or job-sharing arrangements.
- 1.7. Where this Policy refers to reasonable adjustments, it is referring to the duty on employers under the Equality Act 2010. A reasonable adjustment is a change that must be made to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to a staff member's or job applicant's disability. Where reasonable adjustments have been agreed, these will take precedence where there is any conflict between the terms of this Policy and the agreed adjustments.
- 1.8. Further guidance is provided to support the application of this Policy, which includes the full procedure for agreeing hybrid working arrangements and supporting advice on many aspects of this Policy. The guidance will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it stays compliant with best practice within the University.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Hybrid working.** A type of flexible working that focusses on the location in which work is undertaken, with some work being undertaken in the workplace and some work being undertaken in an agreed remote working environment.
- 2.2. **University workspace.** The office, laboratory, desk and/or other such space in/at which the individual normally works in their principal place of work (as stated on their Schedule of Employment). This does not include any rooms or other spaces provided by the Colleges in connection with fellowship or supervisory responsibilities.
- 2.3. **Remote working environment.** The place where remote working is undertaken. Under this Policy, the remote working environment will be based within the UK. It is anticipated that this will normally be an individual's home but could also include College rooms and spaces or a non-University flexible workspace. The process for agreeing hybrid working arrangements, including the normal remote working environment, is included in section 6.1.
- 2.4. **Tasks.** This refers to the components of an individual's role, which determine their ability to work in a hybrid way for the purpose of this Policy.

- 2.5. **Line manager.** For the purpose of this Policy, “line manager” includes not only individuals who are designated as such but those in equivalent roles with responsibility for the supervision or work of another colleague, for example a Departmental Administrator, Principal Investigator or Head of Institution.
- 2.6. **Staff.** For the purpose of this Policy, “staff” includes all University employees (including academic staff) and workers.

3. Purpose of the policy

- 3.1. In support of the University’s commitment to enable hybrid working where possible, the Policy **sets out the arrangements for and expectations around hybrid working across the University**. Specifically, the policy:
- Explains the approach to agreeing hybrid working arrangements and the individual criteria necessary for being able to work in a hybrid way, including conditions around the remote working environment
 - Sets out the expectations of individuals in terms of performance and conduct when working remotely
 - States the steps that need to be taken to ensure the mental and physical health and safety of individuals working remotely
 - Refers to what action can be taken if hybrid working arrangements need to be amended, suspended, or ended.
- 3.2. This Policy is not contractual and may be amended from time to time, as necessary, in light of any changes in legislation or operational requirements. It is not intended that a hybrid working arrangement will constitute a change to an individual’s principal place of work as set out in their Schedule of Employment Particulars. Hybrid working arrangements agreed in accordance with this Policy are informal and discretionary and may be amended, suspended or ended in accordance with sections 6.10 to 6.13.

4. Who is this policy for?

- 4.1. This Policy applies to all University staff.
- 4.2. This Policy does not apply to employees and workers solely engaged by the Colleges, who should refer to their College’s policy on hybrid working if available.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1. **All those responsible for leading, managing and supervising** people have the following responsibilities for their staff:

- Considering, deciding and communicating the appropriate level of hybrid working for their area (led by the relevant Head of Institution)
- Identifying those who are able to work remotely, including ensuring an assessment of the potential remote working environment is undertaken, and making this decision in a fair and consistent manner
- Agreeing work-related objectives and targets, and ensuring that any assessment of work quality is not based on presence in the workplace, unless identified to have had a direct detrimental impact
- Keeping in regular contact with staff working remotely and ensuring that they have a regular opportunity to raise and discuss issues, especially when commencing hybrid working or moving to altered arrangements
- Ensuring employees working in a hybrid way are provided with a fair opportunity to undertake career development opportunities, access support and training
- Ensuring that the core equipment to facilitate hybrid working is provided.

5.2. All staff working in a hybrid way under this Policy have the following responsibilities:

- Providing a suitable remote working environment and informing line managers or other applicable members of staff of any relevant changes to that environment
- Ensuring that the quality and delivery of their work are not negatively impacted by hybrid working
- Under the terms of the University's [Data Protection Policy](#), following the guidance and associated tools provided to enable the University to continue complying with data protection law
- Ensuring their line manager and colleagues are aware of their working location on a day to day basis, in particular to ensure the continuation of safe systems around [lone working](#)
- Continuing to comply with other University policies and procedures where applicable when working remotely, such as those covering absence reporting, conduct, and health and safety.

5.3. HR Schools Teams and staff responsible for HR in their area are responsible for providing advice and support to institutions and individuals concerning the application of this Policy and its associated guidance.

6. Agreeing hybrid working arrangements

6.1. The procedure for agreeing hybrid working arrangements has two stages, with several supporting steps to each stage. The stages are as follows:

- **Institutions identify the appropriate hybrid working arrangements for their area.** Institutions should consider their operational needs and any other applicable factors to identify a split between working on the University's premises and working remotely that ensures arrangements are productive and beneficial both on an institutional and individual level.
- Once a decision at an institutional level has been made, **individual preferences and arrangements are then identified, discussed and agreed between individuals and their line managers.** As part of this, an assessment of tasks should be undertaken to identify whether or not an individual is able to undertake any of their role remotely. Line managers will also need to consider and approve the location and suitability of the normal remote working environment proposed by the individual.

6.2. The full process, with the supporting steps, is set out in the associated guidance for Institutions, line managers and individuals. Should an individual wish to request other types of flexible working in addition to or instead of hybrid working, this should be undertaken as normal through the University's Flexible Working Policy.

6.3. The University encourages a common-sense approach to deciding whether or not a task can be undertaken remotely as part of the assessment. However, it is generally expected that tasks that are

- solely reliant on being undertaken face to face to provide support to others on University premises, and/or
- solely reliant on being undertaken in University premises due to their nature

will not be suitable for being undertaken in a remote environment. Examples of and guidance on the types of tasks likely to come under these descriptions are included in the associated guidance. As both students' learning and their sense of community are positively impacted by in-person lectures, it is also generally expected that face-to-face teaching will be provided for all students on taught courses unless pedagogical reasons support the inclusion of periodic online teaching and learning.

6.4. In the situation where an individual disagrees with a decision concerning hybrid working arrangements (for example, on the ability to work in a hybrid way or concerning the split between working on the University's premises and working remotely) attempts should be made where possible to resolve the disagreement informally in the first instance. If an informal approach is unsuccessful, or inappropriate in the circumstances, individuals who are eligible to make a statutory flexible working request can submit their preference as a request under the University's Flexible Working Policy. Further information on resolving

disagreements and handling any complaint is included in the associated guidance for Institutions, line managers and individuals.

- 6.5. In line with the nature of hybrid working, individuals should expect to come into the University workplace on a regular basis as agreed with their line manager. In addition to any regular attendance at the University workspace that has been agreed, individuals must be willing to attend activities and/or meetings in the University workplace as necessary or when specifically requested by their line manager or Institution with reasonable notice. Individuals based in teams providing in-person support or services may also need to attend at short notice in cases of colleagues' absence or in other urgent situations.
- 6.6. In limited circumstances, individuals may be permitted under this Policy to work entirely from a remote working environment within the UK. The full conditions under which this may be agreed are set out in the guidance associated with this Policy but, as a minimum, should be restricted to roles where a) there is both a proven shortage of suitably experienced candidates and b) the appointment is for a fixed-term duration of 12 months or less and is highly unlikely to be extended or made open-ended. If the appointment does not cease after 12 months, individuals engaged on this temporary arrangement will be expected to apply under the University's Flexible Working Policy should they wish for it to be considered on a longer-term basis. Similarly, if there is a business case to support an individual working this way on a permanent basis and this arrangement is mutually agreed, this should be managed under the terms of the University's Flexible Working Policy.
- 6.7. The arrangement to work entirely from a remote working environment within the UK should also be extended to individuals where professional guidance has indicated that it would be beneficial as a reasonable adjustment to accommodate a disability or long-term, chronic health condition; in these cases, the arrangement will not be time-limited.
- 6.8. This Policy does not extend to working in part or entirely from a remote working environment outside of the UK. The University's Global Mobility Policy and associated guidance should be consulted instead for the conditions relating to temporary and permanent working arrangements outside of the UK.
- 6.9. Working in a remote working environment should not be considered a substitute for childcare or other caring responsibilities where dependents need active and regular involvement, such as for young children. Individuals should ensure they have organised the necessary arrangements to cover these types of personal responsibilities when working in this way.
- 6.10. Hybrid working may not work for everyone all of the time and the arrangement should be regularly reviewed between individuals and their line manager. The

University reserves the right to amend, suspend or end an individual working agreement, as long as this is in line with 6.13. Reasons may include (but are not limited to):

- a project or phase of work requiring all team members to work together onsite for a certain period of time
- a breach of the requirements concerning conduct and performance, such as a regular failure to complete work on time or a regular and unexplained inability to contact the individual when working remotely
- a change to the nature of the tasks being undertaken, requiring them to be undertaken in the University workspace
- a change to the remote working environment making it non-compliant for hybrid working.

- 6.11. The individual may also request that the arrangement is amended, suspended or ended. In the case of amending the arrangement, consideration will also need to be given to the needs of the Institution and, where relevant, the individual's team, before approving or refusing the request.
- 6.12. Should the arrangement be ended by either the line manager or the individual, this should not automatically preclude the future possibility of hybrid working depending on the reasons for the cessation.
- 6.13. Should an Institution need to amend the appropriate hybrid working arrangements in its area, it is expected that this change is undertaken in discussion with staff and a reasonable period of time provided for staff to alter arrangements once decided.

7. Conduct and performance when working in a hybrid way

- 7.1. It is recognised that many staff may frequently work unsupervised at the University and this applies even more so when working in a remote working environment. It is essential therefore that individuals and the University work in a spirit of mutual trust and confidence and that in carrying out their work remotely, individuals continue to promote the interests of the University.
- 7.2. Subject to work commitments and responsibilities, individuals should ensure they remain contactable during their normal working hours as stated in their Statement of Particulars and/or as agreed with their line manager regardless of whether they are working in their University workspace or in a remote working environment.
- 7.3. For appointments where there are no conditions relating to hours and times of work and where the individual is expected to work such hours and days as are reasonably necessary for the proper performance of their duties, reasonable

contactable hours should be aligned to the hours of a regular working day in their University workspace or agreed with their line manager as appropriate. This does not preclude individuals in these roles from working beyond those hours if they wish, but there should be no expectation of response to communications sent outside of these hours.

- 7.4. Whether working in the University workspace or remotely, individuals should ensure that they continue to deliver their work and responsibilities to the required standards set out in their Role Profile and/or as agreed with their line manager. When assessing performance, contribution and achievements, line managers should only take into account the location in which the work has been undertaken when this has had an identifiable and direct impact on work and/or service quality. All staff working in a hybrid way should have equal access to advancement opportunities and training regardless of where their work is undertaken.
- 7.5. Data processed in the remote working environment must be managed in line with the terms of the University's Data Protection Policy. Individuals should follow the guidance and use the associated tools provided by the University for this purpose, as referenced in Section 10 of this Policy.
- 7.6. For the avoidance of doubt, the University's policies continue to apply when working in a remote working environment. In particular, individuals are expected to report absences in line with the relevant processes and adhere to the University's policies relating to conduct.

8. Conditions around the remote working environment

- 8.1. The University will provide each individual working in a hybrid way with either a set of core IT equipment to support their hybrid working or items from that set as either required by the individual or appropriate to how regularly they are working in a hybrid way. This core set may vary depending on the nature of the role, but a standard provision will include a laptop, headset, keyboard and mouse for use both in the University workspace and in the remote working environment, with access to the use of a docking station and monitor in the University workspace. As a standard practice, equipment will not be duplicated for hybrid workers unless part of reasonable adjustments to support those with disabilities and long-term health conditions, but Institutions are strongly encouraged to provide further equipment, such as a monitor, if resources are available to do so.
- 8.2. A health and safety assessment will need to be undertaken before agreement is given under the procedure to ensure the remote working environment is suitable for the level of hybrid working and types of tasks that would be undertaken. In the spirit of this Policy, the opportunity to rectify an inadequate home remote

working environment where possible should be provided before a final decision is made.

- 8.3. As part of providing a suitable remote working environment, individuals should ensure they have appropriate furniture to support the level of remote working they are undertaking as part of the hybrid working arrangements. As a standard practice, furniture will not be provided for hybrid workers unless part of reasonable adjustments to support those with disabilities and long-term health conditions, but Institutions are strongly encouraged to provide specific items, such as a suitable chair, if resources are available to do so.
- 8.4. If the remote working environment is a home, individuals must ensure that their remote working environment has a reliable internet connection and, where necessary, phone signal that are appropriate for the nature of the tasks they are able to undertake remotely.
- 8.5. Individuals should ensure their personal home insurance is suitable for the type of work they are undertaking where their remote working environment is their home. Additionally, where this is the case, individuals should not normally meet others in connection with work in person in the remote working environment but should organise for this to take place on University premises or in a suitable public space.
- 8.6. Individuals must inform line managers or other applicable members of staff responsible for their working arrangements of any relevant changes to the remote working environment, to ensure that a new health and safety assessment can be undertaken if necessary.
- 8.7. No costs incurred by individuals in connection with their remote working, such as energy costs, connectivity charges, or printer consumables, will be reimbursed by the University. This also includes the costs of travelling to and from the University unless explicitly agreed beforehand.
- 8.8. Further advice on these conditions is provided in the guidance associated with this Policy.

9. Ensuring mental and physical health & safety when working remotely

- 9.1. The University is committed to meeting its statutory health and safety responsibilities and to creating a culture that is both proactive and collaborative in supporting the health and safety of all its members. Institutions, line managers, and individuals are expected to undertake risk assessments, make well-informed decisions, take responsibility for their actions and be cognisant of the potential risks that may be encountered while engaged in University business whether conducted in the University workspace or when working remotely.

Individuals must comply with the terms of the University's Health and Safety Policy and follow any associated guidance and tools provided by the University for this purpose, as referenced in Section 10 of this Policy.

- 9.2. There should be regular contact between the Institutions and/or the line manager with individuals working in a remote environment, particularly if a substantial part of the working week is being spent working remotely. Individuals should be given regular opportunities to discuss any issues or concerns relating to the hybrid working arrangement, especially when commencing hybrid working or moving to altered arrangements. Individuals should also ensure that line managers and colleagues are aware of their working location on a day to day basis to continue the safe systems around [lone working](#) at the University.
- 9.3. While hybrid working has the potential to help individuals to balance work and personal responsibilities, working from a home remote working environment can increase the risk of individuals feeling expected to respond to communications or undertake further tasks at times when they should be disconnected from work. Regular rest breaks should be taken when working remotely and in line with any contractual arrangements or reasonable adjustments, to help ensure mental and physical wellbeing and comply with the relevant regulations on working time. There is no expectation that individuals have to respond to communications outside of the hours referenced in sections 7.2 and 7.3.
- 9.4. The University provides a wide range of support services that can assist line managers and individuals in maintaining or addressing mental and physical health issues. Further advice for both individuals and their line managers on maintaining and supporting mental and physical health whilst working remotely is available in the guidance associated with this Policy.

10. Connected policies and other sources of information

- 10.1. Links to other related University policies and guidance can be found below:
 - [Flexible Working Policy](#)
 - [Global Mobility Policy](#) (*under review during 2022/23*) and associated guidance
 - [University Health and Safety Policy](#)
 - [Dignity at Work Policy](#)
 - [Grievance Policy](#)
 - [Data Protection Policy](#)
 - [Data Protection in a remote working environment – guidance and tools](#)
 - [Guidance on Lone Working in the University of Cambridge](#)

11. Policy Review

- 11.1. The Policy will be reviewed 12 months after the implementation date and then every 4 years.