



University
of Exeter

Remote Working Policy

The University has developed a range of flexible working arrangements to support our ambition of becoming one of the world's leading universities. Through these arrangements, we aim to support our managers to deliver flexible services that meet the changing needs of our students and other customers, as well as assist our workforce to achieve a positive work-life balance.

Remote working is when an employee works entirely from home or another space and has no fixed base at the University. Remote working is usually built into a role as a part of the job design.

Remote working is only permitted within the UK therefore your home location must be UK based.

Purpose of the policy

This policy (and associated toolkit guidance) is in place to ensure clarity about the remote working arrangement offered at the University and how this can be used. It outlines the expectations for employees whose work will be completed entirely from home.

Who does this apply to?

Remote working roles are usually designed from the outset as such, and it is unusual to change a role that is currently based at the University to a wholly remote role.

There may, however, be business reasons for agreeing for someone to work from home such as recruitment or retention issues. Where this is the case, remote working may be offered for roles that are not student or customer facing.

A remote working arrangement is subject to the ongoing agreement of the University and exceptionally may need to be changed for business reasons. There may be cases where the continuation of remote working becomes inappropriate.

The University reserves the right, with consultation and reasonable notice to change an employee from one type of working arrangement to another (Remote to Hybrid, etc) where there is a business reason. Where the University considers that it is necessary to change an employee from a remote based environment to a hybrid working arrangement, your manager will discuss with you the reasons for the proposed change in working arrangements. Normally, 3 months' notice will be given, unless a shorter period is agreed.

The same process will be followed if an employee requests to change to a hybrid working basis. Any changes would need to be approved by the employee's manager and confirmed in writing by the University.

Whilst a role may be suited to remote working, its implementation may be limited by the home environment, equipment available or budget to buy equipment.

Principles

Using these flexible working arrangements, we aim to:

- Promote work taking place at the most effective locations, and at the most effective times, in accordance with the needs of our students, service delivery, the member of staff, their team and the wider University community.
- Adopt the use of functional space across university buildings, or remotely, enabling staff to work in an environment conducive to staff and the task they are completing, both individually, and as part of a team.
- Develop a culture of trust focused on measuring productivity, by our results and outcomes, rather than our physical presence.
- Accessibility needs of all staff, regardless of location of work (e.g., on campus, remote and hybrid), will be taken into consideration with regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure staff can thrive in their working environment.
- Make the University an employer of choice, by utilising technology to deliver high quality, flexible working environments.
- Improve ways of achieving objectives, whilst being aware of and promoting staff positive mental and physical wellbeing and respecting their diverse needs and requirements.
- Ensure that all staff are safe, supported and connected regardless of their working pattern or place of work.
- Reduce the University's impact on the environment by condensing its physical footprint, and increasing its environmental sustainability, by digitising paper-based activity, and reducing unnecessary commuting.
- Create opportunities for our community to come together in ways it may not have been able to previously, through integrated and collaborative partnerships across disciplines and functional areas.

Responsibilities

Everyone should be honest and open about remote working arrangements and share responsibility for making them work.

Leadership teams of Faculties and Services are responsible for reading the relevant guidance and making decisions about remote working based on the principles above.

Managers are responsible for thinking about how remote working in their team may help them to achieve their business objectives and manage space effectively. Requests to work remotely must be managed in line with the principles above and associated guidance.

Staff who are remote working are responsible for reading the relevant guidance and for considering and discussing the impact on their colleagues, the service they provide and how any issues may be overcome. Staff who accept a remote contract are expected to ensure that they have a safe and suitable environment in which to work. This includes:

- being able to comply with DSE requirements as set out on the University [Homeworking Information and Guidance SharePoint](#)
- being able to comply with any reasonable adjustments the University has approved
- being able to comply with wider health and safety at work act requirements

Human Resources is responsible for keeping the policy and guidance up to date, providing advice to managers and staff, recording and confirming arrangements as well as monitoring the overall uptake of remote working at the University.

Key areas

Working Hours and Keeping in Touch

- Remote working offers flexibility of when and where to work. Whilst working at home, you should be contactable. You should agree with your manager the appropriate method of communication (eg telephone, email, Teams). We trust you to manage your own time and make sure you do the hours you are contracted to do.
- We may ask you (with reasonable notice) to be available at certain times to meet the needs of the business, to physically attend a university campus or other venue for meetings, training or other aspects of your role that cannot be completed at home. Recognising this, you should consider the implications of the distance of your home from the university.
- Remote working should not result in extra work for other members of the team or compromise the objectives of your team.

You will not be entitled to any overpayments or overtime if you choose to work unsociable hours or more hours than you are contracted to do unless this is specifically agreed in advance with your manager.

- It is not appropriate to combine homeworking with dependent care and homeworking is not an alternative to paid dependent care. You must not plan to have sole responsibility for a child or other dependant during your working hours.

Equipment and Environment

- Staff should advise landlords or mortgage providers and their building and contents insurers that their place of work is their home. Although this does not usually result in a change in costs, the University will not be responsible for any additional costs incurred as a result.
- Remote workers are covered by the University's insurance policy for employers' liability and personal accident in the same way as campus-based employees.
- A remote working package of IT equipment will usually be provided to the employee for the duration of the employment. You will be provided with the appropriate IT equipment and technology (including hardware and software) to effectively complete your

work. Please see the IT equipment standards of [recommended IT equipment for colleagues](#). Remote employees are to use this equipment for business purposes only and are expected to take appropriate steps to keep this equipment safe.

- You are expected to have a suitable and safe working environment that is compliant with DSE regulations. Exceptionally, furniture may be provided by the University.
- Where the provision of furniture (i.e. desk/chair) is recommended by the Health and Safety team, provision should be considered in the following priority order:
 - Repurposing furniture from campus from within the Directorate's work areas.
 - Providing furniture from general University stock.
 - Alternatively, the desk and/or chair should be ordered through the University's approved supplier
- It is not permissible for the employee to purchase their own furniture and recharge the cost to the University even if the cost is less than that of the University's approved supplier.
- Arrangements will be made for specialist IT equipment (e.g. mouse, keyboard) required to meet DSE requirements to be delivered to the employee's home address. Ideally, this should be ready for the employee's first day of employment with their standard IT equipment.
- Any equipment supplied by the University will remain the property of the University and must be returned when your employment or remote working arrangements come to an end. All IT equipment will be wiped when returned.
- Employees who live in radon affected areas are strongly encouraged to undertake home radon testing. Please see the [HSE guidance](#) for more information.
- Employees are responsible for having a safe working environment while working at home, this will include safety areas such as having appropriate gas safety checks, reducing the impacts of slips, trip and falls, having safe electrics (regular visual checks), working smoke alarms etc. Additional information on these requirements can be found at on the [Health and Safety Hub](#).

Health and Safety for Remote Workers

- As part of the onboarding process, it is important that you discuss your homeworking environment with your manager so that they can be assured that you are safe and healthy while working from home. This will also provide you with the opportunity to raise any concerns and/or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed to facilitate homeworking.
- When you are setting up your homeworking arrangements, please ensure you have read the [Display Screen Equipment Guidance](#). The guidance will take you through a workstation self assessment to help you make sure that your place of work is safe, supportive, free from risk and that any access to confidential information or data is treated with care.
- Workplace health and safety law applies whilst working from home and the University has the same legal duty to protect your health, safety and welfare as if you were office based full time. For more information see the "[Working from home safely and effectively](#)" section of the University's homeworking webpages.

- Remote workers must ensure they have a secure, private and appropriately lit and heated space to work in, with a reliable and secure internet connection.
- If you need any reasonable adjustments to be made to your workstation at home you should contact your manager to discuss your needs.
- To ensure that we effectively manage any working environment risks arising from working at home, and can inspect, maintain, or recover University property it may be required for a representative of the University to attend your home location. Where this is necessary, reasonable notice will be given and we will aim to agree a suitable date and time with you.

Security

- Staff are responsible for ensuring they adhere to Information and Data Protection legislation and relevant University information security policies, when undertaking their role for the University, regardless of location.

Training

- Training and guidance will be available to support both managers and employees develop the skills needed to deliver effective communication, performance management and relationship building in teams that are working both remotely and on campus.

Your Wellbeing

- Whilst working remotely it is important that you take regular rest breaks; at least 20 consecutive minutes if working for 6 hours or more.
- If you are ill, then you should inform your manager and follow the [Absence Code of Practice](#).
- Where working for long spells at a screen make sure you take regular breaks away from your screen.
- We know that collaboration, connection and having a sense of belonging can help you stay well. We encourage you to think about what this means for you and to actively make time to connect with your colleagues. The University [Colleague Wellbeing](#) webpages have information on internal and external support services as well as advice and tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing regardless of your work location. If you have concerns, then discussing these with your manager may also be helpful.

Costs and Expenses

For travel claim purposes, your home will be your 'place of work' and you will be able to claim travel expenses for journeys undertaken for work purposes in the normal way, subject to the [University's Expenses Policy](#). You will be able to claim reasonable expenses for travelling to occasional meetings at the University.

- As a homeworker, you are expected to meet the cost of broadband access which is suitable for business use, telephone rental, heating, lighting and electricity and any consumables (such as printer ink cartridges).

- You may claim for the cost of any necessary business telephone calls made from your home telephone (unless you are provided with a mobile phone by the University). Claims should be submitted via the Expenses module in T1, supported by copies of itemised statements highlighting business calls. Calls will be reimbursed at the supplier's standard rate except where calls incur no charge (due to specific rental options, for example).

Working Outside the UK

Your employment is subject to you undertaking your work within the United Kingdom. Hybrid and remote working is only permitted within the United Kingdom therefore your home location must be at a personal address in the United Kingdom.

Employees of the University are not authorised to deliver work on behalf of the University from outside the United Kingdom, unless expressly agreed in their contract of employment or for short overseas business or research trips agreed by your department and Human Resources.

This policy should not be followed for any remote working where the remote location is outside of the UK. You should follow policies and procedures in line with the University Global Employment procedures if you are planning to undertake University work overseas. For more information, see [Global Employment](#).

Further guidance and advice

In addition to adhering to the terms and conditions of the remote working policy, you must comply with all rules and protocols for staff working at the University of Exeter, including attendance, code of conduct, confidentiality, GDPR and IT security.

Further guidance for managers and staff can be found in The University of Exeter [Ways of Working guidance](#).

Please note: the University reserves the right to make changes to this policy as necessary.

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Approved by:	UEB
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