Working in a Hybrid Way Policy and Procedure

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Policy Statement

Purpose

Leeds Beckett University is a campus-based university with a vibrant campus community of both students and colleagues. Our service must meet the needs of our students, colleagues and partners, including providing services that students can access on campus. Working arrangements must ensure the best experience and education for our students, and provide good opportunities for meeting up with colleagues, collaboration, innovation and networking.

Working in a hybrid way, where colleagues spend some of their working hours or days on campus, and some of their time working from home is well established. Some roles remain fully campus based. This policy and procedure set out the ways in which working in a hybrid way will be managed at Leeds Beckett University.

Four key principles around ways of working at Leeds Beckett are applied locally by Schools and Services in accordance with their provision and stakeholders. The principles are as follows:

- Our service meets the needs of our stakeholders
- The changes do not cost us more to deliver than previous patterns of working
- It helps to support a balance between work and other commitments for colleagues
- We can run the process based on mutual trust and accountability

Scope

This policy and procedure apply to all employees who have an agreement to work in a hybrid way.

The University has separate manager guidance on supporting colleagues with disabilities to implement reasonable adjustments in the workplace, which may include hybrid working.

Responsibility

All managers are responsible for discussing and agreeing the detail of hybrid and flexible working arrangements. More information is available in the University's Flexible Working Principles and Home Working Health and Safety Guidance and Checklist. With increased remote and hybrid working it can be harder for managers to notice changes in colleagues' wellbeing, making it particularly important for managers to schedule regular 1:1 meetings and catch ups. Individuals considering applying for roles at Leeds Beckett are likely to want to know in advance what the balance will be between working on campus and working from home, and managers should be prepared to provide this information.

Human Resources is responsible for providing training and advice on the use of this policy.

Review

The Working in a Hybrid Way Policy and Procedure is non contractual and may be amended at any time. The policy and procedure will be monitored and reviewed every three years or sooner in light of legislative changes and organisational requirements as appropriate.

Procedure

1.   Introduction

1.1   The University's Flexible Working Principles outline how colleagues and managers can informally discuss and agree flexible working requests. Working in a hybrid way will be agreed via this process (separate local and national agreements apply for academic colleagues). Managers will agree with colleagues the normal balance between working on campus and working from home as required by the service, role and team. Managers will also discuss working patterns, practices and expectations when working from home with colleagues, including organisation of work, whether the University may require short notice attendance on campus and how team members will keep in touch.

1.2   While working from home, terms and conditions of employment and policies and procedures will remain the same except colleagues may agree with their manager to change their working pattern.   This may be working normal contractual hours at different times or days to accommodate caring responsibilities or an adjustment for other reasons.   Colleagues are responsible for assessing their caring responsibilities (including pet care requirements) and having adequate arrangements in place to ensure they can fully undertake the duties of their role both on campus and from home. Colleagues must be available for calls and online meetings when working from home, with cameras on by default for online meetings. Occasional exceptions to appearing on camera may be agreed with your manager.

2.   Location

2.1   A Leeds Beckett University campus(es) will be the contractual place of work. Undertaking work from the home address is agreed on the understanding that the home environment is suitable, including good Wi-Fi and a suitable place to work.

2.2   Requests to work entirely from home will not be supported. All colleagues will be required to undertake some on campus activity, both as required by the role and to maintain direct interaction between colleagues and within and across teams, and maximise the benefits of collaboration and community.

2.3   Colleagues must discuss and agree with their manager if they wish to work from locations other than on campus or from the home address (even for temporary periods). Managers will consider the following - data confidentiality, equipment security, access to a good internet connection and colleague health, safety and wellbeing.

2.4   Long term arrangements to work from overseas will not be supported due to many complexities, including tax, insurance, employer liability insurance and employment law. Requests to work remotely following a period of overseas annual leave should be carefully explored by managers prior to agreement (including the considerations outlined in paragraph 2.3 above). This is subject to a 2 week maximum subject to School/Service needs (apart from where the overseas working is part of the colleague's duties).

2.5   All colleagues will have a space to work on campus. For some colleagues this will be a hub with shared spaces, bookable meeting rooms and touchdown spaces. All colleagues will have access to all the facilities needed in an office – appropriate desks and chairs, power points for IT and access to kitchen facilities or hot drinks. It is expected that colleagues will bring their work provided laptop with them when they come on to campus (computers connected to the audio/visual equipment are available in teaching spaces).

2.6   There are situations which will require attendance on campus, including:

- Regular meetings and/or times of year, as determined locally by Schools and Services;
- As required by the teaching and examining timetable;
- Meetings linked to HR processes, such as discipline;
- Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs);
- Interviews will take place face to face on campus where possible as this adds to the candidate experience.

2.7   When a new colleague joins a team, or there are other changes within a team, it is important to build in plenty of opportunities for the team to get together, both to discuss work priorities and to get to know each other. This will involve increased on campus working for the whole or part of the team to provide opportunities for effective job shadowing, training and collaboration. Further guidance on local induction is available on the New Starter webpage.

2.8   University events such as graduation and open days may require increased attendance on campus.

2.9   Travel time to campus is not included within working hours, and travel expenses cannot be claimed for travelling between home and a University campus.

2.10   Leeds Beckett will observe UK Government guidance on remote working because of pandemics or other national emergencies and may implement increased periods of hybrid working or working from home due to associated restrictions.

3.   Working from Home and Absence

3.1   Any absence such as sickness should be reported in the same way as if colleagues were on campus.

3.2   Annual leave must be booked and approved by managers in accordance with current University procedures.

4.   Changing/Ending Hybrid Working Arrangements

4.1   The University reserves the right to change or end an arrangement/agreement to work in a hybrid way (this will be discussed with the individual and reasonable notice will be given). Managers should seek advice from Human Resources before ending a hybrid working arrangement.

4.2   Examples of when a hybrid working arrangement may be stopped include, (but are not limited to):

a) if the demands of a role changes such that working in a hybrid way is no longer suitable or practicable;

b) where there has been an identifiable operational impact of hybrid working arrangements including (but not limited to) reduced student experience;

c) where colleagues fail to meet acceptable performance or conduct standards;

d) where colleagues fail to meet the requirements set out and agreed with managers for working in a hybrid way.

4.3   There is an inherent element of variability within hybrid working arrangements. Depending on the circumstances, changes linked to 4.2c and 4.2d above can be short-term and hybrid

working arrangements will resume once the issue has been resolved.

4.4   Where a hybrid working arrangement is linked to an existing flexible working arrangement, both aspects will be taken into consideration prior to changing or ending a hybrid working arrangement.

5.   Working from home: Equipment

5.1   The University will provide any equipment that we consider is reasonably required to work from home. All such equipment will remain the University's property and will be maintained in accordance with our legal requirements as an employer. The default device offered for colleague use will be a laptop; please refer to the Staff IT End-User Device Policy for more information.

5.2   Should further or specialist equipment be required for health reasons (e.g. as identified through the Home Working Health and Safety Guidance and Checklist) , this should be discussed with managers. Colleagues may be referred to Occupational Health so that advice can be sought on potential suitable adjustments. Any decision to purchase equipment to enable working from home must be agreed with the relevant manager (and authorised by the Dean or Director) prior to purchase and must follow University approval processes and be sourced via the University.

5.3   Colleagues are responsible for ensuring that their equipment is in full working order. In the event of equipment failing or developing a fault, colleagues should inform their manager and contact Digital Services to get equipment fixed or replaced as quickly as possible. Whilst Digital Services will endeavour to resolve all equipment faults or updates remotely, it may sometimes be necessary to bring equipment to campus for a critical update or fault resolution, and/or to pick up a short-term replacement whilst the laptop is fixed.

5.4   It is recommended that colleagues use university devices and equipment as the most secure, safe and effective way to access all the relevant university systems. Corporate systems – finance, HR and student record systems – must be accessed via a university provided device only. Where personal devices are used (e.g. smart phone), you must ensure that appropriate security is set up (see the Bring Your Own Device Policy). The University is not responsible for the provision, maintenance, replacement, or repair in the event of loss or damage to any personal equipment used when working for the University.

5.5   The University is not responsible for any associated costs of working from home including, but not limited to, the costs of heating, lighting, electricity, WIFI/broadband.

5.6   Colleagues are not required to take out insurance to cover any University equipment, as this is covered under the University's insurance policies. Working from home may affect home and contents insurance policy, mortgage, lease or rental agreement. Colleagues are responsible for making any necessary arrangements with their insurers, bank, mortgage provider or landlord – please check with the appropriate provider. The University will not cover any additional costs related to colleague insurance premiums.

6.   Working from home: Wellbeing

6.1   The University's Health and Safety policies apply to homeworkers – more information is available on the Health and Safety webpages, including the Home Working Guidance and Checklist, which must be completed by all staff working from home. In accordance with Health and Safety Executive requirements, there may be circumstances such as the nature of the work undertaken or concerns about colleague health and safety, where the University considers it necessary to check home working areas for health and safety purposes.

Reasonable notice of such inspections will be given.

6.2 It is important to have clear boundaries between work and home. Increased remote working should not mean an increase in the time worked or inability to switch off from work. A normal work routine should be maintained, including lunch breaks. If colleagues have concerns about their hours or arrangements, these should be discussed with their manager (including any feelings that mental health and wellbeing are being adversely affected).

6.3 To ensure privacy and security, where possible all work communications should be routed through Leeds Beckett communication channels (e.g. telephone calls should be via a system such as MS Teams, or similar platform approved by the University).

6.4 Internal face to face meetings should be arranged to take place on campus (colleagues should not have face to face meetings in their home, unless agreed with their manager). Colleagues must not provide their personal address or personal contact details to students or other work-related contacts.

7. Further Information and Guidance

7.1 This policy and procedure focus on the requirements and expectations of both the University and colleagues who have an agreement to work in a hybrid way. There are also important IT security, data protection and health safety and wellbeing considerations. The Related Policies and Information section below provides links to relevant information, policies and guides which should be read in conjunction with this policy and procedure.

Related Policies and Information

Flexible Working Principles
Employee Guidance on Flexible Working
Formal Flexible Working Request Policy
Grievance Policy and Procedure
Information Governance policies
Information Governance Short Guides (including hybrid working and data protection)
IT Security Policies
Health and Safety webpages (including Home Working Guidance and Checklist)
Reasonable Adjustments Manager's Guidance
Wellbeing webpages

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