



**ROBERT GORDON
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN**

Hybrid Working Policy



Approved by	The Executive		
Date Approved	February 2022	Status	Approved
Policy Owner	HR Manager	Impact assessed	Yes
Version	1.1	Date of next review	January 2025

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Date
1	Creation of Policy	February 2022
1.1	Policy updated into standard format which resulted in slight changes to clause numbering. Clause 5.4.1 updated from “principles” to “fundamentals”.	February 2022

HYBRID WORKING

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Hybrid working is an arrangement which provides staff with the opportunity to split their working time between the campus and an alternative location. This policy aims to support staff work life balance by introducing greater flexibility in relation to where work is undertaken, whilst continuing to maintain a vibrant on-campus community and supporting the needs of the business.
- 1.2** The RGU Hybrid Working policy is underpinned by the following:
 - 1.2.1 Decisions made at a local level to support business and service needs.
 - 1.2.2 A vibrant campus which is central to our identity and community.
 - 1.2.3 Effective management of resources whilst supporting flexibility, equality, diversity and inclusion.
 - 1.2.4 Mutual trust between managers and staff
 - 1.2.5 An organisational culture that facilitates and promotes a healthy work life balance.

2. Benefits of hybrid working

- 2.1** The University fully recognises the potential benefits of staff working a proportion of their time remotely. These benefits can include improved staff wellbeing and morale; higher levels of job satisfaction; increased efficiency; reduced sickness absence; greater ability to focus with fewer distractions; more time for family and friends; reduced commuting time and associated costs; IT upskilling; and higher levels of motivation. Hybrid working may also contribute to the University's pledge to achieve net zero by 2045.

3. Hybrid working fundamentals

- 3.1** The University adopts a fundamentals-based approach to hybrid working that maximises School / Department flexibility within an organisation wide framework that applies equally to all eligible staff.
- 3.1.1 A vibrant campus is core to the University and, as such, an on-campus presence is essential for all staff on a regular basis. In exceptional circumstances, exemptions will be considered on a case by case basis, with appropriate senior level approval.
 - 3.1.2 Hybrid working will be regarded as the usual working arrangement for staff unless their role cannot be carried out remotely.
 - 3.1.3 The maximum time staff can work remotely is 50% of their contractual hours.
 - 3.1.4 There is not a one size fits all approach to hybrid working and all decisions must take account of business need when applying the policy fundamentals.
 - 3.1.5 Hybrid working should not negatively affect the service provided by a team or negatively impact on other team members.
 - 3.1.6 Hybrid working is a choice and staff can work all of their hours on campus if that is their preference.
 - 3.1.7 Hybrid working at RGU relates predominantly to where work is undertaken not when the work is undertaken. Requests to vary hours on a permanent basis will continue to be dealt with under the University's Flexible Working policy.
 - 3.1.8 Hybrid working decisions are made at a school/department level. Managers will assess the business need for their teams and ensure appropriate staffing levels on campus are maintained at all times.
 - 3.1.9 Managers will treat all hybrid discussions/decisions equally, ensuring equality of opportunity and fairness for all.
 - 3.1.10 Working time will reflect the School / Department's normal business hours regardless of location.

- 3.1.11 Meetings should be held in the most appropriate location, which could be in person or online. Meetings will not necessarily default to face to face as this may act as a deterrent for hybrid working. While it may be desirable or convenient to have mixed mode meetings (in-person and online attendance combined) the preference is for meetings to adopt a single approach to optimise attendee engagement and experience.
- 3.1.12 Managers must ensure there is effective and regular two-way communication so that staff, regardless of their work location, are in receipt of the same information and opportunity.
- 3.1.13 While remote working patterns will be agreed with staff in advance, they do not guarantee a set pattern of work and may be altered based on service / business needs.
- 3.1.14 All individual arrangements for hybrid working, either new or amended, will be discussed and confirmed by managers to staff. In the interests of fairness and ensuring appropriate office cover, not all staff will be able to work their preferred remote campus pattern.
- 3.1.15 When staff work remotely they must have a suitable work location and access to sufficient broadband to perform their role. Given that staff can work all of their hours on campus their remote work station is their responsibility. Advice on setting up or adjusting a work station can be sought from the Occupational Health & Safety Team.
- 3.1.16 Hybrid working must not replace normal child or dependent care arrangements unless in exceptional circumstances and with senior manager approval.
- 3.1.17 Staff are required to be contactable through Microsoft Teams within normal business hours unless agreed otherwise and should keep their Outlook Calendar up to date.
- 3.1.18 As remote working is a choice for staff there will normally be no reimbursement of expenses incurred. All staff who require a laptop to work remotely will be provided with one.

3.1.19 Managers will regularly review the arrangements for hybrid working and adjust where appropriate.

3.1.20 The University reserves the right to withdraw hybrid working, providing staff with a reasonable period of notice.

4. RGU and its campus: The importance of campus life

4.1 RGU is a campus-based University. Our identity and the student experience are in part framed by staff and students interacting and collaborating in person. Our campus supports learning, creativity and innovation within our diverse community. It is an integral part of our student and staff experience and is central to the application of this policy.

4.2 There are many activities and roles that require to be performed in person, on campus, including:

4.2.1 Student or customer facing roles (IT Support, Sport, Library, School Receptions).

4.2.2 Delivery of and support for face-to-face teaching.

4.2.3 Work that involves the use of campus based physical resources i.e. laboratory work.

4.2.4 Meetings that require or benefit from in-person activity and discussion.

4.2.5 IT related infrastructure maintenance and development.

4.2.6 Events such as open days, visits from external individuals and groups, conferences, seminars and talks.

4.2.7 Facilities management (Cleaners, Janitors, Reception, Security, Grounds)

4.2.8 Delivery of and support for the induction and training of new staff.

4.3 The activities that are performed on campus are central to the overall operation and success of the university which means not all roles will be suitable for hybrid working.

5. Agreeing hybrid working

5.1 In order to set a hybrid working pattern the manager will:

- 5.1.1 Identify which roles are suitable for hybrid working.
- 5.1.2 Consider how hybrid working will be implemented in their respective team/ school/ department taking account of service/business needs.
- 5.1.3 Communicate their expectations to staff in terms of how the business / service will function while adopting a hybrid working model.
- 5.1.4 Liaise with HR and reflect on policy fundamentals and associated guidance before entering into discussion with individual staff.
- 5.1.5 Discuss the application of hybrid working with individual staff, taking account of their personal preferences, before reaching final decision.
- 5.1.6 Confirm agreed hybrid working pattern to individual staff.

5.2 The employee will:

- 5.2.1 Discuss their preferences for hybrid working with their line manager but remain flexible when it comes to its application.
- 5.2.2 Work to the agreed hybrid working arrangement and keep their manager informed of any one-off changes to their pattern
- 5.2.3 Ensure there is on-campus cover in the team if seeking to change their pattern.
- 5.2.4 Raise any concerns with their manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 5.2.5 Seek fair treatment advice from HR if concerns remain unresolved.

6. Review

6.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required.



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