**Policy – home and hybrid working**

Policy aims and definitions

The aim of this policy is to set out how current employees can make a request for home or hybrid working arrangements, and the conditions that will apply to such arrangements if a request is granted. [These conditions will also apply where new employees commence working with us as home or hybrid workers.]

As a company, we are supportive of such arrangements where these are appropriate and compatible with business needs. [Some employees may be recruited on home or hybrid working arrangements. Otherwise, employees / Employees] may apply for such arrangements on an occasional basis where necessary to respond to specific circumstances, or on a longer term basis.

When we refer to ‘home working’ in this policy, we mean arrangements under which your home would be your main place of work throughout your working week.

When we refer to ‘hybrid working’, we mean arrangements which could involve you working from home for part of your working hours, on fixed days of the week or hours of the day or on a specified number of days or hours each week[, or splitting your working time between the workplace and your home on a more flexible basis].

References to 'workplace' in this policy means our premises.

Status of this policy

This policy applies to employees only.

This policy does not give contractual rights to individual employees. We reserve the right to alter any of its terms at any time, although we will notify you in writing of any changes.

Requesting occasional home or hybrid working arrangements

We recognise that there are various circumstances in which you may benefit from home or hybrid working on an occasional basis. These may include when:

* a quiet, uninterrupted work environment will, for example, assist in dealing with a backlog of administrative tasks or in producing specific work to a deadline;
* a child, elderly relative or other dependant becomes unwell or arrangements for their care break down at short notice;
* public transport is disrupted (e.g. by adverse weather or by industrial action that affects your ability to travel to the workplace); or
* you have a medical appointment during the working day and it would be more efficient for you travel there from home than from the workplace.

To request occasional home or hybrid working, you should speak to your line manager. Your line manager may authorise an occasional period of home or hybrid working, provided that, in their opinion:

* you have work that can be undertaken at home; and
* working at home is compatible with business needs; and
* any increase in work that may be passed to your colleagues as a result is kept to a minimum.

Your line manager will, where necessary, liaise with [the HR Department / [POSITION]] to confirm arrangements.

In the event that your line manager concludes that it is necessary to refuse a request for occasional home or hybrid working and you are unable to attend the workplace as normal, [your line manager / the HR Department] will advise you whether your circumstances are covered by any other company policies (such as our [Emergency Time Off for Dependants Policy, Adverse Weather Policy], etc.).

Applying for longer term home or hybrid working arrangements

[After successful completion of your probationary period, you / You] can make an application for longer term home or hybrid working arrangements. Any request to work from home or on a hybrid basis must meet the needs of our business as well as your needs and not all roles or jobs are suitable for home or hybrid working.

If you wish to apply for longer term home or hybrid working arrangements, you will need to be able to demonstrate that you can:

* work independently, motivate yourself and use your own initiative, adapting to new working practices as necessary;
* manage your workload effectively and meet any applicable deadlines;
* make appropriate childcare/dependant care arrangements to enable you to focus on your work during your working hours;
* identify and resolve any new pressures created by working at home; and
* keep in regular contact with your line manager and colleagues.

Please be aware that a request is unlikely to be approved if:

* you need to be present in the workplace to perform your duties (for example, to use equipment that is only available in the workplace, or where your job requires significant personal interaction with colleagues or third parties that would not be as effective if carried out remotely);
* any aspect of your performance was identified as [below expectations / unsatisfactory] in your most recent appraisal;
* your line manager has advised you that your current standard of work or work production is unsatisfactory;
* you have an unexpired warning in respect of your conduct or performance; or
* you need [direct or regular] supervision or support to deliver an acceptable quality and/or quantity of work.

To be considered for longer term home or hybrid working, you will [normally] need to make a flexible working request [in accordance with our Flexible Working Policy].[Note that the requirement in our Flexible Working Policy for employees to have at least 26 weeks’ continuous employment before they can make a flexible working request does not apply to requests for home or hybrid working.]

[It may assist your application for home or hybrid working if you first discuss your proposal with your line manager informally. This may identify potential problems with your application, such as a need to be in the workplace on occasions you had not considered, which your application can then address.]

[If your request for longer term home or hybrid working does not involve any other changes, e.g. to the days or hours you work, it may be possible for us to agree this without going through a formal flexible working request process. Please speak to your line manager in the first instance.]

Location of home or hybrid working

You will be required to work from your home address when you are not working at the workplace.

[If you are thinking of moving home, you should speak to [your line manager / the HR Department] in advance to discuss whether your home or hybrid working arrangements will still be feasible – taking into account, for example, whether your new home address is within a reasonable commuting distance of the workplace.]

If at any time you wish to work from a location in the UK other than your home address, either on a temporary or a permanent basis, you will need to seek [written] agreement from [your line manager / the HR Department] in advance.

If you wish to work from abroad at any time, you will need to obtain separate written approval from [your line manager and the HR Department] in advance. It may, depending on the circumstances, be necessary for you to submit a flexible working request under our Flexible Working Policy in respect of a request to work from abroad. Different legislative and compliance requirements mean that working from abroad may be subject to different arrangements from those set out in this policy.

If we agree to you working from a location other than your home address on a temporary basis, we reserve the right to require you to return to working from your home address on [PERIOD] notice.

Attendance at the workplace

You will be expected on request to attend the workplace or other reasonable location - on days or at times when you would normally be working from your home address - for purposes such as meetings, training courses or other events as necessary. [This will typically not be more frequent than [one day per week/half a day per month/one day per month/two days per month] and the dates and times of such workplace attendance will be [agreed with/notified to] you [at least [NUMBER] days] in advance.]

You understand that when you do attend the workplace, you [may / will] have to hot desk or share a desk with someone else.

Supervision, performance and conduct

Your line manager will continue to supervise you and assess your performance and will regularly review your home or hybrid working arrangements and take steps to address any perceived problems.

As a home or hybrid worker, you will be subject to the same performance measures, processes and objectives and conduct rules that would apply if you worked at the workplace.

**Communications**

Your line manager will keep you up to date with communications and information relevant to your work. You must ensure that you maintain regular communication with your line manager and colleagues as needed for the performance of your work.

**Training and development**

Your access to training and development opportunities will, wherever possible, be the same as for staff who are wholly based in the workplace. In relation to applications for internal vacancies and promotions, we will discuss with you if your home or hybrid working arrangement will impact on your ability to do certain roles.

Equipment and home working costs

**EITHER** [We will provide any equipment that we consider is reasonably necessary to enable you to work from home. Any equipment we provide will remain our property. We will make all necessary arrangements for and bear the cost of installing and removing equipment from your home. Where we provide equipment, you must:

* use it only for the purposes for which we have provided it and ensure it is not used by anyone else;
* take reasonable care of it and use it only in accordance with any operating instructions and our policies and procedures; and
* if requested, make it available for collection by us or on our behalf.]

**OR** [[Other than [your company laptop and mobile phone / LIST EQUIPMENT], you / You] are required to ensure you have sufficient and appropriate equipment for working from home. Any personal equipment you use when working from home is your responsibility and we will not be responsible for providing, maintaining, repairing or replacing any equipment in the event of loss or damage to any personal equipment you may use when working for us.]

[Please inform us if you have a disability that means you need any special equipment in order to work from home safely and comfortably. In such cases, we will discuss with you what equipment or adjustments to your home workspace you may reasonably need.]

[We are not responsible for associated costs of you working from home including the costs of heating, lighting, or electricity, internet access, or telephone calls.]

[We will pay all charges on any mobile phone provided by us, on condition that you use it only for work-related purposes [and in accordance with our [Electronic Communications Policy]].]

[If you need to purchase any stationery or send any documents or other materials by post or courier in the course of your duties, you should obtain appropriate receipts and reclaim such costs in accordance with our Expenses Policy.]

Data security and confidentiality

You must take all necessary steps to ensure that private and confidential material is kept secure at all times, including when travelling to and from the workplace. [Your line manager / the Data Protection Team] must be satisfied that all reasonable precautions are being taken to maintain confidentiality of material in accordance with our requirements.

You agree to comply with our instructions relating to IT and document security, [**EITHER** including: [only using equipment that we have provided or authorised; installing and updating all required antivirus and malware protection; regularly updating your password; using provided encryption tools; only using approved platforms to send and receive work-related emails and materials or make work-related audio or video calls; not making work-related calls in the presence of smart speakers or home surveillance systems; ensuring you lock your computer whenever it is left unattended; ensuring nobody else in your home has access to confidential information stored on your computer or other devices; using secure wifi and connecting to our network using our designated [VPN / multi-factor authentication]; keeping all hard copy materials containing confidential information or personal data in cabinets that are locked when not in use; and shredding or otherwise securely disposing of such confidential information and personal data when it is no longer needed, in compliance with our guidelines on data retention].][**OR** as set out in our [Data Protection Policy / Electronic Communications Policy / POLICY.]

You confirm that you have read and understood our policies on [computer use, electronic communications and data security] and that you will regularly keep yourself informed of the most current version of these policies.

If you suspect or discover that there has been a personal data breach, or an incident involving the security of company, client, customer or staff information, you must report it immediately to [your line manager [and/or] the Data Protection Team].

Health and safety

Home and hybrid workers remain subject to the Company’s health and safety policy and have the same responsibilities for health and safety as other employees. You have a duty to take reasonable care of your own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by your actions and omissions. You must attend our usual health and safety training courses, read [MANUALS] and undertake to use equipment safely.

We have the right to carry out a risk assessment of your working area at home for health and safety purposes. This may include a home visit by [the Health and Safety Officer / [POSITION]] and / or a remote risk assessment. Usually, a risk assessment will be undertaken before or shortly after you begin home or hybrid working. Further risk assessments may be conducted if we consider them necessary – for example, because your role or your working environment changes. The need for such assessments will depend on the circumstances, including the nature of the work undertaken.

You must not have in-person meetings in your home with [customers/clients/colleagues] and must not provide your home address or telephone number to [customers/clients].

You must report any health and safety concerns to [your line manager / the Health and Safety Officer] [in accordance with our health and safety policy].

Mental health and wellbeing

It is important that your working patterns and levels of work do not negatively impact on your health and wellbeing. If you are concerned about your health or wellbeing in relation to your home or hybrid working arrangements, including your working pattern or workload, please speak to [your line manager] in the first instance.

You should ensure that you take regular breaks away from your screen during the working day. This is particularly important when working from home as the natural interruptions in a workplace environment aren’t present.

We encourage you to take a lunch break and take time away from your working environment each day when you are working at home, whether this be going for a walk or just taking some relaxation time. If you were in the workplace, you would have natural breaks during the day to catch up with a colleague or share an idea/issue.

[For further information about the support we can provide for employees’ wellbeing, please see our [Wellbeing Policy], or speak to one of our [Mental Health Champions].]

Insurance

Working at home may affect your home and contents insurance policy, mortgage, lease or rental agreement. You must make any necessary arrangements with your insurers, bank, mortgage provider or landlord before commencing home or hybrid working.

[We are responsible for taking out and maintaining insurance to cover any equipment we provide against fire, theft, loss and damage during your employment.]

[Our [employer’s liability / accident] insurance policy covers you when you are working at home. You must report any accidents to [the Health and Safety Officer] immediately [in accordance with our Health and Safety Policy].]

Termination of home or hybrid working arrangements

We reserve the right to terminate your home or hybrid working arrangements, for example if your role changes such that home or hybrid working is no longer suitable, subject to [one month’s] notice.

[If you wish to terminate your home or hybrid working arrangement, you must notify your line manager in the first instance, providing [at least one month’s] notice. [We will only be able to accommodate your request if there is sufficient office space and a suitable desk for you.]]

If you receive an unsatisfactory grade in [an appraisal or a review] or are subject to a formal performance or conduct caution or warning for any reason, we reserve the right to terminate your home or hybrid working arrangements and require you to work at the workplace.

[On termination of your home or hybrid working arrangement, you may be required to return certain equipment provided by us. If termination of your home or hybrid working arrangement also involves termination of your employment, you will be required to return all equipment provided by us. If we need to collect equipment from your home, we will contact you to make the appropriate arrangements.]