

Hybrid Working Guidelines

November 2023

Introduction

At Glasgow Life, we want to support our colleagues to do their best work, have a good work/life balance, work flexibly while staying connected and doing the best work for our customers.

Many of us found that how and where we worked changed radically during the pandemic, based on government guidelines. Expectations about what work looks like changed as we continued to recover after covid 19, and we know that flexibility and choice are important. and what works for some teams won't work as well for others.

The purpose of these guidelines, developed as a recommendation by a listening group on hybrid working that was set up following the leadership and management development programme in early 2023, is to set out a framework for hybrid working. It also looked at ways of working to support everyone to stay connected and work in their best way.

We know that the guidelines won't work for, or be available to, all colleagues. It will depend on the kind of work you do, the part of Glasgow Life you work in, the level of supervision or support you and your team need in your role, levels of physical cover required, and the technology and environment you have available to you.

What is hybrid working?

Hybrid working is a form of flexible working where colleagues can spend some of their time working remotely (eg from home) and some in the employer's office space. Hybrid working can be undertaken in conjunction with other forms of flexible working eg compressed hours.

Hybrid working is not a permanent change to your contract of employment, it is a voluntary style of working, based on business need. Hybrid working is not the same as a formal and agreed flexible working arrangement. If you are considering a permanent change to your work location, work pattern or the hours you work, please use the information available in the [Work Life Balance](#) section of the Colleague Information internet site.

Glasgow Life remains committed to developing sustainable hybrid working practices, following the pilot established during recovery from the pandemic, while maintaining operational delivery and priorities. The key to hybrid working is that all colleagues and managers agree that everyone will remain flexible, as business and individual needs may change and therefore hybrid working arrangements will always be subject to discussion and change, in line with business requirement.

Who is covered by hybrid working?

Hybrid working is available to all roles where work can be carried out effectively from different locations, depending on the activity.

In identifying if your role and work can be worked in a hybrid way, your manager will have considered the following:

- ✓ The suitability of the job and work and whether the work is capable of being undertaken equally effectively from home
- ✓ The impact on the levels of service provided by you and the wider team
- ✓ Whether any costs incurred are reasonable
- ✓ The suitability of the home environment and its technical accessibility and connectivity
- ✓ Any potential negative impact on you or the wider team
- ✓ How to maintain good communication with individual colleagues and teams
- ✓ Any relevant risk assessment and data protection assessment

Key principles of Glasgow Life's approach to hybrid working:

- ✓ Its based on trust. We trust you to work with your manager and agree the best days to be at home and in the office, balancing the needs of the team and the business.
- ✓ We commit to making sure you have the right technology and equipment to support you to work in this way.
- ✓ We still need to come together face-to-face to maintain team working and business relationships, to support each other, particularly new starts and less experienced colleagues and have more informal and impromptu conversations to find solutions to our problems.
- ✓ Performance will be evaluated on the impact you have and the outcomes you deliver.
- ✓ Hybrid working should not impact the level of quality of service and delivery to both colleagues and customers.
- ✓ Community and connection are part of who we are in Glasgow Life and how we all work together. We will make the best use of our office space to enable collaborative working to allow us to connect and communicate together.
- ✓ There will be times when being in an office space is crucial – when you first join or have a new colleague to welcome to the team. At these times we will ask for more office based working from teams to both welcome and connect with new colleagues and help them understand how we work as a team.
- ✓ Glasgow Life will always try to support hybrid working if we can and if your role is suitable. However, please remember that any hybrid working arrangement is subject to the ongoing agreement of management and may sometimes need to be changed for business reasons.

Working Hours

- ✓ Unless agreed with your line manager, normal working hours apply while hybrid working. Any requirement to work outside of core hours must be agreed in consultation with your manager.
- ✓ Travel time to your place of work is not included in work time.

- ✓ To encourage building our community and connections within and between teams, we recommend that working time is approximately split 50/50 between office and home across a 2 week period, with consideration to office working on Mondays and Fridays within your team. Some roles require working across several venues or more frequently in a location that's not your office base and your manager will discuss what works best for you, the team, the business and service delivery.
- ✓ If you agree with your manager that you will occasionally work some hours later in the evening or at weekends, please be courteous and respectful to colleagues. Your colleagues are not expected to respond during unsociable hours.
- ✓ We know that life can be complicated and working in this way can help balance home and working life. However, hybrid working is not suited as a way of managing emergency leave, for long term or regular childcare or any other caring responsibilities or in place of taking sick leave.

Taking individual circumstances into account

Some colleagues may have challenges with their working environment at home which makes remote working difficult and they would like to attend the office more regularly. Glasgow Life will not ask any member of staff to work in a hybrid way if they don't want to.

Alternatively, a colleague may wish to work less time in the office to accommodate individual or personal circumstances for a period of time. In this case, you should talk to your line manager. Depending on the nature of the additional flexibility being sought, your manager be be able to agree to the request for a fixed period. Alternatively, you may be asked to make a formal flexible working request under the work life balance policy.

Safe working

The safety of all our staff is our priority and all the usual workplace health and safety measures will continue to operate in all office environments and at home.

- ✓ A DSE risk assessment should be undertaken by all staff and can be found [here](#)
- ✓ Follow H&S [Executive guidance on the working environment and accidents](#), including reporting accidents
- ✓ Talk to hybrid workers about any mental health problems that might arise from working at home
- ✓ Consider any amendments to your own hom insurance policies

We encourage all colleagues to let their manager know if they have any concerns, have identified any potential risks or have any suggestions on how things can be improved. You can do this through your regular discussions with your line manager.

Please be mindful of your wellbeing while at work, whatever the location:

- ✓ Take a lunch break and regular breaks. It is easy to lose track of time and work more hours that you would usually when working remotely.
- ✓ Hybrid working should not be used as a way of carrying on working when you are unwell. If you wake up feeling unwell, you make a decision whether or not to go to work, including hybrid working. Specific and current guidance on what to do if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection such as coronavirus can be found [here](#).
- ✓ We know that collaboration and connection can help you stay well. We encourage you and your team to think what this means for you and to proactively make time to connect with colleagues.

Data Protection

The ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) has ten top tips to ensure best practice when working outside of the office:

1. Follow your organisation's policies, procedures and guidance

Your organisation will have adapted their approach to ensure that data is adequately protected. Avoid the temptation to do things in a way you think is more convenient, such as sending emails through your personal account or using the video conferencing app that you use with friends for work calls.

2. Only use approved technology for handling personal data

If your organisation has provided you with technology such as hardware or software you should use it. This will provide the best protection for personal data.

3. Consider confidentiality when holding conversations or using a screen

You may be sharing your home working space with other family members or friends. Try to hold conversations, where they are less likely to overhear you and position your screen where it is less likely to be overseen.

4. Take care with print outs

At the office, it is likely you can use confidential waste bins. At home you won't have that facility. Follow your organisation's guidance or safely store print outs until you can take them into the office and dispose of them securely.

5. Don't mix your organisation's data with your own personal data

If you have to work using your own device and software, keep your organisation's data separate to avoid accidentally keeping hold of data for longer than is necessary. Ideally, your organisation should have provided you with secure technology to work with.

6. Lock it away where possible

To avoid loss or theft of personal data, put print outs and devices away at the end of the working day if possible.

7. Be extra vigilant about opening web links and attachments in emails or other messages

Don't click on unfamiliar web links or attachments claiming to give you important coronavirus updates. We're seeing a rise in scams so follow the [National Cyber Security Centre's \(NCSC\) guidance on spotting suspicious emails](#).

8. Use strong passwords

Whether using online storage, a laptop or some other technology, it's important to make your passwords hard to guess. The [NCSC recommends using three random words together as a password](#) (eg 'coffeetrainfish' or 'walltincake'). Make sure you use different passwords for different services too.

9. Communicate securely

Use the communication facilities provided to you by your organisation where available. If you need to share data with others then choose a secure messaging app or online document sharing system. If you have to use email, which isn't always secure, consider password protecting documents and sharing the passwords via a different channel, like text.

10. Keep software up to date

If you're using your own equipment, don't be an easy target for hackers. Keep your security software up to date to make it more difficult for them to get in. If your organisation has provided you with technology to work from home, this should be managed for you.

Working outside of the UK

We are unable to support colleagues working from outside of the UK. This is due to the potential for complex legal and tax implications, associated potential risks and costs this presents to our business.

If you need to work somewhere other than your home or the office, within the UK, please discuss this with your line manager.