

**Agile Working Principles - Professional Services Staff**

**Liverpool Hope University**

The University is committed to maintaining its ethos and values and ensuring our campuses are hubs that support our strategic priorities creatively and effectively.

Fundamental to this is ensuring that our campuses remain vibrant, busy and collegiate for all, as we work in partnership with our students to centre their experience, foster high aspirations, develop their confidence, skills and knowledge to enable them to succeed.

In supporting these key priorities staff can expect to spend the majority of working time on campus, but supported to work elsewhere when work and timing allows. The implementation of agile working for staff also underpins other University strategic aims including wellbeing, supporting new and innovative ways of working and environmental sustainability.

**Academic Staff**

Academic staff are not covered by these specific principles as they already have agile arrangements and flexibility and these will continue to be managed locally by Deans/Heads of Departments.

**Agile Working**

Agile working is about managers and staff considering if the work of their teams can be achieved in a more flexible way that allows staff greater scope to work at times and from locations that are preferable to them. It is about finding ways of working, within certain parameters specific to each team, that increase people’s ability to manage their work-life balance and enhance their wellbeing, while still meeting the objectives of their role.

Agile Working is an **informal** and flexible temporary arrangement and therefore does not require a formal change to terms and conditions and is likely to **vary across different teams**, **roles and projects and over time**. More permanent requests to change work arrangements should be via the flexible working policy.

Working agilely is not a requirement; some colleagues may prefer to continue to work in the University and during normal hours and this is completely acceptable.

There will be some University critical roles that can only be done on campus and at set times. For these colleagues agile working as described in these principles will not be possible. The nature of this type work means that all or almost all these activities would be done on campus.

**Principles of agile working include:**

* It must be possible within your role, for example there will be no or only limited scope to work away from the University in certain customer/student-facing roles..
* It should align to key University strategic aims and School/Departmental operational requirements and have no negative impact on student experience
* If it involves you working from home, following the policies and procedures identified below to ensure you have the means to operate safely, securely and effectively to carry out your work
* While the University will aim to provide appropriate equipment to facilitate agile working, **it must be recognised that this may not always be achievable instantly**.Where appropriate resources are not immediately available and the absence of equipment may compromise health and safety, home working will not be permitted right away.
* Arrangements for agile work must be agreed in advance with your appropriate OLT/ALT manager to ensure that the needs of other team members and School/Departmental needs can also be taken into account
* Different arrangements work for different Schools/Departments and functions There is **no one-size-fits-all solution**
* Each School/Department should plan for an **anchor day** or half day when the team will all be in the office on a bi weekly basis.
* Flexibility involves give and take Responsibility for making agile work rests equally with staff and managers, who together need to assess the opportunities and challenges, openly and honestly, including the need to balance requests for agile working equitably across teams.
* Any agreed agile working that permits work off campus may vary from week to week, or across the academic year depending on operational needs and on occasion staff may be asked on campus at short notice if needed
* Appropriate notice (usually at least 48 hours) will be given if a change to agile working arrangements is required. This change may be permanent due to business needs, a clearly identifiable operational impact including but not limited to reduced student experience or poor service provided by the function or a colleague’s performance standards etc.
* Alternatively it may just be temporary and in exceptional circumstances, requests may be made at shorter notice, if for example, a team member covering the office becomes unwell, or if an unanticipated piece of work needs to be done on campus etc.
* Within any agreed arrangements staff may be required to be on campus on particular days or part days at the request of the manager, for example for in-person training and for meetings that the manager has determined are best conducted in person.
* Colleagues taking agile work arrangements need to ensure they can communicate quickly and effectively with their manager and colleagues when required. This may require sharing your work calendar.
* Agile Working should be used as a short term ‘fix’ for a specific situation, or as a medium-term arrangement of no more than one academic term. Fresh or continued arrangements need to be requested and agreed again for a new academic term.

**Guidance for determining suitability for agile work in School/Department**

As part of developing an accountable and responsible culture, decisions about agile working will be made at a local level by the appropriate OLT or ALT manager to suit business and service needs taking full cognisance of the University Strategic Plan.

Managers after consultation with their teams, will decide what the best arrangements are for the team as a whole, given the circumstances and context of their working priorities and where possible, taking account of the personal preferences of team members. A move to agile working requires good communication, consideration of others and a flexible attitude from everyone involved to make it work. Moving to a new way of working may be challenging for some team members to adjust to, so frequent communication is key.

We hope a team-based approach will also help **ensure an equitable distribution of tasks among the staff in the team**. We wish to avoid a ‘first come, first served’ approach to facilitating homeworking (i.e. we wish to ensure that the implementation of the Framework is based on **proactive consideration by teams rather than reactive responses to individual requests**).

Individual requests for agile working need to be discussed and agreed by the manager in advance. To ensure there is clarity and common understanding, all agreed arrangements are confirmed by email with the employee confirming they agree to adhere to the Agile Working Principles contained in this document. However, there is no requirement for signed forms.

The decision on whether any agile working arrangement can be accommodated ultimately rests with the manager. Any arrangement for agile working is discretionary and the University will have the right to terminate an agile working arrangement subject to giving at least 48 hours’ notice if it is a permanent change to arrangements.

Managers should ensure they determine decisions in a fair and consistent manner

**Policies and Procedures**

If you are carrying out agile working you still need to comply with all the usual University policies, procedures and standards. Contractual obligations set out in your Contract of Employment also continue to apply.

In particular colleagues:

* Must continue to adhere to the University Sickness Absence and Monitoring Policy including sickness absence reporting procedures.
* Any working at home needs to ensure extra care with the way colleagues handle University information, especially confidential and valuable data. Staff working agilely at home should ensure they find out more information, and ways to protect data at <https://www.hope.ac.uk/aboutus/governance/generaldataprotectionregulations/>
* Must continue to adhere to all policies relating to acceptable and appropriate use of IT https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/itservices/policies/

**Health and Safety Policies and Procedures**

You should liaise with your line manager and/or Health and Safety Advisor to ensure that your remote working set-up is appropriate and that you are working in a safe manner. You must also take responsibility for your own health and safety and that of anyone else who is affected by your work (for example others in your household when you are working from home). In particular, you must keep your remote work area clean and tidy and avoid trip/slip hazards.

* Complete the **‘Home Working’ checklist** to be agreed and signed by your Line Manager.
* Complete a DSE self-assessment of your remote workstation, using the ‘**Workstation Assessment’ checklist** and implement any required changes.

You must notify your line manager if:

* you feel any discomfort due to working remotely (such as back pain) or
* you believe that there are any work-related health and safety hazards
* any work-related accidents occur in your home.

Your line manager will escalate the matter to the H&S Advisor who will discuss if appropriate, to look into what action can be taken.

Access to home working guidance, **home working and workstation assessment checklists** and information from HSE, ROSPA and UK Fire Service is available on the Health and Safety webpage at: [LHU DSE and Homeworking Guidance.](https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/staff/governance/healthandsafety/displayscreenequipmentandhomeworking/)

**Further Information**

Agile working agreements are informal and do not represent guaranteed patterns, regardless of how long arrangements are in place. While managers will endeavour to ensure agreed agile working arrangements are achieved in practice, staff must be able to flex any agile working patterns to be available to ‘return’ to their core place of work and hours of work on campus should this be required.

Agile working arrangements are temporary and do not supersede specific contracted work patterns or requirements set out in Job Descriptions.

The University will not provide any additional financial assistance for any member of staff wishing to work from home.  Colleagues may, depending on their personal circumstances, be eligible to claim tax relief for working remotely: HMRC-Claiming Income Tax Relief

**Insurance**

Staff should check if there are any personal implications of home working on their home insurance or leasing / rental arrangements. University equipment is covered by the University’s own arrangements.

The University holds liability insurance that provides cover for the legal liabilities of the University and its employees whenever they are engaged in University business. This cover applies irrespective of where the activity is taking place.

**Equality Statement**

Liverpool Hope University is committed to the principles of equality and diversity as well as the elimination of discriminatory practices. These principles apply to the treatment of all staff.

This guidance, together with any supporting procedures, will be implemented in a non- discriminatory manner. Members of the University administering the guidance are responsible for ensuring that in its application, those to whom the guidance applies, shall not receive less favourable treatment on grounds of sex, marital status, gender reassignment, racial group, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, socio-economic background, trade union membership, family circumstances, or any other irrelevant distinction

**Review**

The first academic year of agile working will be reviewed in the summer of 2024 with various key stakeholders reviewing various feedback and evidential data.

**Proforma**

Please copy and paste the below onto your email and complete the relevant information before sending to your relevant member of OLT / ALT.

**Name:**

**Department:**

Brief outline of the agile working request, please provide days and times were necessary:

Please outline if you require remote access. This will typically apply if you need access to SITS Client, Terminal Four, ZDrive or Unit Four - Agresso:

If you require remote access please confirm if you have a University Laptop:

Do you have any other IT requirements?

In your email you must also include the below statement.

**By submitting this form, I understand that any arrangement is temporary and agree to adhere to the Agile Working Principles contained in the Agile Working principals. I understand that this arrangement is temporary, can be for no longer than one term and is subject to change. Any agile arrangement can be withdrawn by the University for operational and business needs. Submission of this form does not indicate approval; an outcome of this request will be issued by the approver.**

**The approver response to this request will copy in** [**HR@hope.ac.uk**](mailto:HR@hope.ac.uk) **in order for the University to monitor and support the KPIs of the University.**

**Any IT requests will need to be communicated to** [**ITShelp@hope.ac.uk**](mailto:ITShelp@hope.ac.uk) **by the relevant OLT / ALT member.**