

Human Resources  
Goireasan Daonna

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# Hybrid/Mobile Working Guidance

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## Clàr-innse

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# Introduction

Flexible Working, Hybrid/Mobile Working and Flexi-Time create the 3 Flexible Working Strands which sit under the [Flexible Working Arrangements Policy](#).

Hybrid/Mobile Working relates to **where** an employee works. Flexible Working determines **when** an employee works and the Flexi-Time scheme provides employees with the ability to **vary** their hours around core business hours each day.

This guidance should be implemented for any employee who wishes to take advantage of Hybrid/Mobile Working. It outlines expectations, considerations and process to support defining working arrangements to achieve a balance between an employee's preferences and service provision.

This guidance is closely linked to the [Flexible Working Guidance](#) and the [Flexi-Time Scheme](#).

# Guidance

## Definitions

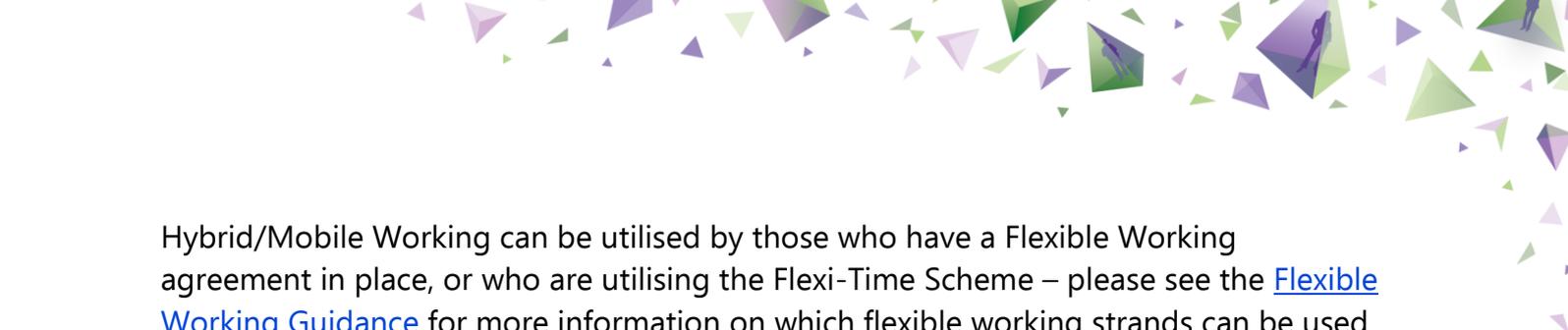
Please see the [Flexible Working Arrangements Policy](#) for definitions of key terms.

## What is Hybrid/Mobile Working?

A Hybrid/Mobile Working arrangement can be used to allow an employee to work from various locations, for example:

- their home
- a designated office space
- any other Council location required by their role, for example depots.

A [Team Agreement](#) is used to provide a fluid, collaboratively developed framework which supports effective ways of working across different locations in a hybrid environment, however this **does not** constitute a permanent, contractual change.



Hybrid/Mobile Working can be utilised by those who have a Flexible Working agreement in place, or who are utilising the Flexi-Time Scheme – please see the [Flexible Working Guidance](#) for more information on which flexible working strands can be used together.

## Hybrid/Mobile Working requests

Any employees who are home or office-based can request Hybrid/Mobile Working. The fluid nature of Hybrid/Mobile Working allows managers to adopt an agile approach to work locations and requests received in order to support employees.

An informal discussion is a helpful first step, allowing both the employee and manager to explore options and understand how the request might work in practice, considering:

- employee preferences
- service delivery requirements
- impact on the team
- the nature of the role.

If a manager is unsure whether a request is workable or how it might affect other team members, both parties may agree to trial the arrangement temporarily. This gives both parties a chance to assess its suitability prior to approval.

Where a request is approved, managers should include the arrangements in the [Team Agreement](#).

Where a request cannot be supported, managers must clearly explain the reasons why. This may include service delivery, performance concerns or the impact on the wider team.

## Requests to Work Outside the Highland Council Boundary

Where an employee chooses to reside out with The Highland Council boundary (but within the UK) there is no automatic right to home working. A [Flexible Working](#) agreement may be appropriate where employees are considering a more formal, permanent change.

Working from a base outside the Highlands (but within the UK) may be considered where it does not negatively affect service delivery, individual performance or the employee's ability to carry out their role effectively. Managers will assess requests on a

case-by-case basis, taking into account the [homeworking considerations](#) outlined at the end of this guidance.

Employees who work out with the Highland Council boundary will have a nominated base in the Highland Council area where travel expenses are claimed from when work-related travel takes place. Employees travelling to their notional base within the Highland Council boundary do so at their own cost.

## Hybrid/Mobile Arrangement and Working Abroad

Working outside the UK presents significant implications in relation to tax and NI liabilities, immigration, employment legislation and creates operational risk relating to export legislation and regulations around data and ICT security.

In exceptional circumstances, a short-term, temporary Hybrid/Mobile Working arrangement may be requested to support a significant, critical and time-limited situation, provided all other leave options have been considered. **Discussion and prior approval** must take place with ACE/CO, HR Manager or above and CO Business Solutions.

Managers and employees should agree a clear plan outlining expected work commitments, how the role will be carried out across different locations and how regular communication will be maintained. This agreement should be recorded in writing, such as in a Team Agreement, to ensure shared understanding and accountability.

An example of exceptional circumstances may be to temporarily allow an employee to be close to a terminally ill relative while continuing to meet work commitments.

## Roles and responsibilities

Managers should speak with each team member to understand individual working preferences and requirements. While arrangements may vary across services, managers must apply policies fairly and consistently to all team members.

When considering Hybrid/Mobile Working, employees are encouraged to read all relevant policies and guidance and be open with their line manager when discussing their own practical needs before having an open conversation with their line manager.

Requesting an employee attends the workplace to work, for meetings, training or team collaboration is considered a reasonable management request. Employees are

therefore expected to attend the office when required, even if this falls on a day they would typically work remotely.

All employees should be reminded of their [Right to Disconnect](#) outside their working hours.

If working from home is part of a Hybrid/Mobile arrangement, employees should review the section on [Homeworking Considerations](#) below.

For more information on manager responsibilities, please see the [Flexible Working Arrangements Guidance for Managers](#).

## The Team Agreement

The application of Hybrid/Mobile Working practices should be documented within a workplace plan known as a [Team Agreement](#). Team Agreements are informal, fluid arrangements and do not represent a contractual change for any employee. The Team Agreement should be treated as a live, changeable document which outlines the Hybrid/Mobile arrangements which have been agreed and approved.

Managers should have discussions with all team members to help shape a Team Agreement, which outlines how the team will work together.

The Team Agreement should document the working arrangements within the team to:

- clarify roles and responsibilities
- evidence a planned approach towards expected work commitments and objectives
- ensure colleagues are aware of each other's working patterns to facilitate appropriate safety measures when individuals are working alone, remotely, or from home
- be aware of how and when team members can contact each other to communicate effectively and work collaboratively.

Employees are expected to adhere to the finalised Team Agreement.

## Reviewing the Team Agreement

The Team Agreement should be reviewed every 6 months, or whenever there is a change or new request.

Hybrid/Mobile Working arrangements may need to be reviewed, modified or withdrawn where:

- an employee requests a change
- they negatively affect the employee or team
- there are performance or service delivery issues
- there is a business requirement.

Performance should be monitored, with regular reviews, to ensure arrangements remain effective and continue to meet both individual and organisational needs.

Employees should give reasonable notice if they wish to modify their Hybrid/Mobile Working arrangements.

More detailed information and considerations are available in the [Flexible Working Arrangements Guidance for Managers](#). There is also a short module on [Traineasy](#) called 'Your Team Agreement'.

## Homeworking Considerations

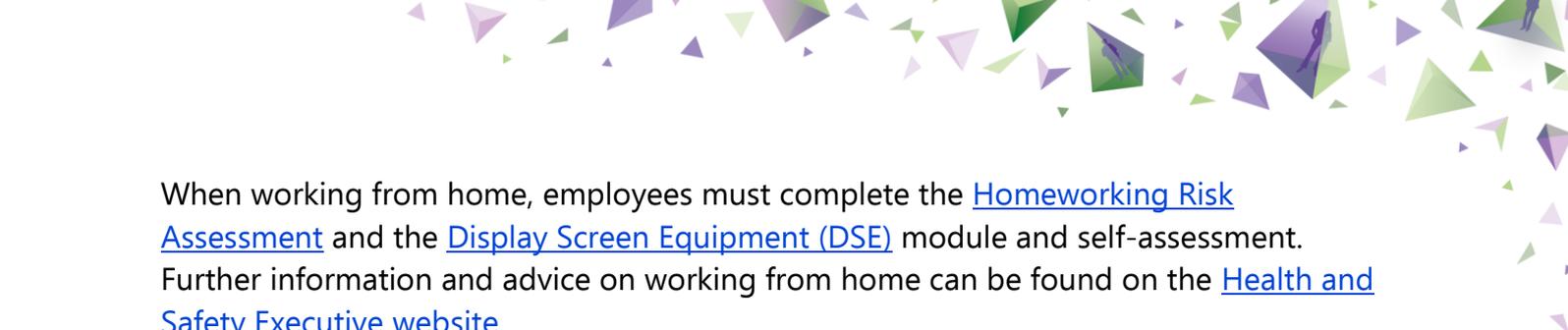
Employees should undertake work effectively regardless of their work location, ensuring they have a safe, secure and private space to work.

Managers and employees must establish clear expectations for contact during working hours, using tools like Microsoft Teams and Outlook calendars to support visibility, coordination and responsiveness. Managers and employees should regularly refer to the Team Agreement to stay informed about their colleagues' work locations and to ensure they can be reached quickly in the event of an emergency.

Standard procedures for reporting sickness or other types of absences continue to apply, regardless of work location. Hybrid/Mobile Working may also be considered as a reasonable adjustment to support employees to return to work or remain in work.

To ensure safety and compliance, [Risk Assessments](#) should be reviewed and updated to reflect new working arrangements, including lone working. It is also essential to follow health and safety guidance and take regular rest breaks when working remotely.

A reliable internet connection is essential to support digital systems. Any issues with connectivity must be reported to the employee's manager promptly. Managers should implement a plan for issues such as poor internet connectivity during home working.



When working from home, employees must complete the [Homeworking Risk Assessment](#) and the [Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\)](#) module and self-assessment. Further information and advice on working from home can be found on the [Health and Safety Executive website](#).

Employees are reminded to comply with the [Code of Conduct](#) and [ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#) at all times, regardless of their work location. Additionally, those working from home should check that their home contents insurance provides adequate cover for work-related equipment and activities.

## **Equipment and ICT**

Employees should be provided with any workplace equipment required to set up their home workstation. Any equipment issued to staff to work from home (including desks, chairs) will be documented for tracking purposes. Where required, hot desk facilities will be provided, however devices may need to be transported between the employee's home and office location. Employees should ensure they have the ICT Helpdesk phone number and know their laptop asset number.

## **Information Security**

Discussions will take place between the manager and the employee to ensure suitable arrangements are in place at home to mitigate risk of breaches of confidentiality or security. For additional information please see [Information Security Guidance](#).

## **Travel**

Each employee should have a 'base' location from which travelling expenses can be claimed in line with the [Travel and Subsistence Policy](#).

Where an employee is Hybrid/Mobile Working, their base does not change unless an application for Flexible Working is submitted and approved.

## **Changes to Home Location**

Employees must tell their line manager of any proposed change to their home location if they have a Hybrid/Mobile arrangement as there may be implications for personal safety and service delivery.

## Wellbeing

Managers have a duty of care to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and must ensure employees have sufficient support and access to the range of wellbeing resources offered by Highland Council, such as the [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#).

## Quick Links

The Hyperlinks listed here will redirect you to the related guidance, letters, information, and relevant organisations mentioned in this policy.

### [HR Microsite](#)

#### [Flexible Working Arrangements Policy](#)

[Flexible Working Arrangements Guidance for Managers](#)

[Flexible Working Guidance](#)

[Flexi-Time Scheme](#)

[Homeworking Agreement and Checklist](#)

[Homeworking Risk Assessment](#)

[Team Agreement](#)

### **Additional Resources**

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\)](#)

[Employee Assistance Programme](#)

[Homeworking Risk Assessment](#)

[ICT Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[Information Security Guidance](#)

[Right to Disconnect](#)

[Risk Assessment](#)

[Travel and Subsistence Policy](#)



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