



# Hybrid Working FAQs

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## The Hybrid Working Trial

### What did the Hybrid trial tell us?

The hybrid trial told us that colleagues really appreciated the flexibility that hybrid working offered. Feedback gathered from colleagues and students indicated no adverse impacts from the implementation of hybrid working in professional services. Academic colleagues also continue to work in a hybrid way with local measures implemented by schools.

### How was it measured?

The trial was measured through a combination of online surveys and through direct feedback gathered on campus from both Academics and students.

### Can we now consider hybrid working embedded within the University?

The benefits of hybrid working were clearly demonstrated during the trial and, as a result of feedback, hybrid working is now our way of working at the University. The focus will now shift to ensuring that colleagues are supported to work in a hybrid way by providing the right technology and spaces to work from whilst ensuring that there is no impact on service delivery and that all colleagues have regular campus attendance.

## Contractual Agreements and Eligibility

### Will I get new contractual terms and conditions if I start working in a hybrid way or can I request a hybrid contract?

There will be no contractual changes as a result of hybrid working. Taking part in hybrid working and mixing your working week with campus-based working and remote working is entirely voluntary. You can choose to work fully from your campus location which should be discussed with your line manager.

University campus locations will continue to be deemed as your contractual place of work and it will be expected that there will be campus-based presence for all colleagues, so no one will be deemed as 100% remote working.

### Will new colleagues be eligible for hybrid working?

Yes, all new colleagues who work within an area in which hybrid working is suitable for their role will be able to participate in hybrid working, providing they have a suitable workstation set up to enable them to operate effectively at home. Colleagues should review the Principles and discuss with their manager to determine if the role is suitable for hybrid working).

For homeworking, colleagues must complete a [home workstation assessment](#), and any areas of concern should be discussed with your line manager for resolution.



### What should be considered when thinking about who may be eligible for hybrid working?

The principles have been developed to support conversations between Directors/Heads of Service, line managers and colleagues around where roles could be carried out. Some roles are wholly campus based (e.g. cleaning and catering) and some are more campus based due to the type of activity that is required such as roles that provide a front facing service to support students and colleagues. The key consideration should always be based on ensuring appropriate service delivery to students, colleagues and other stakeholders whilst considering the most effective place to carry out an activity or role. Additionally, the benefits of all colleagues having regular campus presence is clear for; collaboration, knowledge sharing, team building, feeling part of the University and contributing to the vibrancy of the campuses.

## Hybrid working and other Flexible Working Options

### What is Hybrid Working?

Hybrid working is defined as determining where the most appropriate and effective place is to carry out a role. This is a flexible and non-contractual arrangement agreed between colleagues and line managers, in line with the principles and the agreed parameters as approved locally by the Director/Head of Service.

### What is Flexi-Time?

Flexi-time is a University scheme that allows colleagues to vary their start and finish time of their working day, within set parameters and with agreement from their line manager. It is the responsibility of colleagues and managers to ensure that work is undertaken in a way and at a time that is not detrimental to the service whilst ensuring that the campus location and activity is adequately covered throughout the normal working day.

### Can I work hybrid and still be in the flexi-scheme?


Colleagues can still apply to join the flexi-scheme whether they work in a hybrid way or not, however all requests to participate in the scheme should be in line with university needs and agreed in advance with your line manager.

### My role can't be done in a hybrid way, are there other flexible options available for me?

If your role cannot be done through hybrid working there may be other flexible options such as flexi-time or a formal flexible working request to change your working pattern. You should speak with your line manager in the first instance.

### Does hybrid working mean that I can work at whatever time of day I want?

The focus of hybrid working is on *where* the most appropriate place to carry out a task or role should be and not necessarily *when* you work. However, all colleagues have contracted hours of work when they are expected to work. The University also has a set of core hours (depending on your role and whether or not flexi-time applies to you).



Any flexibility given outwith contracted hours periods should be discussed, in advance with your line manager and if there is an ongoing requirement for increased flexibility, consideration should be given to formalising arrangements through a flexible working request.

#### Do I need to work in a hybrid way?

No, working in a hybrid way is optional. Some people may prefer to work on campus for their full working week. The purpose of hybrid working is to give greater flexibility to determine where the best and most effective place to carry out a role or task is, with the expectation that everyone will have some element of campus-based activity.

#### In what way do academics already work in a hybrid way?

The principles and guidance have been developed with our Professional Service colleagues in mind. As a campus-based university it is important that we have a vibrant campus that attracts students and continues to build an academic community. Our academic colleagues are key to this and as such will be expected to be on campus at times to support and interact with students. Academics already have significant flexibility in determining where they work, (Academic hybrid working principles can be found [here](#)) and these arrangements will continue to be managed locally by line managers.

#### Why can't I have fixed home working days?

The purpose of hybrid working is to ensure flexibility as to where roles and activities can be carried out, this may vary on a daily basis so setting fixed days may impact how effectively work is carried out. There will also be times when face to face meetings are required, which would therefore require on campus presence.


## Hybrid working in Practice

#### How do we know that everyone is being treated consistently, what if my line manager just wants me to be on campus?

The principles have been developed to enable conversations between Directors/Heads of Service, line managers and colleagues to determine where the most appropriate place is to carry out a role or task, so there should be a rationale as to why a particular setting has been chosen to carry out work and the regularity of work at different locations. This should not however be based purely on personal preference or personal commitments, for example there will be times when more on campus presence may be expected/required or changes to normal campus-based days such as for team meetings, face to face contact with students, stakeholders or colleagues. Colleagues are therefore expected to be on campus, if requested due to business needs.

#### What if I disagree with my line manager regarding where work should be carried out?

Conversations should be held in line with the principles and the outcome should ultimately be determined on where the most appropriate place for the work, student/customer interaction or collaboration activity is to be carried out.



The place should not solely be decided on personal preference of either the line manager or the colleague. If you cannot reach agreement, this should be escalated to the Director or Head of Service.

Please note that we are a campus-based university and university campuses continue to be the contractual location.

#### Can my manager ask me to come on campus on a day that I usually work from home?

University campuses will continue to be the contractual location, so if there is a rationale for an on-campus presence, you should make arrangements to support this. There will be no fixed days at home, these days should be determined based on the work tasks required. If a change in previously agreed location is required, as much notice as possible should be given by both managers and colleagues. However, it might not always be possible to provide reasonable notice in some circumstances.

#### What happens if the arrangements we agree within the team for hybrid working don't work – can we change?

Teams should regularly discuss what is and isn't working. The key is to learn and adapt to ensure that it works for colleagues, students, stakeholders and the University.

#### How can we ensure that work is evenly distributed?

Line managers should ensure reasonable workload allocation whether working on campus or remotely.

#### I get less done on campus so why should I come on to campus?

We are a campus-based university and nearly all colleagues have a campus outlined as their contractual place of work. While some colleagues found that they have been more productive while working from home with limited interruptions, there are also colleagues where home working has not been ideal. This may be due to appropriate space and/or personal limitations and preferring to work from campus for wellbeing and social interaction reasons. There are also a number of benefits from working on campus, which include: spending time together as a team, working more effectively with colleagues on projects, ad hoc interactions, opportunities to learn from others, gaining a greater understanding of students, feeling more connected to university life and also creating a greater divide between work and home life.

#### Can I also work in other spaces such as a client's building?

The key to this is whether or not your role can be carried out effectively in the place you are considering, taking into account things such as broadband capability, privacy, and ability to complete the tasks required.

There will be many roles that lend themselves to working in a variety of places outside the campus or home, for most this is likely due to working with clients or external stakeholders where meetings or interactions are best suited at their buildings.



### Can I choose to work abroad instead of within the UK?

The University is not usually able to support requests to work from overseas, even for very short periods of time. Working outside the UK, completing UK based work, is a complex issue due to a number of factors including; tax, employment law legislation, social security, health and safety, immigration etc, which differs between countries.

Very rare exceptions may be agreed, only where there are mutual benefits to both the individual and the University. In these cases specialist in country advice (e.g. local legal advice) will normally be required, which will need to be paid for by the relevant School/Service, to ensure due diligence and compliance. Initial requests should be made via your Dean, Director or Head of Service who should contact [humanresources@napier.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@napier.ac.uk) and request that the circumstances are considered. This is to ensure that the necessary advice is taken and that all requests are considered consistently.

## Meetings and Collaborative Working

### Do I need to come onto campus to attend meetings? Online seems to work best, can I just attend online meetings?

It is reasonable that you may be asked to come onto campus to attend an in-person meeting, even on a day you might not normally be in the University.

For some cases online meetings have worked well and continue to be an effective way to participate in meetings, however this will not be the case in all situations so you will be expected to attend meetings both in-person and online depending on the circumstances.

### If I attend campus to attend a face-to-face meeting on a day that's not my normal day in the office, am I expected to stay all day?

This should be agreed at a local level with your line manager; it is expected that flexibility is demonstrated as it is required as part of our new ways of working. Therefore, if you are asked to attend a face-to-face meeting, and you would like to remain in the office for the full day, as an alternative to one of your normal days, you should discuss and agree this with your line manager, as there may be other operational aspects that need to be considered?

### Does all collaboration need to be done face to face?

We have found that great collaboration can happen both online and face to face, so consideration should be given to what will work best for the piece of work/project and for the people involved.



## Home-based Working

### Will the University pay for the same desk set-up at home as on campus?

Information Services introduced an [End User Device Policy](#), in most cases this is a managed laptop with a headset and carry bag, which can be used both at home and on campus. You can also request for an additional screen, mouse and keyboard for home working. For any additional furniture required you can claim a one-off, non-taxable payment of up to £250, this is to help pay for items such as a chair or desk.

In addition, colleagues are required to complete a [home-working workstation assessment](#) to ensure that the work environment (lighting, temperature, space, etc) and equipment (screen, chair, table, mouse, keyboard, etc) are suitable for the task and the wellbeing of the individual and that the general health and safety hazards (electrical, fire, manual handling, etc) are being addressed in the home workplace as the University has little direct control of this aspect. The following need to be reviewed:


1. The ergonomics of the home-work area/environment - There should be suitable access to the room, the colleague needs to ensure good housekeeping, including adequate lighting, ventilation and heating, remove trailing leads, and not using the floor and high shelves for storage.
2. Work equipment and use– the fixed electrical system you are connecting to is in good condition, the University will provide safe and tested electrical equipment
3. Work process – enough working space and lighting for the task
4. Other aspects -fire arrangements, lone working, taking breaks

Your manager must approve all purchases in advance, and all purchases must be claimed through the expenses module, part of the Finance Business World Agresso System. Claims can be raised within the system and approvals are done online. You can access the module [here](#).

If you have specific disabilities, this limit may be extended further to ensure you have suitable equipment – requests should be discussed with the People Team.

### Can I claim for heating, lighting and broadband expenses while working home?

Your contractual workplace is classed as one of the University campuses. If you opt to work at home and this is agreed in line with the Hybrid Working Principles, as from 06 April 2022 you will be unable to claim tax relief on any household expenses which you might occur whilst working at home. As a result of the pandemic, millions of people were told to work from home, so to help cover the extra costs, HMRC allowed you to claim tax relief over the 2020-2021 and 2021-22 tax years. If you have not already claimed, you can still make claims for both years and HMRC will accept backdated claims for up to four years. You can claim [here](#).



I took an office chair home at the start of the pandemic, can I keep it there for when I work from home, or do I need to bring it back?

If you have taken a chair home you can continue to use this at home if you are working in a hybrid way.

I took IT equipment home at the start of the pandemic, can I keep it there for when I work from home, or do I need to bring it back?

If the equipment you took home is consistent with the [End User Device Policy](#), and your line manager agrees, then it can be retained.

## IT and Office Equipment

What happens if I forget to bring my laptop to work?

Don't worry, there will be desktop devices in some shared areas, such as the library, which can be accessed using your normal login credentials. Any files you have stored centrally, including H:, S:, X: Drive, SharePoint including Teams, or in OneDrive will still be available.

I want to run/host hybrid meetings where some people are online and some on campus, are there rooms available with this technology?

There are rooms that have this capability and they are available to book through [Resource Booker](#).

I will be using a desktop PC on campus but it doesn't have a webcam, microphone and speaker, how can I take part in online meetings if on campus?

The managed laptop service includes a webcam which can be used for online meetings. We will soon be removing the majority of desktops but can enable them with webcams in some circumstances. If you do not have a managed laptop, you can request one [here](#). Headsets can be ordered via the standard equipment request form through [Unidesk](#).


I need to use a phone for my role to make external calls – how can I have one if I've got a shared desk?

We provide all users with software to make and receive calls from their managed laptop using their existing direct dial (office) phone number. This has been installed as standard. You can find more information on how to use the software [here](#).

I have a disability which requires enhanced equipment, what support is available for equipment on campus and at home?

The University will always look to make reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010. However, the University will be unable to provide dual set-ups (at home and on-campus), however as per the [End User Device Policy](#), where colleagues require specialist equipment to complete their role (for example a specialist chair) or where there is a personal need for a dual set-up (linked to a health condition, or reasonable adjustments), this will be discussed and agreed on an individual basis.





If this is something that may be applicable to you, please speak to your line manager about arranging an Occupational Health appointment to assess potential needs that the University will then consider.

#### The open plan office where I am based is too noisy, what can I do to concentrate?

You can order headphones from IS to participate in online meetings when on campus. As long as it does not impact colleague or student service delivery, then you can also listen to music on your personal devices if that helps you to concentrate.

#### What do I do if the IT equipment doesn't work in the office?

If you are able to get online then raise a call through [Unidesk](#). If you are unable to get online then you can call the IS Helpdesk on 0131 455 3000.

#### If my home broadband and/or Wi-Fi services aren't sufficiently reliable or performant to enable me to work effectively – for example I often have drop-outs or interruptions during Teams calls – will the University contribute to the cost of providing a better service?

No, colleagues are responsible for ensuring that their home network connections are adequate for work purposes. You do have the option of working from campus if you are unable or unwilling to get an improved service.

#### If my home broadband and/or Wi-Fi services go down for an extended period of time, e.g., due to a service provider outage, do I still have to work during the period that the service is down?

Yes, if your normal network connection ceases to work and it becomes apparent that the fault isn't temporary i.e. not resolved within approximately 15 minutes, you should make alternative arrangements to allow work to continue e.g. switch to using a mobile broadband connection (if available), perform tasks which don't require a network connection or travel to campus to work from there.

#### Since I now routinely use University IT equipment e.g., laptop or phone at home, can I make it available for use by other members of my household outside of my normal working hours, perhaps instead of buying or replacing personal IT equipment?

No, as per policy all university IT equipment must only be used by an authorised individual who is employed by or contracted to work for the University. It is a breach of policy to allow another person to make use of a user account assigned to you as an individual, which would include allowing them to use your equipment while signed in with your user account. Limited personal use of university IT equipment by an authorised individual is permissible to the extent stipulated in the [University Information Security Policies](#).

## Office and Desk Space

#### Will I have a permanent/fixed desk when working on campus?

Not everyone will have a permanent/fixed desk on campus. Working in a hybrid way gives us more flexibility in how we use space.



### What is the difference between a shared desk area and a generic hot desk area?

Shared desk areas are dedicated areas for specific teams to work from. Generic hot desk areas will be areas created across each campus which anyone can use when they are visiting the campus or need some quieter space. They may also be used as additional desk space if an entire department is on campus at the same time.

### Why are some offices using a shared desk approach instead of everyone being allocated their own desk?

Space is at a premium, working in a hybrid way means that not everyone will be on campus at the same time, which means that not everyone will need a fixed desk to use every day. The move to shared desk areas allows us to better use the space we have available, including increasing learning and teaching spaces for students and creating more collaboration and private spaces for colleagues.

However, if it is appropriate for you to work on campus 100% of time, it may be possible for you to be allocated your own desk, for example where specific systems or equipment is needed. If this is the case, speak to your line manager in the first instance.

### Where can I sit when on other campuses?

Hot desking areas are available to book now on all three campuses, please check [Resource Booker](#) for information and to book.

### What if there is a good reason for me not to share a desk?

These requests and requirements will all be taken into consideration, you should speak to your line manager if you feel you need a fixed desk.

### Who is responsible for ensuring desk areas are cleaned for use?

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure desks are clean. Whilst the cleaning team within Property & Facilities (P&F) will continue to carry out cleaning duties across the campus and office space, everyone should ensure that the desk is ready for the next person using it. To support this, no items other than those in the standard desk set-up items should remain on the desk once it has been used. When using a shared desk, personal items should be removed and taken with you or stored in lockers provided.

### How can I make sure a shared desk/chair is adjusted to my needs, do I need to do a workstation assessment every time I move to a new desk?

No, you do not need to do this for every new desk you sit at. All shared desk areas have a standard set-up and are adjustable to most needs, including an adjustable chair, laptop docking and display equipment.

All colleagues should complete the [online workstation e-learning training module](#) at least once a year.

This will help you to understand how to best adjust your work area to your personal needs. If the online workstation assessment identifies that the standard adjustments are insufficient, or if you have individual circumstances that may require further input from a trained professional, this will be arranged and carried out with input from the University's Occupational Health Service Provider. In the first instance please contact your line manager or [humanresources@napier.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@napier.ac.uk) to discuss.

### Do I need to book a shared team desk?

Desks should be booked via [resource Booker](#). How do I arrange to get my room set up to enable hybrid working?

Agreement should be sought from the appropriate manager and then any specific requests should be made to the Facilities Service Desk by emailing [facilities servicedesk@napier.ac.uk](mailto:facilities servicedesk@napier.ac.uk)

## Storage and Privacy

### Where can I store personal items?

Lockers are available where shared desks or hot desking is used.

### I don't want to carry a laptop (and charger) with me, especially if I'm not going straight home, can I leave it in my locker?

Yes, the lockers can be used to store these types of items securely, but before storing it in your locker do consider where you will be working the following day.

### What if I need other items to help me work effectively that can't be stored in a personal locker e.g., desk light, document holder, footrest, reference material?

The lockers are designed to store items which need to be stored securely. For other items that don't need to be locked away, there will be additional team storage in rooms such as cabinets that can be used.

### Where can I take part in online meetings while on campus if more privacy is needed?

You should use [Resource Booker](#) on the staff intranet to book rooms for this purpose or, if appropriate, you can use a headset provided by IS and participate in the online meeting from your desk.

## Travel and parking

### Coming on campus means I need to travel, can I travel during work time now?

It is expected that colleagues commute to work before their scheduled start time. You should speak to your line manager to make any specific agreements outside this.

I have moved outside of the local area and travel takes much longer now, can I just work from home? We appreciate that some colleagues may have made life choices such as buying a new home or moving to a home further from campus, however the University campuses will still be deemed as your contractual place of work, no roles will be determined as 100% home-based.

### Will I still be expected to travel between campuses for meetings?

Yes, you will be expected to travel to the other campuses. One of the key benefits from our ways of working has been the ability to successfully participate in online meetings, and this will continue. There will be times when meetings take place in-person and on a different campus to the one you are normally based on.

### I am no longer on campus every day, do I still need a parking permit or will booking spaces be available for use?

Temporary permits are still in place and if you wish to park on campus, you must have a permit. These are currently still free of charge. If you have any queries regarding your ability to park on campus, please contact [car.parking@napier.ac.uk](mailto:car.parking@napier.ac.uk)

Parking permits can be requested using the [car park permit form](#).

### Are there showers available on each campus if I cycle into work?

Showers are available to use in the ENgage gym on the Sighthill campus. There are limited shower facilities available at our Merchiston and Craiglockhart campuses. If you require further information contact [environment@napier.ac.uk](mailto:environment@napier.ac.uk).

### Are there charging points for hybrid/electric vehicles on each campus?

There are ten 7kW electric vehicle (EV) charging points available for use at Sighthill campus. You can access the charging points using a [ChargePlace Scotland](#) account card. In the near future, the units will also be able to accept debit and credit cards.

The use and financial charges for all units throughout the University can be found [here](#).


## Hybrid Working & Caring Responsibilities

### I would prefer fixed working arrangements that I can build caring responsibilities around, can I use hybrid working to enable this?

While hybrid working does give greater flexibility and a better balance between campus and at home working, it is not designed to create a set work pattern that aligns with personal circumstances/commitments. There are other policies within the University that may be applicable such as a formal flexible working request.

### Can I care for my children whilst working from home?

It is expected that suitable childcare arrangements are in place during your contractual working hours. During the covid pandemic greater flexibility was seen in relation to looking after children whilst at



home. This was due to schools and childcare providers being closed for long periods. The flexibility of being able to work at home is not to add caring responsibilities, such as school runs, to your working day.

There are a number of flexible working policies and special leave options available to those who may need them. These can be found on the [HR intranet page](#) and you can also speak to your line manager to agree appropriate flexible arrangements.

If there is an occasional requirement for flexibility throughout the working day to support caring responsibilities, these should be agreed with line managers, however with the expectation that contracted hours are carried out at another point in the day.

## Hybrid Working & Sickness Absence

### I feel unwell, should I attend campus?

If you don't feel well enough to attend campus, your absence should be reported in line with the [Attendance Management Policy](#).

### If I'm unwell but feel well enough to work from home, will this be allowed?

Looking after your health and wellbeing is important so you should first assess whether or not you are really fit to work. Working through illness may prolong or make an illness worse so this should be factored in. Depending on your role, if you believe that you are well enough to work from home, please discuss and agree this with your line manager.

### How should I record sickness absence on a day that I'm working from home?

Sickness absence while working from home should be reported in the same way as absence if you were due to work on campus. You should call your line manager to notify them in line with the [Attendance Management Policy](#). Your line manager will then open the relevant absence via HR Connect.