Hybrid Working Guidance

HYBRID WORKING GUIDANCE

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   This framework sets out the University's commitment to hybrid working and the long term plans to embed hybrid working as a University wide operating model in the wider context of the post COVID environment.

1.2   This guidance provides a framework to expand the opportunities to work in a more hybrid way across the University where roles and individual circumstances permit. The long-term plan to create a hybrid working environment will be achieved through informal working practices but within the overarching commitment to ensure there continues to be a vibrant campus with links to the University community.

1.3   There is no "one size fits all" solution to hybrid working and the extent of flexibility will be determined locally between line managers and employees, but the University will continue to develop a smart working culture and principles and ensure its policies support a hybrid working environment.

1.4   All staff working in a hybrid way will be expected to be on campus for a minimum of 2 days per working week (pro rata). For a limited number of roles and if there is a business need, flexibility on these parameters may be needed and should be agreed following discussion with their line manager and Head of Area.

1.4   Line managers will be key in ensuring employees adjust to the concept of what the new operating model looks like, but equally in assisting their teams in understanding the parameters of the approach to hybrid working.

1.5   It is important line managers and colleagues alike recognise the overarching aim of the hybrid working agenda is to ensure it delivers improvements for the University, whilst   providing the potential for more flexibility in both location and working hours for colleagues wherever possible by focussing on output and achievement rather than time management and presenteeism.

2.   **SCOPE**

2.1   This guidance applies to all University employees; the requirements of the business will determine how an individual works.

2.2   The framework around hybrid working is non-contractual and may be updated, amended, or deferred at any time.

3.   **DEFINITIONS**

3.1   **Agile Working**

3.1.1   Agile working is the commonly used umbrella term which refers to line managers and employees working together in a flexible way to achieve the task in hand. The principle behind agile working is to provide opportunities for

staff to work anywhere and/or at any time, subject to the requirements of their roles.

Working in an agile way allows staff, within clearly set parameters, greater scope to work at times and from locations preferrable to both the University and individuals.

3.2   Hybrid Working

3.2.1   Combines working remotely, typically from home, and working on campus. Many of the principles of agile working apply to a hybrid working arrangement.

Hybrid working can be beneficial for staff for a variety of reasons, including work-life balance and well-being. The University seeks to accommodate a hybrid working approach where possible, provided it does not hinder the effective performance of an individual, team or the University and is not to the detriment of the student experience.

Hybrid working could be agreed as part of more agile, informal working arrangements or in conjunction with a more formal flexible working pattern agreed through the University's Flexible Working Policy and Process that can be found here.

3.3   Remote Working

3.3.1   Remote working is the practice of an individual performing the majority of their role from home or another suitable non-University workplace.

Whilst it is one of several forms of operating models it is not expected that any role within the University a solely remote working role. That is, no employee will have their contractual place of work as their home, or other remote location. The University principles for hybrid working allow, by exception, that some staff may be required on campus less frequently than is considered the University norm.

Where it is believed to be a necessary business requirement, such an arrangement shall be discussed with HR and a business case submitted to SLT for approval by the proposing PVC or PS Head of Department, but expectations must be set from the outset that the University can request that an individual come on campus as and when required.

3.4   Flexible Working

3.4.1   Hybrid working is one of a range of potential reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and caring responsibilities practiced by the University. Staff with disabilities who wish to explore alternative working arrangements or who require fixed arrangements should discuss them with their line manager. Hybrid working should not be used as a long-term solution to full time or rigid caring duties, such as childcare or full-time caring responsibilities.

3.4.2   Requests for permanent changes to working hours, times or location of work, fall under the University of Lincoln's Flexible Working Policy that can be found here. These requests, if agreed, have the effect of permanently changing the employee's contract of employment (e.g. a permanent change in hours, or

agreement to work remotely on the same day every week for personal reasons such as childcare arrangements or caring responsibilities). Formal flexible working arrangements are appropriate where a staff member needs a guaranteed commitment that they can work certain hours or days which differ from their existing contractual employment agreement, or where they need to specify a specific day to work from home or another location.

4. HYBRID WORKING STAFF CATEGORISATIONS AND APPROVALS

4.1 The University identifies two categories of worker that are determined locally with expectations of working arrangements agreed between line managers and employees. The categories are broadly defining as follows:

4.1.1 **Campus Workers - staff roles required on campus or a University site for the majority or all of the time.**
These roles need to be carried out on campus, e.g. facilities or technology servicing, the running of gym facilities or the library, lab-based roles, face to face teaching and student support. Campus Workers' regular place of work is the University.

4.1.2 **Hybrid Workers – staff roles where time on campus and time working remotely can be split.**
These roles can be performed through a blend of on and off campus working without detriment to the outputs and service levels. Hybrid workers' regular place of work is the University.

4.2 Individual departments are strongly encouraged to look for ways to work in a more hybrid way, in line with the University wide strategy of moving to a hybrid approach. It is recognised different departments will have different operating requirements and may be able to offer varying degrees of flexibility. This will be dependent on the requirements of the department and individual job roles within the department, and in some cases individual circumstances. Therefore, local arrangements are at the discretion of individual departments provided they adhere to any University or Governmental guidelines in place at the time.

4.3 For hybrid roles, entailing a blended approach of remote and campus-based working, remote working days are to be agreed informally between the line manager and individual. Informal agreements should be made in consultation with the relevant Head of School or Head of Professional Service, to ensure service delivery based on the needs of the role, team, and the University.

4.4 The frequency of when an individual is required to be on campus may change during the academic year to reflect the University needs and cycles of activity. It is important expectations are set with all staff that these are informal arrangements and therefore staff can be asked to attend campus, sometimes at short notice to meet business requirements, or at the request of their line manager.

5. SUITABILITY OF THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

5.1 In order for hybrid working arrangements to be permitted for an individual off campus working environments should be:

- safe and secure
- adequate in terms of space, lighting, layout, conditions and free from distraction.
- Internet connection should be adequate and allow for meetings to take place online with minimal disruption.

6. INTERACTION WITH UNIVERSITY POLICIES

6.1 Interaction with University of Lincoln ICT policy and guidance

6.2 Regardless of mode of working: Campus, Hybrid (or Remote), all staff are required to comply with all University policies, including but not limited to the University Acceptable Use Policy and all other related policies and guidance; University Health and Safety policy and related policies and guidance.

7. NON-TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

7.1 The University provides appropriate working equipment (such as a chair and desk etc.) when working on campus. This provision will be in either the form of a designated work location and workstation or a shared working space or 'hot desk'. The University recognises that a high standard of equipment will need to be available on campus to suit special requirements, for example ergonomic office chairs and adjustable desks. This will be determined by the frequency and regularity of the employee's works on campus and the requirements of their role. If an individual chooses to work from home, it is the individual's responsibility to provide standard office equipment.

7.2 Where specialist equipment is necessary to fulfil a role, new starters and employees should be encouraged to contact Access to Work to ensure adequate equipment for medical and disability requirements are accessible.

8. CONTRACTUAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Contractual obligations and University policies apply to all categories of worker. Whether working remotely or on campus, employees are required to comply with all University policies and procedures, including but not limited to data protection, ICT usage, annual leave, sickness absence etc.

8.2 For both hybrid and campus workers places of work will be the University premises where their role is located unless an alternative workplace is agreed formally through a flexible working request.

9. PERSONAL SECURITY

9.1 Necessary meetings should take place virtually, by phone, or face to face on University premises where possible. For reasons of personal security, face to face work meetings at individuals' homes are not permitted, unless approved in advance by the relevant line manager and relevant safety assessments have been conducted.

9.2   For the employee's own security, it is also recommended that employees who are working off campus should:

     a. not release personal data or information to external contacts, colleagues or students, such as home address or personal telephone number.

     b. ensure colleagues are aware of the remote workers whereabouts and how to contact them.

10.   COVERAGE (INSURANCE) AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

10.1   Individuals working remotely are responsible for assessing the personal implications of home working in respect of domestic insurance, taxation, mortgage, utilities provision and any leasing and landlord agreements.

10.2   The University holds liability insurance that provides cover for legal liabilities of the University and its members of staff whenever they are engaged in University business. These covers apply irrespective of where the activity is taking place if it is authorised by the relevant person at the University.

10.3   All individuals are responsible for the security of the University's property within their control and for avoiding loss. Heads of School, Directors of Professional Services, Managers and remote workers must ensure reasonable steps are taken to ensure

the care, custody and security of University owned assets within their control, in line with the University's Financial Regulations. Laptop computers, which are securely locked away or in a private dwelling/house of an academic or employee have a deductible of £250, which will be payable by the School or Department.

11.   INFORMATION COMPLIANCE

11.1   Regardless of mode of working: All staff are required to comply with data protections laws and University policy and all other related policies and guidance. Information compliance guidance and policies can be found here.

12.   REMOTE WORKING OUTSIDE OF THE UK

12.1   The University at present is not set up to facilitate overseas working on a full-time or permanent basis. There are likely to be tax implications and limitations on the amount of work you can do while physically present in a country outside the UK. Depending on the country and the duration of work there may be visa implications relating to having the right to work and/or reside in a specific country.

12.2   Requests to perform role-related duties and work, through personal choice, either partly or wholly outside the United Kingdom for an extended period, where the University of Lincoln is the main employer should not be allowed. The individual will be responsible for ensuring they are compliant for taxes and associated costs when they intend to work overseas.

12.3   Where it is believed to be a necessary business requirement, such an arrangement shall be discussed with HR and a business case submitted to SLT for approval by the proposing PVC or PS Head of Department prior to any agreement being reached, or any offer of new employment made

13.   ASSOCIATED COSTS/EXPENSES

13.1   The University does not make financial contributions to those working in a hybrid or remote manner for normal household expenses such as heating, lighting, internet and phone lines or council tax costs. However, staff may be able to claim Income Tax relief for employment expenses via HMRC's P87 form.

14.   THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW HYBRID WORKING

14.1   The University reserves the right to end or change informal hybrid working arrangements for business reasons at any time with the individual to fulfil organisational requirements.

14.2   In relevant performance or disciplinary cases, an employee may no longer be permitted to work in a hybrid manner.

14.3   Where the University wishes to change or end contractually (through a formal flexible working request) agreed hybrid working arrangements, these will be (as was previously the case) subject to formal consultation as set out in University policy and by the relevant employment legislation.

15.   TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

15.1   Opportunities will be accessible via a variety of different platforms, including e-learning, virtual sessions, and some face-to-face delivery. The means of platform will be dependent upon the subject and individuals should discuss this at a local level with their line managers.

15.2   The Organisational Development team will advertise training centrally to   support staff around working in an agile environment. This will cover areas such as technology/time management and resilience. The team will continue to develop newly identified requirements to meet the current needs. Further information can be found here.

16.   INCLUSION

16.1   As a community, we unite both on and off campus, to create a respectful and inclusive environment for all while celebrating and supporting inclusivity.