

Agile Working Policy and Procedure

About this Policy

This Agile Working Policy and Procedure provides a framework for consistent and fair practice when considering agile working arrangements. Agile working is designed to help colleagues carry out duties in a more effective way.

This policy applies to colleagues based at our Society support centres (Warwick head office, Hatherton and Waterfront) and Phone Coop. As the Society embeds agile working practices we will consider whether it can be rolled out further and will update colleagues when that happens.

This policy is non-contractual and the Society may amend it at any time.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Agile working	Agile working is the term used by the Society to describe how colleagues can work flexibly from different locations and/or at different times. In terms of location, it may be from an agreed Society premises, hot desking or home working.
Flexible hours	Flexible hours is a form of agile working, where a colleague's contracted hours are worked but with changes to either the days they work and/or their start and finish times.
Flexible working	Flexible working is the term used to describe the way colleagues can permanently change their working pattern, such as moving to part time hours. Flexible working is dealt with under the <u>Society's Flexible Working Policy</u> .
Home working	Home working is the term used to describe when a colleague occasionally uses their home as a base to carry out work from.
Hot desking	A hot desk is a desk that can be used by any colleague to work from as it is not occupied by a fixed colleague. Please note: fixed colleague desks can be used as hot desks if the colleague is not using the desk (e.g. is on annual leave or it is a non-working day).

Policy name:	Agile Working Policy and Procedure	Date of last review:	June 2020
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Who is Responsible for this Policy?

Where this policy applies to a department or team, responsibilities for line managers and colleagues are as follows.

Line Managers

As a line manager, you are required to:

- Ensure that both you and those you manage adhere to the policy.
- Ensure openness and constructiveness in all discussions about agile working with colleagues, remaining focused on the needs of the business and service requirements.
- Consider any health and safety implications when agreeing to agile working arrangements. That includes the need to undertake any assessments such as risk assessments and display screen equipment (DSE) assessments.
- Arrange for the provision of appropriate equipment that is reasonably required by the colleague to ensure they can work securely, effectively and safely when working on an agile basis.
- Ensure colleagues working in an agile way are clear of the expectations of them. You should maintain regular contact, set objectives, monitor performance and take such other steps to ensure effective management.
- Periodically review agile working arrangements for colleagues.
- Consider any information governance and security implications associated with agile working and seek advice as appropriate.
- Ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently.

All Colleagues

As a colleague, you are required to:

- Familiarise yourself with the content of this policy, and with the health and safety policies and procedures relating to agile working.
- Comply with all conditions contained within this policy, and any other policies or guidance referred to within it.
- Ensure your line manager is advised of any changes to agreed agile working arrangements in a timely manner.
- Raise any concerns arising from your agile working arrangements, including those relating to health and safety and data protection to your line manager.
- Ensure openness and constructiveness in all discussions with your line manager about agile working, remaining focused on the needs of the service.

Policy name:	Agile Working Policy and Procedure	Date of last review:	June 2020
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- Ensure the security of the Society's equipment and data complying with the Data Protection Policy and the Acceptable Use of IT Facilities Policy.
- Report the loss or theft of any Society equipment or data or breaches of the Data Protection Policy and/or Data Protection Act in line with relevant policy and as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that you adhere to expected standards of behaviour, wherever you work and leave any hot desks in a clean and tidy manner.
- Ensure that when working agilely, you are contactable via telephone and email and your outlook calendar is open and visible to your line manager and other key stakeholders.
- Ensure that you dress appropriately for the office you are attending.

What is Agile Working?

The Society is committed to modern working practices that enable colleagues to maximise their performance and productivity, while maintaining a positive work life balance. One of the ways we can do that is by putting agile working arrangements in place, where appropriate.

Agile working is based on the concept that work is an activity that we undertake, rather than a place that we go. We also recognise that not all tasks carried out by colleagues have to be done at certain times, which allows us to be more flexible with the hours that some colleagues work.

The Society recognises agile working in two forms, one being "location" and the other being "hours". In total there are three methods of agile working the Society may consider, where appropriate for the role.

Location

1. Working from another agreed Society premise
2. Home working

Please note: the ability to work from home is not a substitute for childcare or similar carer responsibilities. It is the colleague's responsibility to ensure adequate provision is in place, should they choose to work from home.

Hours

3. Flexible hours – working your contracted hours with varying days and/or start and finish times

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Any agreement to work agilely is not a variation of contract. Colleagues are encouraged to remain open to new directions and be continually proactive. As such, any change to hours or location as detailed above, will be agreed on an ad hoc basis between a colleague and their manager.

This policy does not replace the Society's Flexible Working Policy. Agile working is not appropriate for instances where a permanent change of hours or working pattern is required (e.g. for childcare), the Society's Flexible Working Policy should be used in those circumstances.

There are a number of other policies relevant to agile working and should be referred to when working on an agile basis. They include:

- Flexible Working Policy
- Code of Business Conduct Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Acceptable Use of IT Facilities Policy
- Use of Social Networks Policy
- Working Time Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Agile Working Arrangement

Managers and colleagues should discuss and agree the level of agile working that is suited to their role in day to day management. The colleague may request to work agilely and there may also be some circumstances where there is a business need to put in place agile working practices. Where that is the case the line manager should seek advice from their HR Advisor.

The extent of agile working will vary according to individual job roles, however managers must ensure the policy is always applied fairly and consistently. If a colleague requests agile working, then the role will be reviewed to determine whether agile working can be accommodated.

Policy name:	Agile Working Policy and Procedure	Date of last review:	June 2020
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The main things to consider for agile working are:

- The ability for the colleague to perform their role effectively and meet the operational needs of the business.
- The ability to manage productivity.
- The ability to protect the colleague's health, safety and wellbeing.
- The ability to communicate effectively with colleagues.
- Adherence to the DOES values.

Other considerations include:

- Whether this policy is applicable or whether flexible working under the Flexible Working Policy may be more appropriate.
- Whether there are any information governance implications. Where risks are identified, the line manager and colleague should discuss whether these can be adequately mitigated to ensure that the Society continues to comply with any legal or other obligations.

The line manager is responsible for deciding whether a colleague is authorised to undertake a level of agile working or not. Their decision will be final. The manager may seek further support where required (e.g. their line manager or the HR Advisor for their business area) when considering agile working.

Where a colleague's request to work agilely is not agreed, the line manager should confirm this as soon as is reasonably practicable to the colleague. The reasons for not agreeing the request should be provided. The line manager may wish to seek HR advice in such instances.

Agile working is optional and requires agreement from both sides to be put in place. Where a manager and colleague agree a level of agile working, they must:

- Confirm any particulars of the agreement. For example, in relation to management supervision and communication, or other specific arrangements.
- Ensure that all specific expectations of the agile working arrangement are clear to the colleague, including the delivery of objectives whilst working agilely.
- Diarise for regular review of the agile working arrangement to ensure effectiveness. This should be done at least every 3 months.

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Managing Performance

Line managers should agree measurable outcomes with all of their colleagues working on an agile basis and be clear as to what constitutes effectiveness in their service area/role. This should cover areas such as productivity, quality of work, service standards and SLAs. These should be considered and reviewed regularly by line managers.

The most effective way of monitoring the work of an agile working colleague is to concentrate on outputs rather than their hours or presence at base. This requires the clear, realistic and achievable performance targets and objectives.

Both outcomes and behaviours must be monitored in order to understand progress and performance of colleagues. Where concerns regarding a colleague's performance or behaviours are identified, agile working arrangements will be reviewed. In those circumstances, agile working may be withdrawn or suspended while performance issues are addressed.

Maintaining Clear Communications

Having agile working practises in place means colleagues won't always be working at the same place or time as their line manager and other colleagues. This makes effective communications between a colleague and all their key stakeholders even more important.

To aid effective communications, the following should be in place when working on an agile basis:

- Colleagues must have agreed hours of work. Those hours must be documented and followed.
- Colleagues must share their outlook calendar with line manager and colleagues, and keep it updated with their location.
- Managers and colleagues must have shared their telephone numbers so they are contactable at all times during their hours of work.
- Regular discussions regarding workloads and progress are expected between a colleague and their line manager.
- Colleagues must report sickness absence in the usual way as detailed in the [Managing Attendance Policy](#)

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Monitoring and Review

Agile working practices will regularly be monitored by the line manager to ensure that;

- a) the agile working practices continue to meet the operational needs of the business,
- and b) required levels of performance and behaviour are being maintained.

The agile working arrangements must be reviewed by the line manager at least every three months to confirm that the arrangements still suit the needs of the business. This could form part of the standard one to one discussion. Where it no longer meets those needs, the line manager will meet with the colleague to explain what has changed and whether the arrangements can be adapted accordingly or if they will be withdrawn or suspended.

If a colleague is finding that the agile working arrangements are no longer suitable for them they should discuss this with their line manager so the withdrawal of the arrangements can be discussed.

Abuse of an agile working arrangement could lead to these arrangements being terminated immediately and/or disciplinary action being taken against the colleague in accordance with the Society's Disciplinary Policy.

Additional Support

If you require additional support, you should speak to your line manager. Alternatively, you can contact the HR Advisor for your business group or contact the HR advice line on 01926 516469.

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