

## Agile Working Guide

This guidance document sets out the Society housekeeping rules for colleagues to follow upon agreeing with their manager to work on an agile basis. The housekeeping rules are important to ensure colleagues feel comfortable and fully supported when working agilely and to ensure the operational needs of the business continue to be met for the duration of any agile working arrangement.

Please follow the below housekeeping rules when working on an agile basis.

The frequently asked questions (FAQ'S) provide answers to some of the questions that can arise when agile working is being considered or where an arrangement is in place.

**If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your line manager in the first instance.**

If you require any additional support, please contact the following:

- For further support regarding the policy, you can contact the HR Advice line on 01926 516 469, [hr.advice@midcounties.coop](mailto:hr.advice@midcounties.coop) or contact the [HR Advisor](#) for your business group.
- For ICT issues or requests please log an incident/request on [ServiceNow](#).
- For health and safety, please contact the health and safety team on [Health&SafetyTeam@midcounties.coop](mailto:Health&SafetyTeam@midcounties.coop).

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## Housekeeping rules

**Hot desk** – The term ‘hot desk’ refers to a designated shared workspace for any colleague to use at any time. These desks are on a first-come first-serve basis. When working agilely colleagues will be required to use a designated ‘hot desk’. Hot desks must be left clear and returned to the original setting after each use.

**Clear desks** – Hot desk should not contain personal belongings; all desks should be left clear with the exception of any IT equipment. Allocated fixed desks should also be left clear and available to use by other colleagues during periods of absence. No personal belongings should be left in hot desk storage cabinets, key documentation will be stored in organised team storage areas, please discuss and agree any storage requirements with your manager.

**Health and safety** – It is the colleague’s responsibility to work safely and report any hazards they identify. Our Society offices and the home environment will generally be considered low risk office-based work environments. However, colleagues should perform risk assessments on all workstations and provide ergonomic control measures as appropriate. Please read and understand the [Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\) Policy](#), complete a [DSE assessment](#) and take any necessary corrective actions, for example: adjust chair and height of the display screen to a comfortable level. A completed risk assessment should be passed to the line manager and any issues identified actioned.

Colleagues should also familiarise themselves with any local site arrangements for managing health and safety and ensure they are aware of the fire safety arrangements, in the event of a fire or the fire alarm being activated.

**Designated base office** – All colleagues will continue to have a designated base although they may choose to work from an alternative location on an agile basis.

**Working from other Society offices** – When colleagues work from a different Society office, it is expected that they remain there for the duration of the work day, unless in extenuating circumstances with manager approval. It is important that colleagues dress appropriately for the office they are in.

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**Service delivery** – Agile working must not affect the provision of service delivery and managers should have systems in place to maintain suitable office presence as required.

**Open diaries** – It is important when working agilely that colleagues share their diaries with their team and confirm their whereabouts each work day. This should be discussed with the line manager when an agile working arrangement is agreed.

**Out of office hours communication** – Some colleagues may work agilely during out of office hours, therefore may be important to modify your signature to clarify any out of office hours communications. Colleagues must remain contactable during their working hours.

**Working time** – Colleagues must take regular breaks and not exceed reasonable working hours in accordance with the Working Time regulations 1998, please read and adhere to the Society Colleague Break Policy and schedule rest breaks accordingly. Colleague must inform their line manager directly if they have any concerns or consider they may be working excessive hours.

**Data Protection** – Where colleagues work from another agreed premises, it may be necessary to consider space and security of data. Some data may need to be locked away for confidentiality measures and colleagues should be mindful of removing sensitive documentation from the workplace, colleagues should speak to their line manager if they have any concerns, before handling personal data. Colleagues must ensure they adhere to the Society [Data Protection Policy](#) and [Acceptable Use of IT Facilities Policy](#) at all times.

**IT facilities and network availability** – The Society’s IT facilities are accessible 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Where planned maintenance is scheduled, colleagues will be notified in advance and any disruption will be kept to a minimum. To work remotely colleagues are required to connect to the Society network via a VPN. If colleagues need to enable/amend VPN access or if there is any disruption to the network connection, colleagues should log a fault/incident/request on Service Now, the colleague will be issued a service request number and will be communicated with shortly. Where work is not possible, the colleague must speak with their line manager and may be required to attend their place of work or make the time up when the issue has been resolved.

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Colleagues must adhere to the Society's [Acceptable Use of IT Facilities Policy](#) at all times, If you need further information or advice on the Policy, you should discuss this with your Line Manager in the first instance or contact CIT by logging a service request through [ServiceNow](#).

**Homeworking arrangements** – when considering working from home in an agile working arrangement, the colleague must consider any home insurance, mortgage and rent agreement implications. Colleagues should check the details of their insurance to make sure they are covered for work from home, when they work from home regularly.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How do I request agile working?

You do not need to formally apply for agile working. Colleagues should consider how their job can be undertaken in a more agile way where required and discuss this with their manager.

A Manager may also request a colleague work in a more agile way if there is a business need and will discuss this with the colleague before proceeding.

### 2. How long will the arrangement stay in place?

The arrangement will remain under constant review to ensure the agile working practices continue to meet the operational needs of the business and the required levels of performance and behaviour are being maintained. The agile working arrangement may be withdrawn or amended at any time upon after a review discussion between the line manager and colleague.

It is important to remember that an agile working arrangement is not a fixed way of working. Agile working is about working flexibly from different locations and/or, at different times when agreed with your line manager. However flexible working is the term used to describe a permanent change of a colleagues working pattern, for example permanently reducing their hours, or permanently changing their start and finish times etc. Therefore where a colleague wants to request a permanent change to their working pattern, they must follow the [Flexible Working Policy and Procedure](#).

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**3. How will my performance be monitored?**

Local arrangements must be put in place to monitor work output and performance including effective workplace communication and support. A high level of trust is expected between the line manager and the colleague

The manager and colleague will agree any outputs, set objectives and agree a timeline to achieve them. You must remain contactable during their working hours and can therefore agree new outputs or continue to review any objectives set.

**4. Will I have to work from a hot desk in my permanent office location?**

Not necessarily. Agile working may incorporate the use of hot desks, for example, there may be agile workers who may not have a permanent desk for whatever reason and who will use a hot desk in a dedicated area when they are in the office. However, if you have your own desk, we ask that the clear desk housekeeping rule is adhered to, to allow it to be used in your absence.

**5. How do I maintain effective communication and key relationships when working agilely?**

You should:

- Ensure regular two-way communication with your manager and members of your team.
- Attend any key meetings, whether by video conference or in person.
- Engage with Society communications and participate in any appropriate events/ activities or Society projects.

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