



Professional Services New Ways of Working Policy confirmed, TT 2023 onwards

Throughout the New Ways of Working trial phase, the Department has aimed to provide a framework which enables us as members of staff to draw and benefit from the remote working experience. We believe that whilst remote working has proved to be effective in many ways – and has provided valuable flexibility to team members – working together in the office provides enhanced opportunities for collaboration and teamwork and continues to be essential in welcoming new members of staff and providing the support needed for our students and academic staff.

On site working benefits

Building a sense of community, which in turn supports learning from each other, collaboration and teamwork;

Providing excellent service to our key “customers”, students and academic staff.

In addition, working on site is often necessary to undertake key DPIR business, whether it’s recruitment, other in-person meetings, student induction, event management, building management or on-site support for new visitors or staff.

Expectations

In order for on-site working to produce the above benefits, team members need to be engaged with their colleagues and customers as a core part of their work – i.e. being fully accessible to others when in the office as reasonably required.

We would therefore ask members of the professional services team to operate an open-door policy whenever possible (i.e. when not in a meeting or focusing on project work), to encourage in-person communication and communication between teams as much as possible. Any periods when ‘Do Not Disturb’ status is applied on Microsoft Teams or Automatic Replies added to your inbox to facilitate focussed project work should be confirmed with your line-manager beforehand.

Working from home

When working from home, we expect team members to be available via Teams within their normal working hours, so that colleagues can reach them as they would be able to by walking to their office if on-site. Any do not disturb time for project work can be agreed with your line manager.

Arrangements going forward

The trial phase of the New Ways of Working policy has now come to an end and this document confirms that the arrangements in place during the trial phase will remain the same going forward.

The main work location for members of the Professional Services team remains the office (Manor Road Building for core DPIR, Norham Gardens for Reuters).

Full-time professional services staff should work a minimum of 3 days per week in the office, with the ability to be flexible as and when required for operational reasons (i.e. the ability to swap working on site days or to work some additional days on site, and to attend in-person team meetings and events when required).

Part-time professional services staff should work a minimum of 2 days per week in the office, unless their contract is for 60% FTE or less, in which case different arrangements can be put in place in consultation with their line manager., Again, the expectation is for some flexibility to work on-site as and when required.

Some core functions need to ensure presence in the office for operational needs. This means that certain roles require a presence on site daily (Monday-Friday) throughout the day. These include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Operational support: e.g. office management, welcoming visitors, providing health and safety oversight;
- Student and Teaching support: regular in person presence for students and teaching staff.

Teams requiring a daily on site presence should establish a rotation system to maintain daily on site presence; team managers will be responsible for managing the arrangements; and all team members are expected to work together to ensure cover.

Other teams such as HR, Finance, Research and Communications and Events should have some regular office hours, but it is not essential to have an on-site presence Monday to Friday. Managers of these teams should consider operational and team needs, and ensure they are able to work effectively and provide the service required.

In all cases, clear communication of on-site hours is essential (including door signs, email signatures, handouts and handbooks, etc).

Work schedules

All full-time professional services staff are expected to work during **core working hours: 10am-3pm**. Wherever possible, meetings should be arranged within core hours. However, if there are operational needs which require meetings, team anchor days, or site-specific services to be provided outside of these hours, you may be asked to work outside these times and/or adjust your usual work location schedule.

Outside of core hours and operational needs, individual staff should work with their managers to set their working hours to fulfil their FTE.

Working hours and locations should be mutually agreed in advance with line managers and clearly communicated to staff and students (for example in an email signature – templates can be provided by the Communications Team). Do speak to your line manager if you have any concerns about your individual arrangements.



Exceptions

Staff will still be able to make requests for further flexibility through the University flexible working request process. Further information: <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/flexible-working>

Long term

As architectural plans for the refurbishment of the Manor Road Building progress, we will be looking at further opportunities to encourage collaborative working and flexibility by introducing smaller meeting pods, creating more open spaces and supporting colleagues in choosing their working space on the basis of the task being completed on a given day.

Medical symptoms

If you have symptoms of illness (cough, cold etc) that you don't wish to spread, but are well enough to fully work remotely, please get in contact with your line manager at the time that you would usually start work on that day to flag that you would like to work remotely for this reason.

Nina Tomlin, Head of Administration and Finance