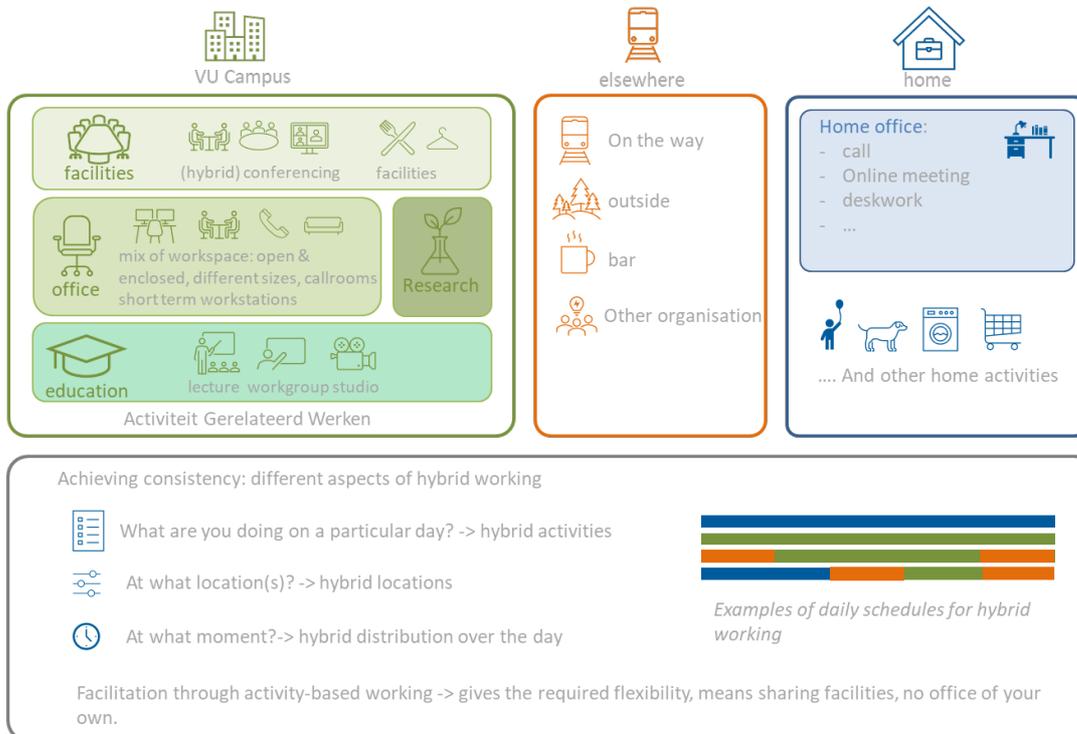


Introduction

Because of the remote working situation of the past year, VU Amsterdam is making the transition to hybrid working. Hybrid working allows you to work at a location that best suits your situation, whereby you can combine working on campus with working from home and/or another location.



When we were forced to work fully from home, all the work activities were performed from the same workspace at home. For some this was the kitchen table, for others a desk in the living room or a study. But returning to campus and making the transition to hybrid working means a return to activity-based working. As was the case pre-Covid, a workspace is chosen on the campus based on the work activity and activities are no longer all performed at the same workspace. One of these activities is holding meetings, in particular the new activity hybrid conferencing. This document explains the main considerations regarding hybrid conferencing at VU Amsterdam.

Hybrid conferencing

Hybrid conferencing is the situation where some of the participants attend in a conference room on campus and some take part online. Several teams have now been able to practise hybrid conferencing. The main challenge turned out to be keeping team members participating from home fully engaged. This requires clear agreements between the participants, as well as new facilities (microphones, screen with camera, online writing tools). It is also important to distinguish between meetings with large teams and smaller groups or bilateral meetings. These different forms require different facilities and, in particular, suitable use of the workspace and agreements with colleagues.

Hybrid conference facilities on the VU Campus

Meetings, video calls and hybrid conferencing are activities that cannot be performed at your regular work desk on the campus. In line with the concept of activity-based working, staff should look for another suitable workspace for these activities, such as a phone booth, a meeting room, or an individual office where the door can be closed. For the purpose of hybrid conferencing, VU Amsterdam is equipping its meeting and conference rooms as quickly as possible with suitable IT and AV facilities, including instructions on using these facilities.

Use of the workspace and facilities

Organising a successful hybrid meeting requires not only the right facilities and systems but also suitable use of the workspace and its amenities. Consequently, important items to consider for hybrid meetings are:

- Choose the right amenities and facilities in the workspace
As already stated, it is important to use a meeting area or conference room for the hybrid meeting and to ensure that other colleagues are not inconvenienced by it. It is therefore not appropriate for all the participants that are present on the campus to take part online in a hybrid meeting from individual desks.
- Visibility of participants
Make sure that everyone taking part in the meeting can be seen clearly. Two ways of doing this are to use an AV screen on which the online participants can be seen or for every participant to use the camera on their laptop while they are together in the meeting room.
- Audibility of participants
Ensure that every participant in the meeting can be heard properly when they are talking. It is important for the participants on the campus that they can all use a single microphone for this purpose.
- How the conferencing equipment works
If you are organising a hybrid meeting, make sure that, especially in the early stages, at least one of the participants on the campus is aware of how the conferencing equipment works, so that the meeting can start on time.

Making agreements

Finally, sound agreements for hybrid meetings are key to their success. You can make standard agreements with your team about hybrid conferencing. In addition, in the case of a meeting with people from outside your team you can make the necessary agreements at the start of the meeting or lay them down in the invitation to the meeting. Important topics in this context are:

- The online meeting culture, such as agreeing how you get all colleagues involved, both online and face to face.
- The required type of meeting: what meetings can be held online, in hybrid form or face to face?
- Meeting documents: how do you share the meeting documents for a hybrid meeting in such a way that all the participants, including those online, have a copy?
- Malfunctions: what should you do in the event of a digital malfunction: will the face-to-face meeting go ahead and how do you inform the absentees?

Sharing questions, comments or experiences

Hybrid working and hybrid conferencing are still under development at VU Amsterdam. The hybrid working programme team is therefore interested in any questions, comments or experiences you may have about hybrid conferencing. Send them by email to: [hybride.werken.hrmam\(5\)vu.nl](mailto:hybride.werken.hrmam(5)vu.nl).