

### *Introduction*

VU Amsterdam facilitates hybrid working for all employees who are able to carry out part of their work at home or another location. Hybrid working allows employees to work at a location that best suits their situation, whereby they can combine work on campus with working from home and/or another location. Hybrid working has the following advantages:

- it meets a need that has been expressed by many VU Amsterdam employees;
- it contributes to sustainability by reducing commutes and facilitating travel outside peak hours;
- it allows the available space on campus to be used more efficiently.

This guideline describes the various agreements on hybrid working, what to take into account, and what support is available. The guideline is intended for both employees and managers. Each unit can establish its own implementation plan based on this guideline. The plan is discussed with the relevant Subcommittee.

Hybrid working at the University is still in its infancy and so this guideline is necessarily temporary and shall apply until no later than 1 September 2022. We invite all employees and managers to experiment with this guideline so that we can work towards a final version that optimally facilitates hybrid working at VU Amsterdam.

#### A. Starting points of hybrid working

1. Hybrid working is based on mutual trust and a professional working relationship between an employee and a manager.
2. Hybrid working is neither a right nor a requirement, but rather an optional solution that is based on agreements reached between the employee and the manager.
3. All agreements made are temporary and can be adapted to changes in the work and the organization in general if required.

#### B. Who is hybrid working for?

1. Employees with an employment contract can make agreements on hybrid working with their manager if all or part of their work can be carried out off campus.
2. This guideline is for employees who structurally want to carry out part of their work from home (in the Netherlands). Occasional working from home is not covered in this guideline.
3. Other employees of VU Amsterdam such as external, hospitality and temporary employees can also discuss the options for hybrid working with their manager or contact person at VU Amsterdam. Please be aware that hybrid working may not be possible or certain facilities or allowances may not apply in individual cases.

#### C. Agreements on hybrid working for employees

1. You will make all agreements on hybrid working with your manager. Ask about any agreements that apply to your unit or department in addition to this guideline.
2. Do not hesitate to express your needs and expectations, both to your manager and your colleagues. Evaluate the agreements regularly and do not hesitate to speak up if the system is not working for you.
3. Discuss the best way to organize working and cooperation in a hybrid situation with your manager and immediate colleagues. It is important to take your team or department and any internal and external business relations or customers into account in the agreements. Read

the [Points for discussion](#) before you discuss hybrid working with your manager and colleagues.

4. There is no University-wide standard minimum number of hours or days that you are required to work on campus. VU Amsterdam aims to offer its employees flexibility in hybrid working within the limits of what is required to be able to work and cooperate effectively within a team. It remains important to work on campus with some regularity in order to maintain a sense of involvement with and commitment to your work, your colleagues, the students and the University in general. How often will depend, among other things, on the type of work you do and how your team cooperates. As a guideline, VU Amsterdam expects you to spend approximately 50% of your working hours on campus. Of course you can deviate from this in consultation with your manager.
5. All agreements will be temporary and will depend on the type of work, the working conditions and your individual situation. It may be necessary to modify the hybrid working agreements if circumstances change, so bear this in mind and prepare for the eventuality that you may be asked to work on campus more frequently (or all the time) at a later date, albeit temporarily.
6. Set all agreements down on paper, evaluate them regularly and change them if necessary, e.g. during your annual interview. You and your manager have a joint responsibility to see to this.
7. Your manager has final say on all hybrid working agreements. It may be that your request cannot be granted, or only partially, in light of the interests of the University. Your manager will discuss this with you. If you and your manager are unable to reach an agreement, please contact the HR advisor of your unit.

#### D. Workplaces

1. On campus you can use flexible shared workplaces for various activities such as meetings, undisturbed working or video conferencing. Ask about the agreements your unit has for using workplaces.
2. Make sure to inform your unit when you will be coming to work so that the available workplaces can be utilized as efficiently as possible.
3. VU Amsterdam can provide various facilities for working from home. Make sure that your home office meets the health and safety requirements; you and the University have a shared responsibility for this. VU Amsterdam provides a maximum allowance for home office facilities which you can use to buy suitable office furniture. Some facilities, such as office chairs, can be borrowed from the University. See the [Checklist for using a computer at home](#) to determine whether your home workplace meets the health and safety requirements. Make use of the [facilities](#) to improve your home office, for example by buying a desk. If you have any doubts or complaints about working from home, contact your manager or the occupational health and safety advisors for [workplace advice](#).
4. If you require additional facilities for your home office because of the type of work you do or because you have a disability, please discuss this with your manager.
5. If you work at another location other than at home or on campus, it is also important to use the [Checklist for using a computer at home](#) to check whether this workplace meets the health and safety requirements. Use a workplace that meets the requirements wherever possible.

6. You can apply for IT facilities such as a laptop and telephone at [askit.vu.nl](https://askit.vu.nl). More information and the conditions for use can be found under 'Digital workstation' and 'Email and telephone facilities'.
7. Wherever your workplace, VU Amsterdam expects you to take due care to protect personal and University data and the ICT infrastructure. You can read more about this in the [Code of conduct for computer and network use](#).

**E. Allowances**

1. You will receive a home working allowance and a commuting allowance based respectively on the number of days you work at home and on campus. All employees also receive an internet allowance. You can find more information about allowances on [VU.nl](https://vu.nl).
2. Facilities for your home office can be purchased under the [Working from home scheme](#).

**F. Health and well-being**

1. Hybrid working may have an effect on your health and well-being. Discuss the benefits and risks of working from home with your manager. Things to be aware of include ensuring a clear distinction between work and home life and increased work pressure. You can find tips for healthy and safe hybrid working at [VU.nl](https://vu.nl). Benefit from the advantages of more flexibility in your daily schedule to get the rest and exercise you need. If hybrid working leads to mental or physical complaints, you should report this immediately to your manager, your HR advisor or the [occupational health physician](#).
2. Just as working on campus, working at home also allows for flexibility in the hours you work. Agree with your manager (and if necessary your colleagues) which hours of the day you will be available.

**G. For managers**

1. VU Amsterdam aims to facilitate hybrid working wherever possible. Take all requests for hybrid working seriously and experiment with new hybrid situations where possible. Set a good example yourself.
2. Hybrid working requires investments in the home office, coordination with other colleagues and extra coordination by the manager. If an employee wants to work from home for only a few hours, discuss whether this still contributes to the objectives of hybrid working (such as sustainability and more efficient deployment of workplaces on campus).
3. Working entirely from home is not covered by this guideline because this amounts to a change of work location. Contact the HR advisor if an employee wishes to work entirely from home.
4. The starting point is that the employee remains in the Netherlands to work from home. Working for VU Amsterdam abroad is only allowed in exceptional cases and with the explicit permission or on the instructions of the manager. Working from abroad can have major consequences for an employee's taxes, social security or health insurance. Always contact the HRM Servicedesk in good time to discuss working abroad.
5. As the manager, you have final say on all hybrid working agreements and you must inform the employee of your decision. If you cannot meet an employee's request and you cannot agree on another solution, the request will be rejected whereby you must ensure to explain the reasons for the rejection to the employee both in a personal conversation and in a

written confirmation. If you or the employee are not happy with the resolution of the request, you should contact your HR advisor. Possible reasons for a rejection are:

- a. The work can only be carried out on campus.
  - b. The requested solution will result in a staffing shortage on campus for the provision of the relevant services.
  - c. The employee's home workplace is not suitable for regularly working from home.
  - d. Hybrid working will have too much of a negative impact on performance, progress, cooperation and/or the interests of the team.
6. If you cannot grant the employee's request to work from home, you can investigate whether another solution is feasible to provide the required flexibility (e.g. more flexibility in working hours on campus).
  7. In some situations, it may be necessary for an employee to work more often (or entirely) on campus temporarily, for example to train a new colleague, to compensate for a staffing shortage or in case of insufficient performance. It is important to make agreements with the employee in these situations as well.
  8. Take the employee's age, personal situation and career phase into account. Newer and younger colleagues may benefit more from working on campus more often (albeit temporarily) to facilitate their induction into the department, the transfer of knowledge, the establishment of a network, etc.
  9. If an employee wants to work from home, enquire whether their home office meets the requirements, whether they have a quiet place to work, etc. using the [Discussion guide for managers](#). The requirements for a healthy and safe home workplace apply from 2 hours of working at a computer per day.