



# Hybrid Working Policy

**Policy owner** UCD Human Resources

**Approval date and body** 29 April 2025 UMT

## 1. Purpose

Hybrid working is a type of flexible working arrangement where employees spend a proportion of their working time on-campus or associated sites (their contractual place of work) and some of their working time from an agreed remote working location.

Where an employee and role are deemed eligible for hybrid working in accordance with this policy and the request has been approved (in accordance with section 4.3), it is expected that employees will work a minimum of three days on-campus per week.

The facility to request hybrid working is being made available to support UCD's ambition to be an 'Employer and University of Choice' and seeks to maximise benefits for work-life balance, health, wellbeing and sustainability while ensuring the successful delivery of all aspects of the University's mission and the optimisation of our vibrant campus experience.

This policy forms part of a wider range of documentation to support hybrid working, such as Criteria and Eligibility Guidelines for Hybrid Working, Hybrid Working Requests Procedure and Health and Safety guidance (which can be found on the UCD SIRC website).

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2023 and the WRC Code of Practice on the Right to Request Remote Working.

## 2. Scope

### 2.1 Eligibility for Hybrid Working Arrangements

- As UCD is a campus-based University, there are many roles in the University that will not be suitable for hybrid working.
- It is acknowledged that faculty members have always had the option to carry out certain duties by way of hybrid working arrangements. This is due to the nature of their work, which may involve field work, access to research facilities and other

off-site activities. These working arrangements pre-date the UCD Hybrid Working Trial and will continue to apply, with Heads of School agreeing working arrangements with faculty members in line with the needs of their School, workload model and the key principles in section 4.1.2.

- Faculty wishing to continue to avail of hybrid working arrangements should submit the online request form via the online portal to comply with the health and safety provisions (in line with section 5.4) and outline their remote work location.
- All other employees who wish to avail of hybrid working must request it via the online portal (subject to section 4.3).
- There is no service requirement to request a hybrid working arrangement (subject to section 2.4)
- Heads of School/Unit/Line managers can approve hybrid working requests (where eligible) for a minimum of three days per week on-campus.
- Approved hybrid working requests, while normally continuous, are not an indefinite arrangement. Hybrid working arrangements should be considered as part of annual staff planning or more frequently as required, to ensure that the arrangement is working successfully for both the University and the employee.

## **2.2 Probation**

Employees on probation may be considered for hybrid working. However, the probationary period is designed to integrate the new employee into the University and their role, and their manager may not be able to facilitate hybrid working during some periods due to:

- The employee having to avail of additional supports to help them settle into their new role with peers and colleagues.
- Assisting with adapting to their new role and work environment.
- Facilitating ongoing engagement, team bonding and collaboration with managers and with team members.
- Facilitating in person meetings and training where required and/or to assist with the assessment of the probationer's performance.

## **2.3 Terms and Conditions of Employment**

There will be no change to terms and conditions of employment as part of a hybrid working arrangement, except that the employee will be facilitated to work remotely as agreed with their direct manager and in line with the key principles (section 4.1).

## **2.4. Exceptional Requests**

Any request for a remote working arrangement, whether full or partial, that deviates from the approved University hybrid working policy (i.e. minimum of three days on-campus per week) are categorised as an 'exceptional request for remote work'.

All employees have the right to make a statutory request for remote working in accordance with the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2023 and the WRC Code of Practice (Right to Request Remote Work).

There is no automatic right to remote working and consideration is on a case-by-case basis approved only in exceptional circumstances, in line with the principles outlined in the policy.

Approval of the direct line manager and authorisation by Head of School/Unit and a relevant UMT member is required.

Where exceptional requests for remote work are approved, six months' service is required before the working arrangement can commence.

## **2.5 Reasonable Accommodation**

Recommendations for hybrid or fully remote working arrangements based on reasonable accommodation for an employee with a disability is outside the scope of this policy and will be dealt with under the reasonable accommodation and disability support process.

## **3. Definitions**

### **3.1 Hybrid Working**

Hybrid working is a type of flexible working arrangement where employees spend a proportion of their working time on-campus or associated sites (their contractual place of work) and some of their working time from an agreed remote working location.

### **3.2 Remote Working Location**

In the context of UCD, the remote working location will be a location other than the campus and associated sites, typically the employee's home, based on an expressed agreement between the employee and their manager. The University campuses and associated work sites/locations will continue to be the primary workplace for all employees.

### **3.3 Approvers**

Members of UMT, Heads of School/Unit/Line Managers or nominees have the authority to review and consider hybrid working requests and arrangements on an ongoing basis.

### **3.4 Faculty**

Faculty are defined as employees on Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor and Full Professor pay scales and contribute to all three criteria;

- Research, Scholarship and Innovation
- Teaching and Learning
- Leadership and Contribution

## **4. Principles**

### **4.1 Key principles**

#### **4.1.1 Approval**

- UCD is a campus-based university that prioritises the delivery of outstanding education and research and a vibrant student, faculty and staff community experience.
- Hybrid working must not negatively impact the delivery of an individual's role. The needs and objectives of the University are given priority over requests for hybrid working, given the critical national and global mission universities fulfil for society. Accordingly, many roles within the University will not be suitable for hybrid working.
- Student-facing services on-campus should be open and available for all of the working week.
- In cases where hybrid working arrangements are approved, in order to protect all aspects of on-campus vibrancy, including the student experience, availability of services, on-the-job learning, building a positive culture and sharing of ideas, employees will spend more of their time working on-campus than working remotely.
- Where hybrid working is approved for a full-time role, the portion of time spent working on-campus will be a minimum of three days per week (subject to section 4.2 below). There will be an appropriate pro-rata amount for those working part time.
- Approvers and employees requesting hybrid working are required to engage constructively to consider how this working arrangement might be implemented, mindful of university, team and individual roles and allied with the provision of excellent services in the context of the principles set out in this policy.
- Requests for hybrid working will be submitted and considered in a transparent environment of mutual trust and accountability for individual roles and responsibilities.
- In situations where a request for hybrid working cannot be approved, the employee will be provided with the rationale for the decision.

#### **4.1.2 Implementation**

- Where an employee is engaged in hybrid working, there is the potential that their current campus space may change or may be used by others in support of optimising space efficiency.
- It is expected that employees engaging in hybrid working will attend the campus when required to do so with reasonable notice provided.
- Employees will be supported with appropriate digital technology to be successful in achieving an integrated working environment. Continuous technological advancements will be embraced and utilised to support connectivity whether working on-campus or remotely.
- While working off-campus as part of a hybrid arrangement, employees will be available by phone / email throughout working hours just as if they were working on-campus.
- All employees will adhere to the UCD core meeting hours policy and remain cognisant of the right to disconnect outside working hours.
- Employees must be within a reasonable commutable distance of campus.
- All University policies, procedures and statutes apply during hybrid working arrangements. These policies specify legislative and regulatory requirements, along with University norms and expectations.
- The focus of all involved in a hybrid working arrangement will be on the delivery of excellent work outputs in an environment of trust, accountability, collaboration and community spirit, regardless of physical location.
- Employees approved for hybrid working will be treated equally in an inclusive work environment, with no detriment attached to working flexibly in this manner.
- This policy will be kept under review, taking into account organisational learnings and relevant external developments, and may be subject to change.

## 4.2 Types of Hybrid Working Arrangements

There is no 'one way' for hybrid working arrangements. The working arrangement should be discussed and agreed between the individual and their line manager in the context of service needs and role requirements. The operational needs of the School or Unit will be taken into consideration during the assessment of the request and the level of on-campus requirements will depend on each particular area of work.

Approvers have the discretion to consider hybrid working requests over the full calendar year in order to allow flexibility for some roles.

A hybrid working arrangement may include the following;

- Specific rostered days on-campus each week as required for the School or Unit to deliver effectively for the University community.
- Some roles are not rostered and flexibility is required. These roles will operate a minimum of three days on-campus per week and there may be flexibility around the specific days depending on the requirements of the role.
- Services where full on-campus presence is required only at certain times of the year may be suitable for hybrid working outside those times. For those roles, off-peak

hybrid working may be considered by the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager depending on the requirements of the School or Unit.

- Cross cover as required to ensure delivery of on-campus services, e.g. to cover periods of annual leave or unforeseen sick leave that impact the team. This collegiality and flexibility will benefit all colleagues in the round.

### **4.3 Considering Requests for Hybrid Working**

Requests will be considered having regard to:

- University needs;
- Student needs;
- Role suitability;
- Employee needs and suitability;
- Designated workspace requirements; and
- The requirements of the WRC Code of Practice (Right to Request Remote Work).

The requests will be considered in an objective, fair and reasonable manner in accordance with the key principles and Criteria and Eligibility Guidelines, which will take into account the suitability of the role for hybrid working as well as the employee suitability for a hybrid arrangement.

### **4.4 Changes to a Hybrid Working Arrangement**

The employee and the approver can agree (subject to section 2.4) in writing a change to an agreed working arrangement, before or after it has started, which can include:

- Postponing the arrangement or part of it to an agreed date;
- Curtailing the period of the arrangement; or
- Varying the arrangement in an agreed way.

### **4.5 Continuing Assessment of Suitability for Hybrid Working**

Hybrid working arrangements should be considered as part of annual staff planning or more frequently as required, to ensure that the arrangement is working successfully for both the University and the employee.

If performance issues arise, these will be managed in accordance with established University procedures for such matters.

### **4.6 Termination of Arrangements**

The approver can terminate an approved hybrid working arrangement in certain circumstances. The termination process is outlined in the Criteria and Eligibility Guidelines for Hybrid Working Requests.

In any case, fair process will prevail and reasonable notice of termination of the working arrangement will be given. The reasons why the working arrangement will be terminated will be provided in writing and the employee will have the opportunity to respond before a decision is made to proceed.

Where possible, the approver will engage with the employee to consider whether any alternative arrangements other than termination of the hybrid working arrangement may be feasible depending on the circumstances. If the decision is to proceed with termination of the arrangement, the employee must revert to their primary workplace by the date stated in the notice.

Failure to adhere to the notice issued may result in disciplinary action. The employee can also request a termination of the hybrid working arrangement by writing to their line manager with the proposed date to revert to their primary workplace.

#### **4.7 Moving to a New Role**

When an employee moves to a new role, they do not retain their current hybrid working arrangement and a new request will need to be considered by the relevant approver. This is to ensure optimum service levels are maintained whilst supporting the capacity for hybrid working for team members.

#### **4.8 Abuse of Hybrid Working Arrangement**

All employees must continue to meet all the requirements of their role while they are working remotely. If there are reasonable grounds for believing an employee is not fulfilling all the requirements of their role, they may be given reasonable notice of termination of the hybrid working arrangement setting out the reasons for termination and specifying the date on which the employee must return to on-campus working.

The process is outlined in the Eligibility and Criteria Guidelines for Hybrid Working document.

#### **4.9 Penalisation**

Employees will not be penalised for making a request for hybrid working and/or requesting to return to a previous working arrangement.

#### **4.10 Raising Concerns**

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Concerns in relation to hybrid working requests or the consideration of the request, should in the first instance be discussed with the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager, with the support of the HR Partner, where necessary.

If the matter is not resolved, the UCD Grievance Policy and Procedure may be utilised.

#### **4.11 Record Keeping**

Records for hybrid working will be kept for a period of three years from the commencement of the arrangement and will include the following information:

- the period of employment of each employee,
- the dates on which each employee was on an approved hybrid working arrangement, and
- the number of times each employee was on an approved hybrid working arrangement.

In cases where the hybrid working arrangement has been approved and is continuous, the records will be kept for the duration of the approved working arrangement.

Copies of termination notices will be kept for a period of 12 months.

Hybrid working requests that have not been approved will be kept for a period of 12 months.

The retention period can be increased where it is deemed appropriate and necessary to keep a record of the hybrid working arrangement, request or termination notice for a longer period than stated.

## **5. Roles and responsibilities**

### **5.1 UMT and Extended Leadership Group**

- Oversee the successful implementation and maintenance of hybrid working as one form of flexible working practice in UCD, consistent with the values of the University.
- Undertake a periodic (annual) review of the effectiveness of the policy and its application so that it remains in support of the Key Principles (4.1).

### **5.2 Heads of School/Units/Line Managers**

- Consider requests fairly and in accordance with the Criteria and Eligibility Guidelines for Hybrid Working Requests, WRC Code of Practice (Right to Request Remote Work) and support documentation.
- Provide clear procedures and guidance to hybrid workers to ensure effective performance management and to proactively address performance related issues as they arise.

- Raise and address issues promptly where the hybrid arrangement is not working as desired.
- Ensure an inclusive working environment between on-campus workers
- Consider fairly, requests for equipment while working remotely, noting that it will not always be possible to provide equipment in dual locations. In such cases, the campus or associated location will be the primary place of work where the equipment is provided.
- Consider the continuing suitability of hybrid working arrangements as part of annual staff planning.
- Observe the shared responsibility of employees and managers to build and sustain trust and accountability, whilst ensuring the delivery of excellent work outputs for the overall good of their role, team and University.
- Proactively manage office space to secure space efficiencies from hybrid working in accordance with UCD's Sustainability Strategy.
- Seek advice and support from UCD HR, as necessary.

### 5.3 Human Resources

- Provide support to employees seeking to make a hybrid working request.
- Provide guidance and advice to managers considering hybrid working requests which should be done in compliance with this policy, the Code of Practice (Right to Request Remote Work) and the supporting documentation.
- Provide impartial advice based on the principles of the policy, relevant legislation, and EDI principles.

### 5.4 Employees

- Engage proactively with their line manager in relation to hybrid working requests.
- Identify a remote working location which is suitable to perform their duties while also meeting statutory health and safety requirements.
- Take reasonable care to protect their own safety and health and that of any other person who may be affected by their actions at work. This extends to when colleagues are engaged in homeworking and similar arrangements.
- Complete the necessary safety training, read the relevant safety guidance materials, and complete the homeworking risk assessment accurately.
- Ensure good quality, reliable internet connection when working remotely.
- Confirm that the workspace facilitates compliance with GDPR, data security and applicable confidentiality standards. It is the duty of everyone in UCD who processes personal data on behalf of UCD to understand and apply data protection.
- Familiarise themselves with the provisions of this policy and the obligations set out in the supporting documentation.

- Observe the shared responsibility of employees and managers to build and sustain trust and accountability, whilst ensuring the delivery of excellent work outputs for the overall good of their role, team and University.
- Perform their role and responsibilities to the very best of their ability regardless of changes in working location and working patterns as may be agreed for the duration of any arrangement.

### 5.5 Related Documents

- Criteria and Eligibility Guidelines for Hybrid Working Requests.
- Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2023.
- WRC Code of Practice, The Right to Request Remote Work.

## 6 Version history

Version	Date	Description	Author
1	1 September 2025	Introduction of Hybrid Working Policy	UCD HR