Blended working guidelines

Introduction

Our aim is to have a blended and flexible approach to working that ensures everyone stays connected, is supported by their teams and digital tools, where everyone feels included and where staff wellbeing, work life balance, business needs, organisational culture, quality and impact are the focus.

This policy aims to:

* ensure a fair and equitable experience of working for SCVO
* safeguard the health, safety and mental wellbeing of staff
* ensure that we are all working within GDPR and cyber security guidelines
* support the achievement of SCVO’s strategic objectives
* set out what you can expect from SCVO, and what your responsibilities are.

Blended and flexible working

SCVO supports blended and flexible working.

Blended working at SCVO means a mix of home working, office working and working off-site in another location.

Flexible working means you can vary your working hours, using flexitime or TOIL or by requesting a fixed change to your work hours, location and pattern.

Some jobs are office-based by design (for example Facilities roles), and some provide a service within set hours. Flexible working options are still available to staff in these roles, within the scope of the service.

Blended and flexible working can be agreed with your line manager within the following parameters:

Where you work

Whether you are working from home, an SCVO office or another location the following applies:

* You have an assigned office base
* You agree a blend of home/office/other off-site work location with your team(s) and line manager
* You commit to joining staff away days, team meetings and 1:1 meetings in person (how often – to be agreed in your team)
* You have shared responsibility with SCVO for your Health & Safety
* You keep your Outlook calendar up to date with your work location
* You do not work for another employer during your SCVO work time
* You have childcare or other care arrangements in place
* Working from another location other than your regular place of work including abroad as a short-term arrangement will be agreed in advance with your line manager and HR. Working from abroad needs to be approved by your line manager and our Chief Executive. See our working from abroad policy for more information
* Any permanent change to your work location will be agreed in a flexible working request (for example if you plan to relocate to another area).

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| Q: What’s the difference between blended working and changes agreed with a flexible working request?  A: Blended working gives you and your team flexibility to vary your work location within the above parameters, on a flexible, changeable basis. For example, in a week where you have no team meetings, you might opt to work from home every day. The following week, if you want to see colleagues face to face, have a team meeting, or need a change of scenery, you choose to work from the office.  A flexible working request allows you to agree set arrangements, protected and confirmed in your terms of conditions of employment, for example agreeing that you do not work on Wednesday afternoons. |

When you work

The following applies to when you carry out your work:

* The regular working week is Monday to Friday
* You commit to joining staff away days, team meetings and 1:1 meetings in person (how often – to be agreed in teams)
* You keep your Outlook calendar up to date with your work times and non-working times
* You use annual leave/TOIL or flexitime if you need to take time off during your working day/week
* You follow SCVO’s absence reporting procedure if you are unwell
* Permanent changes to working hours, working days will be requested following SCVO’s flexible working process.
* Teams will agree core times when team members are expected to be available to join meetings and answer calls, emails and other communications. An example of core hours is 10:00 to 12:00 and 14:00 to 16:00.

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| Q: What is the difference between working flexitime and a work pattern agreed in a flexible working request?  A: Flexitime means you can vary your work pattern within the above parameters, on a flexible, changeable basis. For example, if you have an appointment or just want to finish work early, you can start early and finish early using flexitime.  A flexible working request allows you to agree set arrangements, less changeable than flexitime arrangements. For example, reducing your working hours to part-time, or having set days or times off during the week when you are not available to work and not contactable.  Example 1 – Nonworking day agreed in a flexible working request  Danny wants to change his work pattern, he has caring responsibilities on Wednesday afternoons. Danny makes a flexible working request to change his work pattern and finish work at 12:00 every Wednesday. Danny’s manager, following some consideration and consultation with the wider team is happy to agree. HR sends Danny an amendment to his terms and conditions that confirms he does not work on Wednesday afternoons. Danny feels reassured that everyone understands that he doesn’t work on Wednesday afternoons.  Example 2 - flexitime  Charlotte volunteers for an after-school club, she is a trustee on their board. They meet on the last Thursday of each month at 4:30 pm during term time. On board meeting days, Charlotte starts work at 8:30 and finishes at 4:00 pm (with a 30-minute lunch). When Charlotte has an SCVO commitment that she can’t move, she sends her apologies to the board and does not attend the meeting. Charlotte is also training to do a marathon and depending on the weather (she is a fair-weather runner!) likes to run at lunchtime. Working around her work commitments, Charlotte takes a two-hour lunch break when she feels the need to have a longer run. Charlotte appreciates the flexibility flexitime gives her. She likes to vary her work pattern on a daily basis, fitting in her other commitments around her work for SCVO. |

How we work

SCVO’s values

We hope SCVO is a great place to work, with good terms and conditions and a welcoming, positive culture where people feel they can be their best selves. We aim to follow the principles of Fair Work. You can find out more about what matters to us as an employer in our People Strategy. Our **values** are:

* Accountable and committed
* Responsive
* Supportive
* Progressive
* Bold

We live our values as we go about our work, with each other and with people outside SCVO. Our full values and behaviours statement is available on SharePoint.

Communication

Regular communication with your line manager, team members and colleagues is key to successful blended working and is also important for your mental health and wellbeing. Your line manager will agree with you how often you will meet by phone, video call and in face-to-face meetings. You are required wherever possible to join all-staff events and Town Hall meetings and to stay up to date with all-staff communications. SCVO will provide you with the communication tools you need to do your job and to stay in contact with your line manager, team and colleagues.

Team meetings

How often you meet as a team, in person and in virtual meetings, will be agreed with your team and line manager. As we transition to working more of a blend of home and office working, we will support you to find a balance that works for you, your team and SCVO as a whole.

Our collective aim is to have a blended and flexible approach to working that ensures everyone:

* stays connected
* is supported by their teams and digital tools
* feels included.

With a focus on:

* your wellbeing
* your work life balance
* SCVO’s business needs
* organisational culture
* the quality and impact of your work.

Some jobs are office-based by design and others provide a service within set hours. Flexible working options are available to staff in these roles within the scope of the service you provide.

Health and safety

Wherever you work, you have a duty to ensure that you work in a safe and responsible manner and follow all health and safety guidance issued by SCVO.

If you are not well enough to work, you will report your absence to your line manager following the absence reporting procedure. Do not come into the office if you have symptoms of covid.

You are responsible for reporting equipment faults to the IT helpdesk or facilities helpdesk.

SCVO, with your support, will ensure that:

* All equipment is safe when you receive it
* Information and training on the safe use of equipment, including display screen equipment (DSE) is available to you
* DSE and H&S assessments are carried out annually

You must complete the following on an annual basis:

* Health and safety for home workers training and assessment
* Display screen equipment (DSE) training and assessment

New starters must complete the Health and Safety induction for home and office working, including the above training.

You will agree to a home visit for Health and Safety reasons, for example to carry out an in person DSE assessment, if we have concerns about your health and safety.

We will provide you with specialist equipment, within reason, to work safely if you have a physical injury or condition or if you are at risk of developing a physical injury confirmed by specialist DSE assessment or an occupational health assessment.

If you have any workstation related aches or pains, please report this to your line manager and to [facilities@scvo.scot](mailto:facilities@scvo.scot). A member of the facilities team will support you to complete a DSE assessment and work with you to decide if you need any additional equipment or a specialist assessment.

Please report any work-related accidents or ‘near misses’, at home or in the office, to your line manager and [facilities@scvo.scot](mailto:facilities@scvo.scot). All workplace accidents and ‘near misses’ are recorded and reported to the Health and Safety Committee.

If you have any concerns about your Health and Safety, or the Health and Safety of your colleagues, you have a duty to report this to [facilities@scvo.scot](mailto:facilities@scvo.scot).

Security

You are responsible for keeping all communication, documents and information associated with your work for SCVO secure wherever you work.

Specifically, you have a duty to:

* use a unique password for your work computer and any other digital devices
* keep sensitive and/or confidential documentation secure at all times
* complete cyber security training every year
* complete GDPR training every year
* only use approved systems and software in line with the IT and Security policy.

Computers and other equipment provided by SCVO should be used for work-related purposes only.

You must make sure your screen is not overlooked and that calls can’t be overheard if you are working on something confidential or sensitive. You should not work on anything sensitive on public or insecure wifi. You should also be mindful of others around you.

Equipment and materials

SCVO will provide the equipment and materials necessary for your work. You must make sure that proper care is taken of equipment and materials.

For home working we provide:

* A laptop with access to SCVO systems and software

We provide the following on request for home working:

* An office chair
* A small desk
* An additional screen / monitor
* Laptop riser
* Keyboard and mouse

All equipment will be selected by SCVO, including chairs and desks, and will be delivered to your home. We will only provide you with a desk if you have no other suitable surface to work from.

We will provide you with specialist equipment not covered above, within reason, to work safely if you have a physical injury or condition (or if you are at risk of developing a physical injury) confirmed by a specialist DSE assessment or an occupational health assessment.

Use <https://forms.office.com/r/Bqp4sF6iyp> to request a chair or desk.  Once submitted your request will be reviewed, if approved, please allow up to 30 days for delivery.

Contact [ithelpdesk@scvo.org.uk](mailto:ithelpdesk@scvo.org.uk) to request a screen/monitor, laptop riser, docking station, keyboard or mouse.

Only approved systems (Office 365/Salesforce) should be used for SCVO core business, failure to do may result in you breaching our Data Security Policy.

For office working we provide:

Our offices are set up with desks, docking stations and monitors. Other equipment is available on request, see the list above. We have a clear desk policy which means you must clear your desk at the end of the day. We provide lockers for you to store your equipment i.e. your keyboard, mouse, and any other equipment.

Please report equipment faults to the IT helpdesk or facilities helpdesk.

If your employment ends, or you are planning long term leave (e.g. maternity leave), you will return your laptop/desktop and any other equipment on request to SCVO. We will arrange to visit your home at an agreed time to collect the equipment or send a courier to collect the equipment. When you return from long-term leave, you will be re-issued with the equipment you need.

Telephone and internet accounts

You will cover the cost for all telephone and internet connections in your home.

Stationery and postage

Keep your receipts for any stationery purchased and any items posted in the course of your work and reclaim these costs once a month using our expenses claim procedure. You will limit your use of paper, for environmental and confidentiality reasons wherever you work.

Home working expenses

No contribution will be made by SCVO towards normal household expenses attached to home working, such as heating, lighting or council tax costs.

Insurance

You are responsible for checking that all home and contents insurance policies provide adequate cover for working from home.

Travel to work

Travelling to your base office is on your own time and at your own expense.

Travel time and costs from your home to other locations can be claimed for distances more than the distance to your base office. For example, if you live three miles from your base office then travel expenses are not claimable in any direction within a three-mile radius of your home.

Travel and subsistence expenses

Our Travel and expenses policy is under review

Booking a desk

You must book a desk in advance of arriving at an SCVO office using our [desk booking system](https://dashboard.robinpowered.com/scvo/office?duration=30&capacity=0&locations=7852,7852&levels=974&end=2021-10-20T23:00:00Z)

To find out more about booking a desk, here are our [**Robin desk booking system instructions**](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/employee/Technology%20Guides/Room%20Booking%20System/Booking%20a%20Desk%20with%20Robin%202021%20Guide.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=eRQX2K)[.](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:p:/r/employee/Technology%20Guides/Room%20Booking%20System/Room%20Booking.pptx?d=wd1da3edbe17141489829ebace0d17faa&csf=1&web=1&e=Ol77Go)

Flexible working requests

You can agree a permanent or longer-term change to your terms and conditions of employment by making a flexible working request. This includes changes to:

* Your work location
* The number of hours you work
* Your work pattern

See our [Flexible working policy](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/employee/Employee%20Policies/Flexible%20working%20requests.doc?d=w3400f4fdf11a44a88859aa39c4fcb9f0&csf=1&web=1&e=mlRMgY) for more details.

Links to other policies

[Flexitime and TOIL](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/employee/Employee%20Policies/Flexitime%20and%20TOIL%20Policy.docx?d=wcad64da33ed14d3189a5f29eee7bbd04&csf=1&web=1&e=2CloKV)

[H&S current](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/employee/Employee%20Policies/Health%20and%20Safety.doc?d=w747320b99fdf41b2b2cf52fffb1710a8&csf=1&web=1&e=wLcOxs)

[IT Policy](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/employee/Employee%20Policies/IT.doc?d=wd32e2132e8214418b9988c9489e118ff&csf=1&web=1&e=9Rphqt)

[Absence Reporting](https://scvo.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/employee/Employee%20Policies/Sickness%20Absence%20Reporting.docx?d=w2562608ab10449c2b23b0f659c64637f&csf=1&web=1&e=F4gn2d)

A review of blended working will take place in 2022. This guidance does not change or form part of your terms and conditions of employment. The guidance can be updated and changed.

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| Date of issue/update | New - October 2021 |
| Policy owner | HR |
| Approved by | Management team, 23 September 2021 |