



Hybrid Working Policy

Purpose:	At Headlam, we are embracing innovative working practices in order to create a high trust, high performance culture. Hybrid working gives colleagues and their Line Managers the flexibility to determine the best ways of working for them in terms of working hours and location, whilst ensuring everyone feels connected and part of a team, no matter when or where they're working.
Scope:	This Policy is applicable to all colleagues, whilst recognising that flexible working opportunities will vary depending on job role.
Group or UK Only:	UK Only
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Introduction

Hybrid working is the ability for a colleague and their Line Manager to flex the colleague's location and hours of work to best meet the needs of both them and the business. We recognise that Hybrid working will be different for different individuals, different job roles and different teams – and so aren't prescribing a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, colleagues are empowered to work remotely on occasion based on the key principles set out within this policy.

Eligibility

All hybrid working needs to be discussed and agreed in advance by the colleague's Line Manager. This will allow Line Managers to consider any customer and team commitments, and ensure the colleague receives adequate managerial support whilst working remotely.

Colleagues should note that their Line Manager will only be able to agree hybrid working in the event that:

- The colleague is in a role that is suitable for hybrid working. Due to the nature of our business, it is unlikely that we will be in a position to accommodate hybrid working requests for the majority of our colleagues in the following departments:
 - Warehouse
 - Transport
 - Trade Counters
 - Customer Services
- Each office/team has sufficient resource to remain operational five days a week during normal office hours (these hours may be different in parts of the business)
- The colleague is performing satisfactorily in their role
- The colleague is displaying our Company values, with good self-motivation, self-discipline and time management
- The colleague has access to all the facilities, equipment and files/information they need to perform their role satisfactorily whilst away from their normal workplace

Frequency

Eligible colleagues can work remotely any day of the week, but we ask that they attend their permanent contractual location of work at least two to three times per week as a general rule.

If a colleague wishes to request permanent or formal hybrid working arrangements, or if they wish to regularly work remotely more than two to three days per week, they should make a Flexible Working Request in line with the Company's Flexible Working Policy.

Reasons for Hybrid Working

There are many reasons why colleagues may find hybrid working beneficial, for example they may wish to avoid a lengthy commute, save on fuel costs, complete focussed work in a quieter environment, or work closer to home in order to do the school run. When deciding whether to grant a request for hybrid working, Line Managers will focus more on the feasibility of the request rather than the reason for it.

However, Line Managers do reserve the right to reject hybrid working requests if the reason for it could negatively impact the colleague's ability to work productively. For example, if a colleague is asking to work from home in order to home school their children whilst working, it is likely that the request will be rejected on the basis that this will interfere with the colleague's ability to dedicate themselves wholly to their role.

Working Hours

Unless temporarily agreed otherwise by their Line Manager, colleague's contractual daily and weekly working hours will remain unchanged by hybrid working to ensure they remain available to their teams, and that their teams remain available to them.

To ensure Line Managers know when a colleague is taking a break, the use of tools such as shared calendars and out-of-office messaging is encouraged.

Line Manager Contact

Colleagues should keep in regular contact with their Line Manager, making additional efforts to ensure they keep their Line Manager up to date with what they are working on. Equally, they should notify their Line Manager if they are unsure about what they are required to do.

Colleagues should consider all lines of communication, including email, telephone and video calls to ensure relationships are maintained and work continues.

Monitoring and General Management

Line Managers are responsible for the day-to-day management of colleagues, which includes ensuring they have adequate work, and monitoring the quality and volumes of work being produced. This requirement is more difficult to manage when colleagues are working remotely, so Line Managers need to have a plan in place to address this. This could include daily debrief meetings between the colleague and their Line Manager and the use of shared calendars.

If, at any point, a Line Manager feels that hybrid working is having a negative impact on a colleague's work or wellbeing, they should discuss this with the colleague immediately and try to find a solution. If a solution cannot be found, Line Managers reserve the right to withdraw permission for hybrid working.

Meetings

Colleagues who are working remotely can dial into meetings if they are able, providing it is suitable to do so. If a Line Manager specifically requests the presence of a colleague at a meeting, they will not be permitted to work remotely that day.

Rest breaks

Colleagues who are working remotely should be mindful of their working hours, and ensure they take adequate rest breaks. They should:

- Remember to take comfort breaks and drink/meal breaks as normal
- Take a break of at least 20 minutes when their working day is scheduled to last more than six hours
- Ensure the time period between stopping work one day and beginning the next is not less than 11 hours

Workstations

Generally speaking, Headlam will not provide workstation equipment for hybrid working e.g., chairs and desks, unless the colleague has a medical requirement for specialist equipment. It is the responsibility of the colleague choosing to work remotely to ensure their workstation is ergonomic, and they have all the equipment they need, at their own cost. Line Managers may ask colleagues about their workstations and reject requests from colleagues who do not have sufficient equipment.

There are steps which colleagues can take to make sure they achieve a comfortable posture while working from home on display screen equipment (DSE), including:

- Breaking up long spells of DSE work with rest breaks (at least five minutes every hour) or changes in activity
- Avoiding awkward, static postures by regularly changing position
- Getting up and move around or do stretching exercises
- Avoiding eye fatigue by changing focus or taking screen breaks from time to time

Work Environment

Colleagues must ensure the environment they are choosing to work from is suitable, private, equipped with everything required to work safely and confidentially, and does not pose a conflict of interest. Line Managers should ask colleagues about their proposed working environment and reject requests from colleagues who do not have a suitable or appropriate place in mind.

Colleagues should notify their Line Manager immediately if they start to have concerns about their chosen working environment, or if they start to feel any discomfort (such as back pain), or if they feel that there are any work-related health and safety hazards. The Line Manager will discuss the matter with the relevant support functions (e.g., HR or H&S) and will look into what action can be taken, if any.

IT Equipment

Colleagues will only be granted permission to work remotely if they have been assigned with the necessary equipment to do so by the IT department, and this could include a computer, phone, etc. To request such equipment, the colleague's Line Manager will need to send a request to the IT Department, who will respond accordingly. Line Managers may re-assign any spare IT equipment they have to the colleague, but they need to seek approval from the IT Department beforehand.

Colleagues are not permitted to remove any equipment from the office for use at home e.g. printers or scanner.

Colleagues are responsible for the safekeeping of any IT equipment assigned to them for the purpose of hybrid working, and should keep it safe and secure at all times. If the IT equipment becomes damaged or faulty, colleagues should report this to their Line Manager immediately. Colleagues should return the equipment to their Line Manager when they return to their normal workplace, or at any point when requested to do so.

Colleagues are not authorised to use their personal devices to access Headlam systems or networks and should only access them using the equipment provided to them by the Company. This is because Company equipment is installed with the necessary antivirus software to keep them protected. Furthermore, no unauthorised software is allowed to be installed or unauthorised devices plugged into any Headlam PC. If a job requires additional software or hardware, colleagues should speak to their Line Manager. Colleagues should consult the IT Policies for more information on the use of IT equipment.

VPN (Virtual Private Network)

When working from a remote location, colleagues can access our network securely through VPN. Full details on how to do this are available from the IT department.

WIFI/Internet Connection

In most cases, colleagues will need internet access in order to facilitate hybrid working. It is the responsibility of the colleague requesting hybrid working to ensure they have adequate internet connection and speed in their working environment which is stable and safe, and all costs must be met by the colleague. Colleagues must ensure any internet connection they use is secure and password protected.

Stationery and Postage

Colleagues should think ahead about what stationery they will need when working remotely and take it from the office in preparation e.g., paper and envelopes. Colleagues should provide their Line Manager with a full list of stationery which they remove from the office, and return any unused items upon their return to the office, or when requested to do so by their Line Manager. If a colleague needs to post an urgent letter whilst working from home, they should do so at their own expense and claim back the expenditure via the normal expenses claims procedure.

Ink and Printing

Headlam will not cover the costs of printers or ink for colleagues who are working remotely. Colleagues wishing to work remotely should consider their printing requirements in advance and schedule to attend the office on days when they need to print multiple documents.

Documents and Files

Colleagues may not remove documents or files from site without the express knowledge and permission of their Line Manager. Colleagues and their Line Manager should keep a list of any documents or files which are removed from site and the date which they were removed and returned. Line Managers should think carefully about granting colleagues permission to remove documents or

files from site, ensuring that their removal will not hinder access for those who remain office based and might also need access to them.

Colleagues who remove documents or files from site must keep them for the minimum length of time possible, ensuring they are returned at the earliest opportunity or when requested from their Line Manager. Colleagues who are hybrid working immediately before a period of annual leave must ensure all documents and files are returned before their holiday commences.

Security, Privacy and GDPR

All colleagues are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of information pertaining to the business or anyone associated with it, including colleagues, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders. Whilst working remotely, the risk of this data being compromised increases as colleagues transfer it between the office and their Hybrid working environment, and as they distance themselves from some of the safeguards which are in place at the office. Therefore, colleagues working remotely should take special care not to misplace or share the sensitive data they have in their possession, be that electronically or hard copy. Specifically, they should:

- Keep the remove of IT equipment, documents or files to a minimum, and only remove from site the items which are absolutely necessary in the course of their work
- Keep documents and files locked away in a drawer when they are not being used
- Ensure IT equipment is protected with unique passcodes, and locked when left unattended e.g., during a rest break
- Never leave IT equipment, documents or files unattended in cars, on public transport, or in public spaces
- Be aware of their surroundings and who may overhear them when working

Further, IT equipment, documents and files should be used for work-related purposes only and must not be used by any other member of the family or third party at any time or for any purpose.

Absence

Colleagues who are granted hybrid working are still subject to the usual procedures if they find themselves unable to work for any period of time. For example:

- **Illness** - If a colleague feels unable to work due to illness at any point during a day they were scheduled to work remotely, they must notify their Line Manager in accordance with the agreed notification procedure. The Company's Attendance Management Policy and usual trigger point system will apply.
- **Appointments** – If a colleague has an appointment which occurs during a day they are scheduled to work remotely, they should discuss this with their Line Manager in advance. It might be possible for the Line Manager to adjust the colleague's working hours to accommodate the appointment, but were this is not possible the colleague may be asked to take annual leave or be marked as absent. For information about managing time off for medical appointments, colleagues should refer to the Company's Attendance Management Policy.

- **Emergencies** – If an emergency occurs during a day when a colleague is scheduled to work remotely, they should notify their Line Manager immediately. It might be possible for the Line Manager to adjust the colleague's working hours to accommodate them dealing with the emergency, but where this is not possible the colleague may be asked to take unpaid leave in accordance with the Company's Emergency Dependents Leave Policy

Tax

Colleagues may be able to claim tax relief for any household expenses incurred as a result of working from home, provided the expenses are solely work related. Colleagues are responsible for making their own claims for tax relief and Headlam will not do this on their behalf. Information on making such a claim can be found on the Government website or from calling HMRC directly.

Insurance

Headlam will not cover the cost of any equipment belonging to colleagues which is damaged in the course of homeworking e.g., chairs, printers, etc. Colleagues may find that items damaged during the course of homeworking is not covered by their insurance, and they are advised to check their home contents insurance policies and ensure they are covered for homeworking reasons if they wish.

Mortgage or Rental Agreements

Colleagues are responsible for checking applicable mortgage or rental agreements to ensure they are permitted to work from home, and for obtaining any permissions necessary to work from home.

Support

While working from home, colleagues can contact Gould Hall for IT support as normal. As always, they will do their best to support colleagues, but they will not be able to support with home broadband problems. Colleagues experiencing problems with their home internet should raise this with their own provider.

Requirement to Attend Work in Person

All hybrid working is a flexible arrangement, and so can be changed, stopped or started at any point by Line Managers. Any regular patterns of hybrid working do not form a contractual right and even if agreed, may be subject to change without notice entirely at the Line Manager's discretion. With this in mind, colleagues should not commit to any personal appointments which rely on them being granted hybrid working before they have received permission from their Line Manager to do so.

Occasionally, a colleague who has been granted permission to work remotely on a specified date may be required to attend work after all due to a business need arising, or a meeting being arranged which requires their presence. Where possible, Line Managers will give the colleague 48 hours' notice of the requirement to attend in person, however this may not always be possible and colleagues will be expected to attend subject to shorter notice where necessary.

End of Policy