



# UK Research and Innovation

## Working Location Policy

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### Policy Statement

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is committed to ensuring its workforce has the agility necessary to adapt to changing business requirements, which may on occasion entail changes in working location.

All employees will normally have a fixed place of work confirmed upon appointment. However, UKRI recognises that office-based working may not automatically be the default position for all employees, and for some a non-office arrangement (such as field working) may be a necessary part of their roles.

In addition, from time to time, UKRI may require employees to transfer temporarily or permanently to another place of work.

The purpose of the Working Location Policy is to set out the principles and procedures relating to mobility, relocation and field / mobile working, including the expenses that may be claimed.

Before following this policy, please consult the HR Policy Framework.

**Management Statement**

The Working Location Policy applies to all UKRI employees. This includes those employed on temporary or fixed term contracts but excludes visiting workers, students or those workers provided by a third-party agency.

UKRI is committed to retaining and utilising the expertise of its employees and will support them through changes in working location.

Line Managers should refer to HR for guidance on specific amounts that can be claimed in individual circumstances.

The Working Location Policy has been agreed with the Trade Union Side and complies with statutory legislation.

**References**

UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy  
 UKRI Ways of Working policy  
 UKRI Data Protection Policy  
 UKRI Acceptable Use of ICT Systems and Services Policy  
 UKRI Managing Performance and Conduct Policy

Version Number	Status	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
Version 1.0	Complete	January 2020	New policy created

## Working Location

### 1. Principles

- 1.1. Employees' normal place of work is stated in their statement of employment particulars and they will normally have a fixed office working location, however employees may be required to perform their duties at alternative locations if it is deemed in the best interest of UKRI. These interests may include:
  - 1.1.1. a compulsory permanent transfer to a post at another location,
  - 1.1.2. a temporary or permanent transfer to another location,
  - 1.1.3. where a role requires an employee to work away from the office, on business, for the majority of the working week.
- 1.2. UKRI reserves the right to withdraw or terminate Field / Mobile working arrangements should the needs of the organisation require this, or where performance or disciplinary issues arise. Affected employees will be consulted prior to any changes being made to terms and conditions.

### 2. Delegation

- 2.1. For more information on the delegated authority, please refer to the HR Delegated Authority Framework.

### 3. Mobility

- 3.1 Mobility is a contractual obligation on all employees to accept a compulsory permanent transfer to a post at another place of work within UKRI, provided it is within 'reasonable daily travelling time' (RDTT) from the employee's home. Further details can be found at [Appendix A](#).
- 3.2 Employees will be given notice of any transfer at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 3.3 Whilst the wishes and personal circumstances of employees will be taken into account as far as possible, employees will normally be expected to transfer to a post deemed to be within RDTT if required to do so (paragraph 6). Where the transfer location is not within RDTT, employees will not be expected to transfer unless they wish to do so.

### 4. Relocation

- 4.1 For various reasons employees may be temporarily or permanently transferred to another place of work. Further details can be found at [Appendix B](#).

### 5. Field / Mobile Working

- 5.1 Field / Mobile working relates to roles that require employees to work away from UKRI office locations for the majority of the working week.
- 5.2 As such the employee's normal base of work, for contractual purposes, is their home. Further details can be found at Appendix C.
- 5.3 For employees contractually working from a home base, HMRC deems all travel from this home base to undertake their duties to be business travel; further information regarding expenses can be found within Appendix C or within the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy.

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### 6. Occasional home working

- 6.1 An individual's main place of work remains the establishment, but they may have a standing or ad hoc arrangement with their line manager to work at home at irregular, unspecified times. This would be informal and non-contractual.
- 6.2 This would typically be for short-term instances such as:
  - 6.2.1 where concentrated focus is needed without the distractions of a noisy office for a period of time, e.g. report writing,
  - 6.2.2 where the individual is temporarily confined to the home (e.g. injury),
  - 6.2.3 when covering short-term difficulties e.g. adverse weather conditions and public transport emergencies.
- 6.3 Employees are required to get local management approval before each planned occasion of occasional working from home, but do not have to use the flexible working application form. As with regular and frequent remote working, the line manager must be able to contact the person at any time of the agreed working day by the agreed method.
- 6.4 In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for UKRI to attend the employee's home to carry out a risk assessment. However, in many cases it will be suitable and sufficient for the employee to carry out the assessment under the direction of UKRI.
- 6.5 For example, UKRI should provide the employee with information on the need for an appropriate space in which to work, with a suitable desk or table and how to set the equipment up appropriately to avoid health risks that could arise from prolonged computer use. The employee should inform UKRI of any risks which are identified.
- 6.6 It is the employee's responsibility to report all faults that may present a hazard to their own health and to take reasonable care of their own health and safety. The domestic electrical system is the employee's responsibility.
- 6.7 For more guidance, please see [Appendix D](#).

### 7. Reasonable daily travel

- 7.1 Reasonable daily travel will be determined by the circumstances of the appointment, in consultation with the line manager.
- 7.2 Other extenuating circumstances may also be taken into account in determining whether it is reasonable for an employee to travel daily to a new place of work (irrespective of the time it takes to make the journey), such as:
  - 7.2.1 a need to be near someone (child/parent/dependant) for carer reasons,
  - 7.2.2 a pre-existing medical condition that would be exacerbated by a significant increase in daily travelling time,
  - 7.2.3 a change to the working location that would entail an unreasonable change to their usual mode of transport, e.g. the purchase of a car, not being able to walk, not being able to cycle,

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7.2.4 no longer being able to commute by bike, where this has been their usual mode of transport.

## **8. Overseas working**

- 8.1 Any period of overseas working will be agreed with the employee prior to posting.
- 8.2 For information relating to expenses and visas for overseas working please see the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy.

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**Appendix A – Mobility policy**

**A1. Mobility options**

A1.1 An employee will normally be expected to transfer to a post within RDTT at another location within UKRI in the following situations:

A1.1.1 a compulsory move made under the mobility obligation,

A1.1.2 a redundancy situation. As an alternative to accepting compulsory redundancy an employee may:

A1.1.2.1 voluntarily redeploy to a new location; or

A1.1.2.2 seek redeployment to a suitable vacancy locally.

A1.2 Employees may also request a voluntary move to better their career or for other personal reasons if they so wish.

**A2. Mobility Transfer Expenses**

A2.1 Employees will not be expected to suffer significant financial detriment if transferred to another location considered within RDTT. For further information on the expenses an employee can claim when they transfer to another location refer to UKRI Relocation paragraph in [Appendix B](#).

A2.2 RDTT is used when determining whether or not it is reasonable for an employee to make the journey in this time. Account will be taken of how much further the employee has to travel from home to the new location than to their current place of work, and what transport facilities are available to them to make the journey.

A2.3 Other extenuating circumstances may also be taken into account in determining whether it is reasonable for an employee to travel daily to a new place of work (irrespective of the time it takes to make the journey). Employees may be required to submit evidence in support of extenuating circumstances.

Examples of extenuating circumstances may include but are not limited to:

- Caring responsibilities;
- Pre-existing medical condition that would be exacerbated by a significant increase in daily travelling time;
- A significant increase in the distance the employee has to travel would entail an unreasonable change to their usual mode of transport, e.g. the purchase of a second car.

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**Appendix B – Relocation**

**B1. Overview**

- B1.1 The overall aim when relocating staff is to provide support to try to reduce the inevitable personal and financial disruption that employees face when they are required to move from one location to another. This can be in the form of financial assistance or provision of special leave to assist with making arrangements for a transfer.
- B1.2 A permanent transfer is usually a posting that is expected to last three years or more, shorter-term temporary postings are classed as detached duty. For details of expenses that can be claimed whilst on detached duty employees should refer to the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy.

The reasons for a permanent transfer may include but not be limited to the following scenarios:

- Transfer at UKRI's request.
- Voluntary transfer to avoid compulsory redundancy.
- Voluntary transfer in response to a vacancy notice.

- B1.3 Should a situation arise where there is a need to relocate a number of staff (e.g. due to the closure of a site), HR will advise on arrangements.

**B2. Relocation Expenses**

- B2.1 The intention of the relocation financial package is to meet reasonable costs incurred; there can be no betterment at public expense. The “no betterment” principle does not prevent transferees from trading up to a larger property provided that they meet any additional costs over and above those of a “like for like” move.
- B2.2 For details of the relocation package available to them, employees should contact HR. Each package will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- B2.3 Other than where flat rate allowances are payable, the reimbursement of relocation expenses is on a receipted actual basis.
- B2.4 Employees should not commit to any major relocation expense until HR at the new establishment has specified, in writing, the assistance available to them. Employees must always seek agreement before committing to any expense that they expect UKRI to pay.
- B2.5 If the employee's home is within reasonable daily travelling of the new location or they choose not to relocate they may be entitled to reimbursement of any additional travel costs for a period of three years. Employees should refer to HR for further guidance.
- B2.6 Employees can claim for certain reasonable expenses incurred, as follows:
- B2.6.1 for compulsory transfer to a location within reasonable daily travelling time (RDTT) of their home, employees are entitled to reimbursement of any additional travel costs for a period of three years.

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B2.6.2 Employees will be allowed up to five days special paid leave to search for suitable permanent or temporary accommodation at the new establishment. Vouched travel costs will be reimbursed in accordance with the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy, within an absolute limit of £500.

B2.6.3 This budget may be used to cover journeys to and from the new establishment and local travel in the search for accommodation. Multiple visits may be made within this cost limit. Where no visit is made prior to transfer, the provisions may be carried forward. Reasonable receipted expenses for the employee and their household will be reimbursed in accordance with the principles set out in the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy.

B2.6.3.1 Overnight expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with paragraphs 21 and 22 where an employee has been unsuccessful in securing suitable accommodation (temporary or permanent) at the new establishment at the point of transfer and has therefore to occupy hotel accommodation. HR will need to be satisfied that employees are making every effort to secure suitable accommodation and that reimbursement of hotel costs is justified.

B2.6.4 Voluntary transfer to avoid being made redundant:

B2.6.4.1 if the home is within reasonable daily travelling of the new location – employees are entitled to reimbursement of any additional travel costs for a period of three years,

B2.6.4.2 if the home is not within reasonable daily travelling of the new location – the employee will be expected to relocate and may claim up to £15K (refer to HMRC for tax implications) plus stamp duty (where applicable) towards the costs of relocation: this amount will be periodically reviewed.

**B3.** Payment will be against receipted expenses and will cover the following:

B3.1 legal fees for house sale and purchase,

B3.2 relocation company fees for removal and storage costs,

B3.3 travel and subsistence in connection with looking for accommodation at the new site,

B3.4 the repayment period will be determined by UKRI, taking into consideration the size of the sum advanced, but will not exceed beyond the length of the expected leave date.

**B4.** Other (voluntary) transfers in response to vacancy notices:

B4.1 if the home is within reasonable daily travelling of the new location – the employee is not entitled to expenses,

B4.2 if the home is not within reasonable daily travelling of the new location – the employee will be expected to relocate and may claim up to a maximum of £8k (refer to HMRC for tax implications) plus stamp duty (where applicable) towards relocation expenses, at the discretion of the Director of the receiving establishment. The types of expenses listed above can be claimed.

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- B5.** HR will specify in writing what relocation expenses, where applicable, will be available for the employee. Employees must always seek agreement before committing to any expense that they expect UKRI to pay.
- B6.** Certain relocation expenses are subject to income tax and National Insurance Contributions (NICs); information is available from HR.
- B7. Visits to the New Establishment to Search for Accommodation**
- B7.1 Employees will be allowed up to five days special paid leave to search for suitable permanent or temporary accommodation at the new establishment. Travel costs will be reimbursed in accordance with the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy within an absolute limit of £500.
- B7.2 This budget may be used to cover journeys to and from the new establishment and local travel in the search for accommodation. Multiple visits may be made within this cost limit. Where no visit is made prior to transfer, the provisions may be carried forward. Reasonable receipted expenses for the employee and their household will be reimbursed in accordance with the principles set out in the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy.
- B8. Permanent staff transfer (excess fare allowance)**
- B8.1 The excess fare allowance that you may claim is based on the extra cost of travel between your new home and your new office. This is calculated, monthly in arrears and as part of your salary and will be notified well in advance to you by HR as part of a formal consultation period. Therefore, claims for excess fare allowance should not be made through the expense system.

**Appendix C – Field / Mobile Working****C1. Benefits of Field / Mobile Working**

- C1.1 For roles that require a large amount of travel, Field / Mobile working provides employees with a more flexible way of working that helps them achieve a better work / life balance and utilise their time more productively.
- C1.2 Field / Mobile working reduces the requirement for relocating employees: containing costs, reducing domestic disruption for employees and their families. This applies to both new recruits and existing employees who may change their role(s).
- C1.3 UKRI recognise the need to have effective and open lines of communication between line managers, Field / Mobile working colleagues and office-based employees. Responsibility lies with line managers to ensure Field / Mobile working employees are aware of this policy and should constantly review methods of communication are adequate for all involved.
- C1.4 This policy covers contractual Field / Mobile working arrangement. UKRI recognises that from time to time employees based in the location of their main offices may need to work from their home or other locations. This enables mutual flexibility, effective working and promotes our efforts towards ensuring that UKRI is a great place to work. Similarly, a short-term remote working arrangement may be appropriate to accommodate personal or work-related issues. Whilst these arrangements form an acceptable and mutually beneficial way of working, they do not constitute a contractual Field / Mobile-based arrangement. Please see the UKRI Ways of Working policy for further information.

**C2. Identification of Field / Mobile Working Roles**

- C2.1 The requirement and suitability for roles to be contractually Field / Mobile Working (home based) will be assessed in line with consistent criteria. Role requirements:
  - C2.1.1 If the role requires the job holder to be necessarily away from the office, on business (for example attending meetings, visiting stakeholders and varying locations), for on more than 60% of the working week averaged over a course of a rolling 24 months, then that role may be classed as Field / Mobile Working.
  - C2.1.2 Field / Mobile Working is not a form of “dual location” working due to the requirement to travel to multiple locations. Field / Mobile Workers are not subject to dual location tax liabilities, if a role is likely to require attendance in one location on a regular basis then advice should be taken from HR.

**C3. Expenses for Field / Mobile Working**

- C3.1 For employees contractually working from a home base, the HMRC deems all travel from this home base to undertake their duties to be business travel; therefore associated expenses are reclaimable and non-taxable.
- C3.2 Other reclaimable expenses include postage and courier costs. Telephone and broadband costs will not be covered by expenses unless, in exceptional circumstances, additional costs and/or poor network coverage can be demonstrated. This should be discussed and agreed with line management.

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- C3.3 All expenses must be submitted, with receipts, in line with the UKRI Travel and Subsistence Policy.

#### **C4. Health and Safety**

- C4.1 UKRI has a duty of care to all employees and must comply with health and safety legislation. This applies whilst working at home, in the field or when travelling on company business as well as in the Swindon, London, Bristol or defined offices.
- C4.2 All contractual field / mobile working employees will be required to undertake regular DSE risk self-assessments. There is no obligation on UKRI for office equipment or furniture to be provided. However, any identified risks will be resolved on an individual basis, including reasonable adjustments and the provision of specialised equipment for employees with disabilities.
- C4.3 All electrical equipment provided by UKRI is covered by the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and must be regularly inspected. The mains supply of electricity for field / mobile working staff remains their own responsibility.
- C4.4 As accidents and injuries which occur whilst working must be reported to the employer by way of normal reporting procedures, wherever they occur, and the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 complied with, field / mobile working employees should report any serious occurrences whilst working at home or in the field to their line manager, and via the accident reporting system, as soon as possible. A basic first aid kit should be available in the home, provided by the employee.
- C4.5 Field / Mobile working staff should ensure that they take appropriate breaks and be aware of establishing boundaries between work and home responsibilities. In addition to be a necessary work practice, regular communication with line management and colleagues provides an important support network. Good management should include proactive ways to integrate home workers in to their team and the organisation. This will include the attendance of team and line management meetings.

#### **C5. Confidentiality, Security and Information Assurance**

- C5.1 All UKRI assets, including data and information, must be safeguarded and stored in line with the UKRI Data Protection Policy and Information Security Incident and Data Breach Policy, together with the Information Assurance Policy, legal and public sector requirements. The principles of current UK data protection legislation and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 must be applied and confidential and sensitive information protected.
- C5.2 All information security related incidents, including any near misses, should be reported immediately to the Data Protection Officer. In the event of not being able to reach the Information Manager, please notify the UKRI Head of Information Governance.
- C5.3 Confidential documents must be appropriately disposed of. Paper documents must be shredded, using a cross cut shredder or brought to one of the UKRI offices for safe disposal. Memory sticks (which must be encrypted) must be returned to the appropriate IT service location for appropriate disposal or cleansing.

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- C5.4 Provided that due safeguards have been put in place UKRI will cover any unavoidable damage to its property. If the damage is due to a third party's negligence, UKRI reserves the right to require the employee to pursue a remedy with the third party on its behalf. UKRI does not take out insurance cover and will not contribute to household insurances. However, we do not expect field / mobile working employees to provide insurance cover for any equipment belonging to UKRI.

#### **C6. Installation or maintenance of equipment and recovery of property on exit**

- C6.1 UKRI reserve the right to request permission to enter the home of field / mobile working employees, if required, to install or maintain equipment, recover property on termination of employment and to carry out any required health and safety risk assessments.
- C6.2 If entry into the home is required, prior arrangement will be made and any representative of UKRI will carry formal identification and work with due regard and respect for the home environment.

#### **C7. Responsibilities of Managers and Employees**

- C7.1 UKRI reviews the performance of all employees. This must be done on a consistent and fair basis. Line managers must consider the issues presented by field / mobile working, such as the reporting and review of work, support and guidance. They should also ensure in setting objectives that fair assessment and visibility is established.
- C7.2 UKRI reserves the right to require office-based working if this is an organisational requirement.

**Appendix D – Home Working Guidance****D1. Regular and frequent home working**

D1.1. There are two main categories:

D1.1.1 those who work at home on a regular and frequent basis but who are otherwise based at the establishment,

D1.1.2 those who have a contractual agreement to work from home full-time.

**D2. Home working application**

D2.1. Prior to commencing any regular and frequent home working the line manager should agree with the employee a reasonable frequency and method of communication. The line manager must be able to contact the person working at home. The line manager should also agree with the employee how regularly they may be required to come into the office e.g. for team meetings, Appraisal & Personal Development Reviews and training.

D2.2. It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that a risk self-assessment / work station assessment is carried out at the employee's home.

D2.3. It is the line manager's responsibility to consider providing any specialist equipment which is recommended as part of the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment.

D2.4. Line Managers should continue to involve employees working at home in team meetings, performance appraisals and staff training. Such events must be scheduled and agreed between the line manager and the employee and the employee must make a reasonable effort to accommodate such events.

**D3. Related Policies**

D3.1 All home workers will be expected to comply with UKRI policies and procedures in particular with regard to Health and Safety (by undertaking the required assessments), Data Protection, Confidentiality and Security. Employees are responsible for managing and securing any personal, sensitive or otherwise protected data / records whether directly on a computer or documents which have been taken away from the office.

D3.2 All UKRI usual terms and conditions and practices and procedures will continue to apply. In the event that the employee is sick during a period of home working then the normal UKRI Sickness Absence reporting procedures must still be followed.

D3.3 In accordance with the Working Time Regulations, employees (including home workers) should not work more than 48 hours per seven-day period, calculated over an average period of 17 weeks unless they opt out of this.

D3.4 If the normal place of work is home, then the home worker may be able to claim home to establishment travel expenses should they be required to come into the office e.g. to attend a meeting. Employees should refer to the Travel and Subsistence policy for further information.

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#### **D4. Insurance, tax and mortgage agreements**

- D4.1 A regular home worker must inform their insurers that they are working from home on a regular basis. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide adequate home buildings and contents insurance. UKRI will not accept liability for damage caused to the home or its contents.
- D4.2 UKRI will not accept any responsibility for an employee who suffers any detriment, loss or legal action as a result of not obtaining the necessary permissions from their insurer, mortgage lender, landlord or local authority.
- D4.3 It is the employee's responsibility to contact the HMRC about whether they qualify for tax relief on expenses incurred while working at home. UKRI has no liability for any tax imposed on an employee as a result of working at home.
- D4.4 It is the employee's responsibility to inform their household insurer of the homeworking arrangement. Business meetings at home are discouraged and UKRI does not accept any liability arising from any incidents associated with such activity.

#### **D5. Equipment / Expenses**

- D5.1 Where necessary, UKRI will provide suitable equipment that is required to undertake those duties agreed to be undertaken while working at home. Employees should refer to HR for further information.
- D5.2 Equipment used at home should be maintained in efficient working order and should only be used in accordance with the Acceptable Use of ICT Systems and Services Policy.
- D5.3 UKRI is responsible for the safety of the equipment that it supplies. Employees are under a duty to take reasonable care of the equipment and to report any faults as soon as reasonably practicable.
- D5.4 Employees who use their own device have a responsibility to ensure that it is in efficient working order and has the appropriate anti-virus/security software installed.
- D5.5 Employees who have a formal and contractual home working arrangement in place may be reimbursed for evidenced reasonable additional household costs associated with the work they are undertaking. Reimbursement of such costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis by HR where recommended by line managers.
- D5.6 Equipment provided remains the property of UKRI and must be returned at the end of the home working arrangement.

#### **D6. Hours of work**

- D6.1 Employees who work from home are not necessarily required to work fixed hours of work. However, there should be reasonable office hours during which employees must be available to respond to telephone calls, deal with e-mails or attend meetings (either from home or, where practicable, in person). These working options should be discussed and agreed with the line manager.

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- D6.2 Employees who work from home must ensure that they take adequate rest breaks as required by the [Working Time Regulations 1998](#).

#### **D7. Concluding a home working arrangement**

- D7.1 UKRI should review home working arrangements annually. Employees will have the right of appeal against decisions that result in a change to contractual arrangements. If an employee wishes to cease working from home, they must discuss this with their line manager in the first instance.

#### **D8. Misuse of a home working arrangement**

- D8.1 Any misuse of the home working agreement will be dealt with under the UKRI Managing Performance and Conduct Policy e.g. where an employee is continually unavailable and the line manager is unable to contact them, where evidence suggests the productivity is significantly reduced during home working periods.