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Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Health Education and Improvement Wales

Agile Working Policy

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Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Purpose	3
3.	Error! Reference source not found.	3
4.	Principles	4
5.	Roles and Responsibilities	4
	5.1 Employee	4
	5.2 Line Manager	5
	5.3 People Team	5
6.	Procedures	5
	6.1 Health and Wellbeing	6
	6.2 IT Equipment and Resources	6
	6.3 Information Governance and Confidentiality	6
	6.4 Communication	6
	6.5 Risk Assessment	7
	6.6 Incident Reports	7
	6.7 Safeguarding	7
	6.8 Managing Attendance at Work	7
	6.9 Annual Leave	8
	6.10 Working Time Directive	8
	6.11 Taxation	8
	6.12 Policies	8
	6.13 PADRs and Access to Training	8
	6.14 Career Progression	8
	6.15 Travel and Subsistence	8
	6.16 Employment Contract	8
	6.17 Widening Access	8
7.	Training	9
8.	Monitoring	9

1. Introduction

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) as an organisation has an All Wales remit and the ability of all employees to work in an agile manner is essential to achieving this. In addition, the ability to work in an agile manner may allow more effective and efficient ways of working. Agile working is not just related to working from different locations or at different times. It is about gaining the benefit of utilising the available technology to change working practices, work differently, increase the effectiveness of HEIW and change the culture to focus on outputs and outcomes.

Agile working is the term used to describe how employees can work flexibly from any location; for example, this could include, but is not limited to:

- The individual's home
- Ty Dysgu
- Other locations
- Any combination of these

This policy provides a framework for consistent and fair practice on the issues to be taken into account when considering agile working arrangements. The associated playbook provides more detailed guidance and links to supporting policies and information.

This policy and associated playbook has also been designed to meet the HEIW values of:

- Respect for all
- Together as a team
- Ideas that improve

2. Purpose

This policy and associated Playbook has been developed to support all employees in undertaking work in an agile manner and to confirm the principles that govern agile working.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all HEIW employees are treated with equity and are able to undertake their role effectively and efficiently and to the best of their ability regardless of when, where and how they undertake their duties.

It will also ensure that HEIW actively discharges its legal responsibilities to its employees in accordance with the appropriate legislation and guidance.

3. Scope

This policy and associated Playbook will apply to all employees, and staff on secondment within HEIW enabling them to work in an agile manner. This policy will apply to Agency Workers by agreement between HEIW and the employment agency.

This policy will cover agile working in all circumstances including:

- As a result of the nature of the role and need for it to be performed outside Ty Dysgu
- A positive decision of the individual in agreement with their manager
- Following a formal flexible working request
- As a permanent or temporary reasonable or tailored adjustment under the Managing Attendance at Work Policy
- As part of a corporate response to a major incident resulting in the closure of Ty Dysgu

4. Principles

Agile working is available to all employees, in addition to and does not prevent requests for Flexible Working under the Flexible Working Regulations 2014.

Agile working should:

- Facilitate effective working across different locations
- Promote working within the guidelines of a task without the boundaries
- Focus on results and performance and not attendance
- Promote high trust and low bureaucracy
- Ensure flexibility becomes the norm rather than the exception
- Provide employees with the opportunity to manage their work life balance
- Utilise technology to facilitate changing working practices

Agile working should promote the All Wales reach of HEIW, the nature of the work and support given to the end user and create a sense of belonging to the organisation.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Employee

All employees who work in an agile manner are responsible for ensuring that:

- They work together with and develop a shared joint responsibility with their manager in agreeing how they can work in an agile manner and deliver outcome-based measures of performance,

- All measures set out in this and related HEIW policies and procedures are complied with e.g. Health and Safety, Lone Working and Managing Attendance at Work Policies,
- They keep up to date with issues/working practices within their working area by maintaining appropriate and regular communication with their manager and other colleagues within HEIW and across NHS Wales,
- They attend meetings, training and supervision as necessary and appropriate,
- They take care of IT equipment which they use and familiarise themselves with the relevant IT policies,
- They identify and report any issues to their manager related to agile working arrangements,
- Work/life balance and health and wellbeing is maintained.

5.2 Line Manager

All line managers will:

- Ensure that agile working is promoted and supported
- Ensure that employees are supported in accessing the equipment including IT equipment necessary to undertake their role
- Ensure that employees are able to access and complete training
- Ensure that issues related to improving or maintaining productivity, quality, health, safety and security are considered and action taken to support employees in managing them
- Ensure that the concepts of managing by outcomes have been discussed with employees and appropriate methods to monitor output have been mutually agreed with employees as part of the supervision process
- Ensure that communication is maintained with all employees and that employees are briefed and encouraged to be part of a team and that employees who work in an agile manner continue to receive regular supervision
- Ensure that agile working is monitored through regular review such as appraisal, supervision and ad-hoc checks
- Seek advice and assistance from the Facilities and Compliance Officer in HEIW and Occupational Health where necessary in relation to the health and safety of employees, including reasonable adjustments that may need to be made to the workplace

5.3 People Team

The People Team will:

- Ensure that Managers are provided with advice and support in managing and supporting agile workers

- Support managers and employees to continue to develop and promote a culture of agile working and, where barriers to agile working are identified, work to reduce them
- Undertake regular employees' surveys including questions on agile working, publish the results and act on the findings
- Undertake training needs analysis
- Work with managers and employees to promote engagement

6. Procedures

The key principles of agile working are contained in this policy with more detailed guidance contained in the associated playbook.

6.1. Health and Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of all employees is paramount and both employees and managers have a responsibility for promoting and supporting health and wellbeing. Agile working should not adversely affect the health and wellbeing of employees. Managers should check on the health and wellbeing of their employees and all employees should make themselves aware of the resources that are available to support them.

Mental Health and Wellbeing is also important in agile working and is supported through the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

6.2. IT Equipment and resources:

All employees should be provided with the equipment that they require to undertake their role. This will include equipment provided through an agreed reasonable or tailored adjustment under the Managing Attendance at Work Policy and equipment supported by a business case.

6.3. Information Governance and Confidentiality

All employees should abide by the Information Governance Policy and the Data Protection & Confidentiality Policy regardless of the location from which they work.

All employees should ensure that they are up to date with their Information Governance Training.

Any breach of confidentiality should be reported via DATIX, this would include the loss or theft of IT equipment containing confidential and/or personal identifiable data.

It is expected that when working outside of Ty Dysgu staff will take all reasonable precautions to safeguard data and failures to safeguard data may be dealt with under the HEIW Disciplinary Policy.

6.4. Communication

Agile working and modification of working practices requires more proactive communication to maintain team spirit and cohesion and to ensure that all members of individual teams remain in contact and engaged.

To promote and facilitate this, managers should discuss how and using what methods on-going communication will be conducted. The available technology should be utilised including Skype and Teams, e-mail, telephone calls and text messaging. Managers should hold 1 to 1 meetings with each member of their team. The frequency of these meetings is for discussion and agreement. Employees commencing agile working, or a new working pattern should discuss with their manager and teams to ensure that there is sufficient overlap in working hours for group communications, individual working and fulfilling job roles. In addition, where possible, periodic face to face meetings should be arranged.

6.5. Risk Assessments

All employees should have the appropriate risk assessments put in place.

Any employees using a computer workstation (or similar) for 2 hours or more per day will be covered by the Procedure for the Assessment and Use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE).

Any employee undertaking work at home should complete a homeworking questionnaire contained in the Homeworking Procedure. Any issues highlighted may require a more detailed risk assessment.

Any employees identified as a lone worker under the Lone Worker Policy will require a lone worker risk assessment.

Guidance on completing risk assessments will be contained in the playbook linked to the relevant policy.

6.6. Incident Reporting

Any incidents involving an employee whilst on duty should be reported via DATIX at the earliest opportunity. This would include accidents, violence and aggression and loss of equipment and/or data.

6.7. Safeguarding

Managers must be alert to any potential safeguarding issues that may affect employees and consider any potential safeguarding implications when dealing with agile workers and

requests to work in an agile manner. Further advice can be sought from the People Team

6.8. Managing Attendance at Work

All agile workers must follow the guidance contained in the All Wales Managing Attendance at Work Policy. Any employee who is unfit for work as a result of sickness must report to their line manager and provide appropriate certification as detailed in the Managing Attendance at Work Policy.

Managers must conduct Return to Work interviews with all employees in accordance with the Managing Attendance at Work Policy. All sickness absence will be managed in accordance with the Managing Attendance at Work Policy. Advice should be sought from the People Team as appropriate.

Agile working is not an alternative to sickness absence i.e. if an employee is not fit for work due to sickness, they are not fit to work. An exception to this would be where an employee may be fit for work but travelling to work is not possible. In such circumstances working from home or another NHS site may be considered as a reasonable or tailored adjustment and documented following the guidance in the Managing Attendance at Work Policy.

6.9. Annual Leave

All employees are entitled to annual leave in accordance with their contract and terms and conditions of service. All employees should take their annual leave within the leave year within which it is granted, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The taking of annual leave is important to maintain health and wellbeing and all employees should be encouraged to take their annual leave spread across the leave year.

6.10. Working Time Directive

All employees must abide by the provisions of the Working Time Directive in having breaks during and between working periods.

6.11. Taxation

Employees who work from home may be eligible for tax relief and should contact HMRC to confirm their entitlement.

6.12. Policies

All employees are required to abide by all HEIW policies and procedures.

6.13. PADR and access to training

All employees should have an annual PADR in accordance with the policy and be provided with equal access to training opportunities and agile working should not be a barrier to this. All employees are required to complete the required statutory and mandatory training appropriate to their role.

6.14. Career Progression

Career progression is encouraged within HEIW and agile working and the working patterns adopted by individuals will not be a barrier to promotion and career progression.

6.15. Travel and Subsistence

All claims for travel and subsistence should be claimed in accordance with the HEIW Travel and Subsistence Policy and NHS terms and conditions of service.

6.16. Employment Contracts

Agile working does not constitute a change to any individuals terms and conditions of employment.

6.17. Widening Access

HEIW is committed to widening access to employment and the use of agile working should be used in a way that supports widening access to employment with HEIW from groups that are underrepresented.

7. Training

This policy is underpinned by the NHS Wales approach to Compassionate and Inclusive Leadership. This encourages managers to use discretion in making decisions where they feel able to do so. Some examples of how these skills can be applied is covered in the Managing Attendance at Work and PADR training sessions.

The People, Inclusion and OD team and the Leadership and Succession Planning team promote 'Compassionate Leadership' programmes for all current and aspiring managers. Including supporting 'outcomes-based management' and coaching skills for managers, and support networks through the 'Y Ty Dysgu' online portal.

In addition, mentoring and coaching advice is available from the People Team and a training programme on agile working will be developed.

Managers should complete Managing Attendance at Work and PADR Statutory and Mandatory training.

8. Monitoring

This procedure will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required by a change in circumstances.