GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

Smart working policy

1 Introduction

The Greater London Authority (GLA) aims to be an exemplar employer and good working practices are key to our success. We want our working environment and arrangements to inspire and enable everyone at the GLA to work effectively together, make the best use of available space, enjoy a healthy work-life balance, and deliver world-class service to London and Londoners.

Smart working helps us achieve this. It equips us to do our jobs from the most suitable location, whether this is in the office, at home or at another location. It is about working differently to achieve our objectives in the most timely and cost-effective way.

Investing in smart working delivers organisational benefits including more efficient use of office space and a workforce confident in its use of technology. It leads to increased engagement, motivation and productivity, helping to attract and retain the people we need to be successful, and a workforce which reflects London's diversity.

We have many flexible work patterns and practices, but smart working is broader than this and benefits everyone. Smart working helps us all to achieve a better balance between work and home life, with greater flexibility bringing benefits for overall wellbeing, including more choice around managing caring responsibilities, personal appointments or commuting arrangements.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all GLA employees.

3 Key principles

We are committed to equality and diversity and to fostering an inclusive culture where everyone is treated fairly and with respect, feels able to speak up and contribute, and has their health and wellbeing supported.

We will:

- enable and encourage flexibility in all jobs
- recognise that the level and type of flexibility will vary by job type
- focus on results and outcomes, not presenteeism (being seen in the office)
- work together within teams to provide service whenever it is needed by e.g. ensuring availability and cover across the week

- work together and across teams to make best use of the resources and space available
- provide the equipment, systems, procedures and support that managers and employees need to work effectively wherever they are (within reason)
- support managers to help their teams work effectively in this way
- make decisions on working arrangements within each service at Assistant Director/Head of Service level to ensure fairness and consistency, and monitor consistency of application at GLA level
- continuously review how we work, identifying and promoting good practice, and tackling unnecessary barriers to smart ways of working

4 What does smart working mean for me?

General

Your contractual place of work is the office and we provide the space, furniture and IT equipment you need to carry out your role there.

The standard issue IT equipment for all employees (a laptop and a mobile phone) gives you the flexibility to work from any available desk or space in the office or from any other suitable location, including your home if you choose.

Your manager will work with you and your colleagues to find a way of working that works for your area and all parties, including external contacts. This also involves being flexible to avoid colleagues being disadvantaged by the choices of others.

A small number of roles need fixed hours or work locations. These may involve face to face dealing with customers or other contacts, or shift work linked to the office premises. Where the job can only be done on specialist equipment or where a computer is not essential to the job, other computers and phones will be available instead.

If you need the certainty of a set pattern of work, for example if you have caring commitments at set times of the day, or want to work part-time on a permanent basis, you can make a request for flexible working in the usual way.   You can continue to work smartly and flexibly whatever your work pattern.

While you and your colleagues or customers may work from different locations at different times you still need to be able to contact each other. To support this, we expect you to:

- be equally contactable whether you are working in the office or at another location
- let others know where and when you are available e.g. keep your calendar up to date and open for all to see so they can rely on it as an accurate source of information. Mark confidential or personal appointments as 'private'.
- familiarise yourself with and use the software provided to keep in touch
- be available to attend meetings, joining remotely or attending in person as required
- respect each other's working arrangements by planning ahead and being flexible

- avoid sending messages outside 'expected' hours e.g. very early or late in the day, or be clear that you do not expect a response at that time. If you receive such a message, you should not feel under pressure to read or respond immediately.

Working in the office

We want to ensure there is enough space in the office for you and your colleagues when you need to work there. To achieve this, you will:

- be able to sit at any desk in the office which is shown as free
- not be assigned a desk on a permanent basis or via a rota or in a team area
- only be assigned a set desk if this is essential for you or your role (very few)
- store personal possessions e.g. coats, bags away from the desk
- log off from a computer and clear the desk/work area when you finish working at it
- be flexible and considerate about where you choose to work

To support this way of working we will:

- use technology to indicate which desks are free or have been vacated during the day
- provide a laptop docking station, screen, keyboard and mouse at most desks
- provide other areas where you can sit and work on your laptop
- replace furniture and technology (hardware and software) over time to ensure maximum flexibility
- provide storage away from desks
- make reasonable adjustments if you are or become disabled
- keep the system under review to ensure that it is working

See the 'Office etiquette' for more information about working together in the office environment (Appendix 1).

Working in other locations

We want working from home or another location to be voluntary. To maintain this, you need to consider how you and your colleagues work to make best use of the office space available. We recognise that for some your home might not be a suitable working environment, for example if you do not have a suitable workspace.

You are responsible for making sure that your work environment is safe for you, and that your GLA equipment, confidential data and information are kept secure.

Your terms and conditions of employment are the same wherever you choose to work, and you remain subject to GLA policies and your contractual hours. Please follow the usual procedures for e.g. notifying sickness and booking leave.

Regularly review how and where you work. Be realistic and avoid working in places and situations where external distractions and interruptions have a negative impact on the work you do or on the professionalism of your interactions with others.

We do not provide additional equipment if you choose to work from home or at a location other than the office – we do not pay for furniture or IT hardware or software, or reimburse these or any other costs such as phone or energy bills or printing.

See the 'Working from other locations guidance' for more information *(to be completed).*

5   Health, safety and wellbeing

Smart working can be beneficial for wellbeing by improving work-life balance, but frequent changes of workstation or working remotely can also present challenges. You need to:

- in the office, check that your workstation is correctly set up each time, taking time to adjust seating if necessary
- when working elsewhere, make sure your environment is suitable including work surface, seating and an appropriate level of lighting
- wherever you are working, know how to get out safely in case of fire or other emergency
- keep your work environment clean and tidy and deal appropriately with hazards e.g. don't leave drawers open, or leave bags and cables where they can be tripped over
- if you are working alone in another location, be vigilant and aware of your surroundings
- follow good practice e.g. on taking regular breaks from working at a screen
- take a rest break of at least 30 minutes if you work for more than 6 hours in a day
- don't make or receive work calls while driving
- make time to connect with colleagues working elsewhere, so that no one feels isolated

If you need an adjustment to your working arrangements because of a disability or health condition, discuss this with your manager.   We will work with you to find effective solutions so that you are not disadvantaged. Our occupational health providers can carry out formal assessments where they are needed and give specialist advice.

See the 'Health, safety and wellbeing guidance' for more information *(to be completed).*

6   Data protection and IT security

See the Data protection policy *(link)* and IT protocol for more information *(to be completed as decisions are made about technology)*

7   Information for line managers

As a manager, you should:

- model and encourage good working practices that make all feel included
- develop effective ways for team members to contact you and each other
- work with their teams so all are clear what cover is needed and what their role is

- make time to catch up with individuals and the work they are doing
- plan ahead and give reasonable notice of events or meetings where it is essential that team members attend in person

See the 'Smart working guidance for managers' for more information *(to be completed).*

8   Help and support

You can find more information about smart working on the dedicated page on the intranet *(under development).*

If you have questions or need help, speak with your manager, or contact one of the smart working champions or Unison representatives.

You can also contact: *(give details for HR&OD, TG helpdesk, FM helpdesk)*

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Appendix 1

Office etiquette

The office is an inclusive and professional environment where space and facilities are to be shared fairly. We show our consideration for others by taking personal responsibility for maintaining office standards, helping to create a pleasant, safe and efficient working environment for all.

These are some of the things we do:

Desks and workspaces

- we leave a workspace how we would want to find it – clear and ready for use
- clear desk means completely clear – no paper, dirty mugs, wrappers, office stationery, magazines, phone chargers etc. It means nothing under the desk either.
- anything left out at the end of the day that should not be there is cleared away, or if considered valuable taken to lost property
- this includes desk areas, meeting spaces, tea points and shower rooms
- we lock up laptops, mobile phones and personal IT equipment when leaving the office, and when we plan to be absent for significant periods.
- all desks are considered as potentially available for shared use. Even if we have an allocated desk this will need to be available for colleagues to use if we are out of the office or away from our desk for an extended period.
- if we are to be away from a desk for longer than xx hours, we log off any fixed PCs and vacate the desk to allow others to use it.
- we are careful when having conversations in shared workspaces, keeping the volume down so as not to interrupt colleagues
- we are considerate of others, particularly on busy days, and don't take up a fixed desk if we can work effectively in other ways. For example, if we have multiple meetings or are planning to do work which does not require a large screen

Shared areas

- we use touchdown positions e.g. benches at tea points for occasional and not continual use
- we give priority to diners in the City Hall lower ground floor café at lunchtime, and don't arrange to work or have meetings there between 12 noon and 2pm
- we respect colleagues taking breaks and avoid holding meetings at tea point tables between 12 noon and 2pm
- for the comfort of others, we avoid eating messy or strong smelling food in work areas
- to prevent pests being attracted to the office floors we do not leave any food out overnight
- we return used crockery and cutlery to the tea point after use and add to dishwasher if possible
- we tidy up after ourselves at the tea point, in meeting rooms and in the washroom facilities
- to prevent noise disturbance to meetings, we do not use the spiral ramp when meetings are taking place in the Chamber
- we do not fix any items to the glazed walls, internal partitions or windows

Security

- we always display our security pass when in the building and remove it as soon as we leave
- we do not allow people to tail gate us into the staff areas and we never allow our security pass to be used by someone else
- we are aware of escape routes and places to hide wherever we are working in the building
- we escort our visitors at all times in the staff areas
- we are responsible for the security of our personal property when in the office and anything left unattended is at our own risk.
- we lock our screen any time we leave our desk, even for a short period
- we lock up our laptops at the end of the working day or when we plan to be absent for significant periods
- we safeguard confidentiality and data protection and are aware of who might be listening to our conversations or looking at our screens when working in public area

Sustainability

- we make the effort to use the recycling bins properly, avoiding contamination
- to reduce paper waste, we keep printing to a minimum and double sided
- we turn off computers and monitors at the end of the working day. Printers and photocopiers switch off automatically using the units' power saving facilities
- we remember to turn off lights when leaving cellular offices (political areas), meeting and store rooms

Storage

(to be added once the storage audit is completed and decisions about storage have been made)