



Scottish Public
Pensions Agency
Buidheann Peinnseanan
Poblach na h-Alba

Working better together

Your SPPA guide to
hybrid working

Welcome back or welcome in! Or even welcome from afar.

Remote working can be difficult.
Hopefully you settled well into
working from home.

We're now ready to move forward
into a new hybrid working
environment.

**Collaborate
Effectively**



Some of us haven't met, some of us live next door to one another, but together we're now embarking on our new '**hybrid**' ways of working.

Your safety and the safety of your colleagues will always be our number one priority so we want you to feel equipped and empowered to adopt a more flexible approach to your work - one that better meets your needs and the needs of this business, whilst continuing to take every step possible to stay safe.

Please be patient, understanding and responsible. We've never done this before and there may be times things aren't perfect.

We're all in this together, so let's stay connected - look out for each other and collaborate effectively to successfully introduce our new ways of working.

What's inside

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Listening to you

This guide is built based on information our colleagues have asked for. Some people want to be in the office as much as possible, some would rather be at home full time. Our surveys have told us that most people would prefer a mix of home and office. Teams will have different needs and preferences, but we are hoping that our hybrid working model will make the most of in person team collaboration by bringing team groups back to the office on allocated days.

Working together

The success of hybrid working will rely on us collaborating effectively - using of our range of MS Office tools, and communicating well across teams. Our strategic aim of '**Collaborate Effectively**' is going to be key, and everyone has a part to play. Hybrid working will become another dimension of our flexible working offer to the benefit of our colleagues and our customers.

To date, we've followed Scottish and UK Government Guidance and taken the appropriate preventative measures internally. The SPPA Business Continuity Plan has been in place for a considerable period of time and this has focused on making sure we have robust contingency plans, whilst looking after our colleagues by providing recognised guidance and education.

Working with the Scottish Government (SG) and our own Business Continuity team, we pulled together an internal communications plan based on colleague wellbeing – with safety at the core. This involved regular and official streams of information from Scottish Government and with agreed SPPA specific interventions.

So what's hybrid working?

And why are we doing it?

Hybrid working is when we blend home and office working. The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that this has been widely adopted across the Scottish Government (and throughout different industries). As the pandemic has continued, many tools and processes have been introduced to improve the home working environment and this has mean that hybrid working is now recognised as a lasting way of working.

At the SPPA we want to create a hybrid working environment that sets you and your teams up for success, promotes collaboration and maintains your safety, whilst promoting your wellbeing in the workplace. We have based our plan on consultation with colleagues, PCS and the Colleague Collaboration Group, using a variety of feedback tools to gather a clear understanding of people's concerns, priorities and needs.



How does it work?

There is no set pattern. Arrangements can be set flexibly to suit business needs, your work/life balance and team dynamics. We want to embed hybrid working because it offers the flexibility our colleagues have asked for post-pandemic, because it suits the needs of the Agency, and because it is good for many people's wellbeing and the environment.

Some roles will require a set amount of office attendance, for instance our mailroom and IT colleagues. Some roles might require colleagues to come into the office less often; for some, it's not essential.

Our hybrid working vision

To provide a safe office environment that can be used flexibly to meet our colleagues' different needs.

Some key principles...

Stay safe

Stay at home if you have symptoms of Coronavirus: Use the NHS test and trace app and follow NHS advice.

Hands, Face, Space: Wash your hands and use sanitiser often; wear a face covering when moving around the office and maintain at least 1m social distance from your colleagues.

We will continue to prioritise safety and wellbeing: We will follow all Scottish Government guidance on safe and healthy office spaces and regularly consult with PCS and our Health and Safety committee.

In the office...

Work takes place where you can be most effective: Obviously we all have a job to do, so some of us will need to attend the office more often, but this is not a requirement if your job doesn't need you to. Regular 'office days' will be agreed with your manager.

Plan for collaboration and team working: Keep the best bits of both home and office working – going into the office will be an opportunity to meet and collaborate with your team.

Keep it clear and keep it clean: Aim to adopt a clear desk policy and make use of your locker.

Keep it paperless: Paperless offices are better for the planet and for security. Keep up what we've started and minimise printing. Remember: never take sensitive documents home.

Remember...

The situation will change: External factors might mean we need to change our plan, but we will keep you updated if something changes. This is a transition and we hope that we will keep finding ways to improve and make things better as we go along.

Being in the office

When do I come in?

Our new hybrid working arrangements will begin in late October. This guidance is specific to SPPA and should be read alongside the SG Return to Offices handbook, which provides further detail on general matters such as expenses.

Links to SG guidance: A range of measures are in place to safeguard colleagues. This approach has been guided by the updated strategic framework, the [latest Scottish Government advice on returning to offices](#), and wider workplace guidance.

When will I need to go into the office?

Initially (from 1 November), office attendance for most people will be limited to one day a week, working alongside the rest of your team in a designated area known as a zone. The zones will be allocated to ensure safe spacing between individuals and teams. Some teams will have days allocated; some may have more freedom to specify which day is preferable. It won't be possible to accommodate everyone's preferences at this stage – for instance demand will be much higher for Wednesdays than for Fridays – and we need to ensure safe distancing can be achieved.

We would like, as far as possible, people to attend on their allocated team day each week so that teams can begin to collaborate and communicate in person again. However, if you have concerns about attending the office and would rather continue working from home, you will be able to do so unless there is a valid business reason why you are required to attend (see below for examples). In all situations we will try to ensure that people feel comfortable and safe.

If you have a particular need to be back in the office more than one day a week, please make your line manager aware of this as soon as possible. This might be because your home working set up is not ideal, or because of health reasons.

Being in the office - continued

If you will need adjustments to your working set up while in the office for any amount of time, please [fill in this form](#) to ensure that HR are aware of your specific and most up to date requirements. This might include an adjustable chair, a different type of screen, disabled access or an Occupational Health assessment.

In the longer term, we will look to establish a blend of home and office working that best accommodates everyone's personal preferences, although this will be weighed alongside business and operational needs. For example, you may have to come into the office to do certain tasks, functions or take part in certain events.

Here are some examples of business needs that may require you to be in the office (or other workplace):

- **Your role requires you to be in a specific location working with specific equipment (for example working within the Business Support team, or because you need secure printing facilities)**
- **A collaborative task, event or meeting**
- **One to one or group training sessions (including Inductions), or group events which would be more effective in person.**
- **You are meeting with external parties that aren't set up effectively to make on-line working feasible**
- **You are interviewing job applicants**

Our new office space

The office looks different

Been here before?

For those who have worked in the SPPA office prior to the pandemic, the office space will look a little different when you return. Extra space has been created, both for desk areas and for walkways to ensure safe social distancing can be maintained. The desk areas are organised into zones and the walkways are clearly signed. Please [see our site map for more information](#).

You will have a chance to visit the office before your first day back to see what has changed and ask any questions. This is especially important for anyone with additional needs or who has never been to the office before. Details of the 'open days' will be shared in early October.

Entrance

When you arrive in the office, you will need to put a mask on before you come inside. Entry is via pass and pin pad as usual but please use hand sanitiser before using any touch points. We are not setting staggered arrival times, but instead ask everyone to respect social distancing and queue safely if a number of people arrive at the same time.

You will be required to wear your security pass at all times as normal. If you have recently joined SPPA and don't have a security pass yet, please [contact the SPPA HR Helpdesk to request one](#).

For the first two weeks of the office being open, there will be a member of the Business Support team on hand to meet you at the door, show you to your allocated locker (these will be allocated by alphabetical order) and then to your desk. If you're returning to the office for the first time after this date, please just let the Business Support team know that you'll be coming in, and they will make sure someone is on hand to meet you and get you set up.

Our new office space - continued

Cleaning and Catering

Cleaning

Our cleaning partners, Sodexo, will be providing an enhanced cleaning service. Desks and chairs cleaned thoroughly after each use. Just turn over the card which says 'Please Clean' when you've finished

Meeting rooms cleaned after use. The meeting room booking system will ensure that Sodexho are aware of all room bookings. Touch points throughout the building cleaned regularly, including toilets, kitchen, entrance areas etc.

There will be on-call deep cleans in the event of a confirmed case of Coronavirus. There will also be cleaning supplies readily available and all staff are encouraged to keep their working area as clean as possible throughout the working day.

Toilets will be open as normal with no restrictions on numbers. It remains everyone's responsibility to follow the principles of 'Hands, Face, Space' and to help keep these facilities clean.

Catering

There will be no canteen available initially, but the kitchen will be open. To ensure social distancing is maintained we will ask that no more than five people use the kitchen at a time.

Please continue to be considerate of others and keep the kitchen clean.

We are looking at alternative catering provision, but until further notice you will need to bring your own food. Hot food deliveries can be arranged but must be collected in the car park.

Our new office space - continued

Desks and workspaces

Desks and workspaces

Our safe office capacity, based on the need for clear walkways and 1m social distancing, will dictate how many people are able to be in the office at any one time. In the first year of hybrid working, we expect that we will have no more than 75 people in the office at any one time - and it will probably take a while to build up to that number safely and gradually.

Departments will be allocated office space, at a ratio of 1 desk for 2 people. Within departments, teams will attend the office on a rota of different days to make best use of the space. This should be arranged by managers and team leaders in the way that best meets business needs and personal preferences.

Each desk will be set up with two monitors and a laptop docking station. You will be given a keyboard and a mouse for office use, which you can store in your locker rather than taking it home.

Each zone will have a selection of different chairs and the option for one standing desk per zone, so that you can select the most comfortable set up. There will be advice around the office on how to set your workstation up in a safe and ergonomic way and conduct your own quick DSE assessment. Business Support staff will also be available to advise you.

Dedicated desks will be available for those who require an adjusted desk setup. If this affects you, check with your line manager or the Business Support team and [update your DSE record](#).

There will also be multiple meeting and breakout rooms/areas for collaboration and private meetings, and a number of hot desks which can be booked by individuals if they wish to attend the office outside of their teams' allocated day(s).

Meeting rooms will have a maximum occupancy and rooms for 1-2 people, up to 8 people will be available to book. For information on booking a meeting room please see page 15 of this guide.

Lockers

You will be asked to use a locker to store your mouse, keyboard, and any personal items that you don't wish to take home with you. Lockers will lock with a key and you will get this key on your first day back in the office. The clear desk policy will apply to everyone, every day:

Clear the desk completely at the end of every day. That's it.

Facilities

Meetings and training

Hybrid working arrangements

SG have advised that no updated contracts will be issued for the foreseeable future. Unless you had a homeworking contract in place prior to the pandemic, your contractual place of work will remain Tweedbank. You will initially be able to attend the office on your team's allocated day; longer term your hybrid working arrangement will be an informal one, discussed and agreed between you and your manager. Managers should use the SPPA informal home working agreement template to set out clear expectations, and review this regularly – the monthly conversation is a good opportunity.

If you are joining a remote meeting from the office, you should use headphones to minimise disruption to other staff and to ensure privacy. This also prevents awkward echoes if other people in your zone are on the same call.

Training and inductions will be able to take place in the office, subject to room availability. You will need to bear in mind group sizes and safe capacity for meeting rooms before arranging training, and please continue to use remote delivery for training sessions where that method is well suited to the course and the content. Remember to consider the preferences of your attendees too.

Meetings and training

Many other organisations across the world have already implemented hybrid working, and as a result there are helpful insights to be learned. One important point is that meetings should be remote (online) by default. Mixed mode meetings, with some people in an office and some at home, are often difficult and can result in some people being left out of the conversation. This can then mean that one group or person is disadvantaged and less able to participate. Teams should ensure their meetings are all remote or all in person.

Even where some individuals are in a room, the meeting should still take place via MS Teams in order to accommodate those individuals not in the room and to avoid them being left out/not heard. Given the space requirements of the rooms (and working preferences) it is very unlikely any meetings will be fully face-to-face for most teams.

How to book a meeting room or training

For information on booking a meeting room please see page 15 of this guide.

External visitors and board meetings - not inviting external visitors into office at the moment but will review in early 2022 and decision will be based on consultation with both SPPA colleagues and board members.

Overtime

Overtime will normally be carried out from home unless there is a valid business reason for it being carried out on site, e.g. specific system requirements for priority tasks. For any on site overtime, a member of SLT/ELT must act as the Responsible Officer. Business Support Manager must be informed of any requirements for onsite overtime at least 2 weeks in advance.

Coronavirus symptoms

Your safety

We recently asked everyone to complete a Coronavirus Occupational Risk Assessment Form for the office clear-out. SG advise that from 30 August, people who are high and very high risk are now able to attend the office as normal, if they wish to do so, without any additional safety measures. This reflects the move to level 0 across Scotland and the continued use of 'Hands, Face, Space' in our workplace.

Vaccinations are recommended by the Scottish Government but not mandatory, and you do not have to provide information about your vaccination status.

You do not currently need to take a test to attend work if you are asymptomatic. If you do have symptoms, you should follow the advice on NHS Inform.

Suspected or positive case at work

If you develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, need to self-isolate, or become unwell when working in the office there are steps you need to take.

It is important that we know who is in the office each day and where they are working so we can implement processes in the event of a positive case. This is why we will insist that office attendance is prearranged and will discourage anyone from turning up at the office without booking a desk in advance. To assist in this, you can also use the NHS Track and Trace app on your personal mobile phone.

Maintaining a healthy office

If you have cold symptoms, or a cough, please consider colleagues' health and avoid attending the office while you are showing symptoms, even if you have a negative Covid test result.

We are also offering Flu vaccine throughout October with the support of Borders General Hospital, so please consider signing up for a free flu vaccine or speak to your GP if you are eligible for a free NHS vaccine.

Protecting you

DSE checklist

Due to hot-desking it is impractical to complete a full DSE on a daily basis. This document is intended purely as a quick set up guide for colleagues attending the office in a hybrid working pattern. It assumes that you will have already done a full online DSE assessment previously, and have a knowledge of how your desk should be set up.

Chair

Your chair should have working back height and tilt adjustment, seat height adjustment, swivel mechanism, and wheels. The arms of your chair should not prevent you getting close to your desk. The chair should be adjusted in line with best practice. Whilst working the user's feet should comfortably supported.

Desk

There should be enough room on the desk for your equipment. Your desk surface should be free from glare and reflection, and all equipment within easy reach. The desk height should be suitable to allow sufficient legroom under the desk. The keyboard should be used approximately 8-10cms from the edge of the desk wherever possible, and in line with both monitor and chair to avoid twisting.

Keyboard

If using a keyboard with your laptop, the tilt mechanism on the keyboard can be employed if needed. Avoid having your hands bent up at wrist, hitting the keys too hard, or overstretching your fingers.

Screen

Can you adjust the angle and height of the screen? Can it be angled to moderate glare if necessary but not angled excessively to alter viewing position? Screen at a height that accommodates your work needs.

Use the window blinds provided when necessary. Overhead lights do not cause glare.

Screen characters should be clear and readable. Software settings may need to be adjusted to change text size. The user should be able to easily adjust the monitor controls, i.e. brightness, contrast and picture quality.

Hopefully this guide will help you to quickly set up your workstation each day and to use it in a safe and comfortably manner. However, should you encounter difficulties which might be resolved by use of additional equipment such as a screen riser or foot rest in the first instance contact our Business support Team at sppafacilities@gov.scot

Booking a meeting room

Your how to guide

Booking a meeting room, desk or shared space

1. In Outlook, click on **Calendar**.
2. Click on **New meeting**.
3. Select the start and end times using the dropdown menus.
4. Click **To**, and in the search box search for attendees name(s) and double click on it.
5. Click **OK**.
6. There are two ways you can book a room once you have invited your attendees:
(a) Select the **Rooms** button (next to Location in your invite request), find an available room and click on **Rooms** then **OK** to update.
(b) Use the **Room Finder**, to show availability. Choose an **available room**, then click on **Suggested times** to update the request. Complete the **Subject** field in the invite and click **Send**.

Booking confirmation

You will receive an email confirming that 'your request was accepted'.

If you booked a room which is already booked, you will receive an email confirming that 'your request was declined'. Meeting room requests are declined if:

- **there are conflicts with another booking**
- **more than one day is booked**
- **there is no end date on a recurring meeting**

A recurring meeting is more than 180 days. If declined, please ensure that you cancel the meeting request as your attendees will still have received the request.

Cancelling a meeting room request

To cancel a meeting, open up the calendar entry and select **Cancel Meeting**.

Outlook Display Name	Capacity
TK - The Eildon Room (Room 1) (3)	3
TK – The Doddie Weir Suite A (10)	10
TK – The Doddie Weir Suite B (12)	12
TK - The Tweed Room (Room 2) (6)	6
TK - Trimontium (Room 3) (6)	6
TK – The Dryburgh Room (Room 4) (6)	6
TK – Meeting Room 5 (8)	8
TK – Meeting Room 6 (3)	3
TK – Meeting Room 7 (3)	3
TK – Meeting Room 8 (3)	3
TK – Meeting Room 9 (3)	3
TK – Meeting Room 10 (4)	4