

Staggered Work Patterns

Staggered work patterns can help ease congestion on public transport and traffic at peak hours, as well as avoiding large groups of people arriving and leaving organisations at the same time of the day. Staggering staff lunch breaks can also help prevent large groups from gathering in rest areas or in queues at local shops/ lunch providers.

Implementing Staggered Work Patterns

Staggered hours should enable staff to continue to operate both effectively and where possible at a safe distance (more than 2 metres) from one another.

Some examples of how this might work from a practical perspective include:

- Split staff into teams or “work bubbles” with alternate days working from home, or splitting across the day with one team on campus during the morning and working from home in the afternoon and vice versa.
- Optimise the time in busy areas (such as laboratories) by ensuring that any work that can be done outside of these areas is done remotely, thereby freeing up the space for others to use.
- As far as possible, where staff are split into teams or “work bubbles”, fixing these splits, so that where contact is unavoidable, this happens between the same individuals.
- Spread out standard processes, so that only one team needs to be on the premises to complete a task at a given time.
- Delegate any tasks that can be done remotely to staff that cannot be on campus.
- Where it is possible to remain 2 metres apart, use signage such as floor markings to facilitate compliance, particularly in the most crowded areas. This includes entry points to buildings, toilets and communal break areas where queues may form.

It would also be helpful to:

- Stagger breaks and lunch breaks
- Avoid the use of hot-desking to reduce the risk of infection.
- Position workers facing away from each other where possible, again to reduce the risk of infection.
- Open windows regularly to increase ventilation

Communication

Managers should:

- Clearly explain to the individual the rationale behind introducing staggered work patterns and how they can help to make them a success.

- Agree any changes in working patterns with the member of staff and confirm these in writing.

Planning a Rota

- Plan the rota as far in advance as possible to ensure consistency and allow staff to plan their schedules. Microsoft Teams has a facility to allow for rotas to be developed across the team.
- Look for consistency to ensure the rota is 'fair' and the same employees are not working unpopular shifts, or those they have expressed a preference against.
- Implement a system for notifications or changes so that they are alerted immediately, e.g. through a Team space. Keep this consistent so staff never miss an alert or change.
- Encourage staff to manage any swaps between themselves, but ensure that there is a formal process whereby the manager must sign off this agreement.
- Have a backup plan for unexpected staff absence, e.g. other employees that could be called in at short notice.
- Monitor rota data and attendance patterns to understand if there are issues so that they can be addressed early.

Review

Managers should regularly review staggered working patterns and alter as required based on changing circumstances and feedback. This will require monitoring and review on a weekly basis until such time as effective working patterns are established.