

Engineering Department Flexible Working Policy

Policy Statement

The University of Bristol Engineering Department is committed to supporting flexible working arrangements that enhance work-life balance while maintaining excellence in research, teaching, and service delivery. This policy applies to all academic staff (45) and professional services staff (12), ensuring equitable access to flexible working options within operational constraints.

Flexible Working Options

Remote Working

Hybrid Arrangements: Up to 3 days per week remote work for roles compatible with off-site delivery

- Research-focused academics: Maximum flexibility subject to teaching and meeting commitments
- Professional services staff: Minimum 2 days on-site for collaborative activities and student support
- **Core on-site requirements:** Teaching delivery, laboratory supervision, equipment-dependent research, team meetings, student consultations

Flexible Hours

Core Hours: 10:00-15:00 Monday-Friday for collaborative activities and student availability

- Standard working hours: 35-37.5 hours per week with flexible start/finish times
- **Early starters:** 07:00-15:00 | **Late starters:** 10:00-18:00
- Academic staff may compress teaching into specific days subject to timetabling constraints

Compressed Working Week

9-day fortnight: Work standard hours over 9 days with one day off per fortnight **4-day week:** Extended daily hours (8.5-9 hours) with one weekday off

- Must maintain research output expectations and teaching commitments
- Not available during peak teaching periods (Weeks 1-2 and 11-12 of term)

Term-Time Working

Academic calendar alignment: Reduced hours/days during term time with extended breaks

- Professional services: Up to 44 weeks per year (8 weeks unpaid leave)
- Academic staff: Research-intensive periods during vacation time
- **Essential cover:** Skeleton staffing maintained during vacation periods

Application Process

Eligibility and Approval

- **Probationary period:** Complete 6 months satisfactory service before application
- **Application timeline:** Submit requests 4 weeks before proposed start date
- **Review criteria:** Role compatibility, team impact, service delivery, student needs

Key Requirements

- Maintain research output and teaching quality standards
- Ensure adequate PhD supervision and student support coverage
- Participate in essential departmental meetings and activities
- Coordinate with research group and administrative team members

Trial Period

- All arrangements subject to 3-month trial with monthly review meetings
- Performance metrics: Research deliverables, teaching evaluations, collaboration effectiveness
- **Adjustment process:** Modifications agreed through discussion with line manager

Operational Guidelines

Communication and Collaboration

Availability expectations: Responsive to emails within 24 hours during working days

- Schedule regular team check-ins and research group meetings
- Use shared calendars to coordinate collaborative activities
- Maintain visibility of research progress through regular updates

Equipment and Resources

IT support: Laptop, VPN access, and video conferencing tools provided for remote work

Laboratory access: Coordinate equipment use and maintain safety protocols

Library resources: Ensure continued access to research materials and databases

Monitoring and Review

Performance standards: No reduction in research output, teaching quality, or service contribution expected

- **Annual review:** Flexible working arrangements evaluated as part of PDR process
- **Policy review:** Department-wide assessment annually with staff feedback
- **Modification rights:** Arrangements may be adjusted based on operational needs

Examples in Practice

Senior Lecturer: 2 days remote research work, 2 days on-site teaching, 1 day compressed into evening hours for international collaborations

Research Associate: 4-day compressed week during non-teaching periods, full-time during intensive teaching weeks

Administrative Coordinator: 9-day fortnight with alternate Mondays off, maintaining core student support hours

Technical Specialist: Flexible start times (07:00-15:00) to support international equipment deliveries and early laboratory users

Policy effective from [Date] and subject to annual review.