

Management

Traditional practice	Now in 2014	Framework in practice says
Manage through attendance. If I cannot see you, I cannot manage you	Manage through what staff produce and do (deliverables/outcomes) regardless of where they are located	We trust staff to work effectively and efficiently wherever they are. Everybody will be clear about what is expected of them in their roles Focus will shift from hours worked to what is being done Managers have a responsibility to track performance and progress with their team regardless of their location If deliverables are not being met, poor performance will be managed robustly
Traditional practice	Now in 2014	Framework in practice says
Some flexible working schemes are available	There are increased opportunities for us to work flexibly such as part-time, different working patterns	We can balance our work and other life demands better The needs of the customer and the service come first when deciding when I work

Agile Working Guidelines

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1. Introduction

We live in a society where all organisations, from local councils to banks, the leisure industry and shops have to respond effectively to communities that want services around the clock. Agile Working is about bringing people, processes, technology, time and place together to collaborate and work in the most effective way to deliver better services.

Agile working is therefore a real opportunity for Camden to transform the way we do business, be flexible in where and how we work while at the same time offering far more flexibility in the ways our community accesses and receives our services and offer staff more opportunity to work flexibly while still delivering outcomes for the Council.

We are a Timewise Council which means that we champion flexible and part-time working, using our own practices as an example to other employers in the public and private sector. This demonstrates our commitment to agile and flexible working and our undertaking to make Camden the best possible place to gain work and build a career.

Agile working is multi-dimensional and has many different forms, it combines flexible-location and flexible-time working arrangements.

- **Flexible-location** working includes hot-desking, remote working, working from community hubs and working from home arrangements.
- **Flexible-time** working means having a varied working pattern that is not just Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. Camden operates many different types of flexible-time arrangements, including compressed working week, part time hours, term time only working and job sharing.

At Camden we believe it is important that there is an appropriate balance of interests between the Council and our employees. We do, however, want to make sure that working in an agile way does not mean that service delivery suffers in any way. In fact, we want it to be a better service. We also want to make sure that employees and managers know what is expected of them, to ensure that there is fairness and equity and that working arrangements are safe. This document addresses these issues.

2. Key Principles

The key principles that underpin the Council's approach to agile working are:

- The organisational values (the ways of working - WOWs) are important to successfully implementing agile working arrangements.
- Service delivery and outcomes must not be compromised and Camden will consider the implementation of, and any requests made by staff for, agile working on the basis of service requirements.
- It is not a right to work in an agile way it's based on service need. Working arrangements may be reviewed at any point if there are concerns about your outputs, performance or transparency of your whereabouts as well as if it no longer best meets the needs of the service.
- Camden will implement agile working arrangements to maximise the use of its accommodation resources in line with the accommodation strategy.
- Camden accepts that there is not a 'one-size fits all' approach to implementing agile and flexible working; different departments and services will have different needs and requirements.

3. Aims of this guidance

The aims of these guidelines are:

- To set out Camden's approach to agile working
- To provide employees with information on the types of agile working, i.e. flexible location and flexible time working.
- To provide managers with a framework for considering agile working arrangements and managing staff in an agile environment.

4. Scope

This guidance covers all Camden staff, including schools based staff, where agile working is being considered. It is however noted that in some services and schools, the type of roles and services provided make it particularly difficult to offer agile working arrangements, e.g. remote working. More information can be found in the Agile Working – Frequently Asked Questions document on Essentials.

These guidelines will change and evolve over time as Camden embeds agile working.

5. The benefits of implementing agile working

As stated in the introduction, there are many benefits of agile working for the council, its customers but also for staff.

For Camden:

- Greater flexibility to meet service needs and improve customer service.
- Being an innovative, forward-thinking council by focusing on outcomes rather than being present in a fixed office.
- Evidence from other organisations points to increased productivity from staff.
- Evidence suggests the potential for reduction in absence.
- Evidence suggests that agile working improves employee retention and motivation.
- Creates an environment of trust between manager and employee.
- The potential to contribute to the environment through less staff commuting to work.
- Reducing the costs of our office accommodation by making the best use of our office space.

For Staff:

- Greater flexibility for parents and carers especially over the arrangement of working hours and location of work.
- Greater opportunities for all staff for development and education inside and outside of work.
- Reduction in commuting time, travel during working hours and travel expenses.
- Can improve working life and open up opportunities for employees with disabilities or health problems.
- Creates an environment of trust between manager and employee.
- Better accommodation and IT equipment.
- Modernised working environment.
- Increased motivation as more control over where you work.

6. Responsibilities

Employee's responsibilities

It is important for employees to note that decisions on implementing any agile working patterns will be based primarily on service needs.

All employees are expected to:

- Identify opportunities to promote successful and positive agile working arrangements whilst remaining focussed on the needs of the service.
- Ensure flexibility, openness and constructiveness in relation to discussions and agreements about agile working with your manager and how you will use technology to work in a different way.
- Be open and transparent about your whereabouts and ensure that this is made clear in for example diaries and on Lync.
- Be open to work in different remote locations with home working being only one option.
- Take appropriate responsibility for health and safety, adhere to health and safety rules and ensure that any H&S issues are raised with your manager.
- Comply with the IT Code of Conduct and other Council policies and procedures, whether working from home, remotely or in the office.
- Comply with agile working, hot-desking or other protocols and arrangements, where appropriate.
- Report to your manager immediately once known, any loss, theft or damage to Council IT equipment or the loss of confidential information.

Manager's responsibilities

Managers are expected to:

- Identify opportunities to implement agile working, with support from property services, to maximise the use of space and office accommodation within their service area to support the accommodation strategy.
- Ensure that all agile working proposals are reasonably considered and endeavour to find a solution, where possible. Ensuring that proposals are dealt with openly, consistently, fairly and promptly and take into account any equality and diversity issues.
- Promote successful and positive agile working by learning from and sharing their learning in with other managers. Keeping an open mind and being prepared to respond to and address any issues or concerns.
- Play a key role in ensuring that any H&S requirements are adhered to when implementing agile working.
- Ensure that they continue to manage staff based on outcomes, that the concept of managing by outcomes has been explained to all staff within their area of responsibility and appropriate methods to monitor output have been put in place.
- Ensure that they continue to manage staff effectively in line with Camden's Performance Development guidance.
- Ensure that staff and, where appropriate, recognised trade unions, are consulted on any changes to working arrangements and/or accommodation moves being clear about any implications as well as the benefits

- To review any agile working arrangements within their area of responsibility, ideally at team meetings or at other suitable frequent intervals as well as with their management team and others across the council as necessary
- Ensure that agile working arrangements positively contribute to outcomes and to adjust or withdraw them should they be found to be not contributing.
- Always plan implementation carefully, with realistic timescales.

7. Health & Safety

Everyone has responsibility for health and safety in the workplace. When moving to an agile working arrangement it is important for a risk assessment to take place. Managers should ensure that employees working remotely undertake a self-risk assessment and ensure that any issues are addressed with Corporate Health and Safety. This includes but is not limited to Personal Safety and Lone Working.

In a hot-desking environment staff should make sure that they adjust their workstation and chair to suit their needs and that any further H&S requirements or concerns are raised with their manager. There is a [workstation self-assessment form](#) available on Essentials that can be used by all employees, whether working from home, hot-desking or at a preferred desk.

Further assistance and advice can be sought from the Corporate Health and Safety team.

8. Types of Agile Working

Agile working is multi-dimensional and has many different forms, it combines flexible-location and flexible-time working arrangements.

- **Flexible-location** working includes hot-desking, remote working, working from community hubs and working from home arrangements.
- **Flexible-time** working means having a varied working pattern that is not just Monday to Friday, 9 to 5. Camden operate many different types of flexible-time arrangements, including compressed working week, part time hours, term time only working and job sharing.

The following are examples of the most common types of agile working arrangements that many of our staff currently work.

8.1. Flexible-Location Working

Agile working environment

This is where staff do not have their own personal desk but are given access to a desk when needed, from which they can set up their lap top and Lync system. It can be refined to mean the sharing of a desk/seat/workstation arrangement by more than one member of staff in the team, e.g. 6 desks for every 10 staff. The desks are unallocated and used on a first-come, first-served basis but should only be used if you are working at that desk. There will be collaboration space that you can use your lap top and Lync system from. Hot-desking will mostly suit office staff who can carry out their work in any location and may spend a lot of their working day in meetings and who.

Preferred desks

We value all the work our employees carry out whether it is remotely, work done at home, in a hot-desking environment or at a preferred desk. Some roles require an employee to have a preferred desk assigned to them due to the nature of their work. Flexibility should be allowed with the use of preferred desks in an agile environment, namely employees should have access to preferred desks when they are available. It may also be appropriate to make reasonable adjustments for any employees with disabilities. This might mean being allocated a preferred desk in a hot-desking environment.

Mobile and remote working

This involves staff, for example, social workers and road traffic wardens spending most of their time 'on the road' rather than working in the office. This type of working may include having access to touch down centres or community hubs i.e. dedicated areas where staff access a phone and plug in a laptop or connect it wirelessly. Staff could also check their email using a hand held device such as a PDA or Blackberry from anywhere; it may also be possible to connect to back office systems via these devices. One specific type of remote working is working from home on an ad hoc or regular basis. Staff can use their laptop to access all software and files as though they were in the office.

8.2. Flexible-time working

Compressed working week

This involves the reallocation of time worked into fewer and longer blocks during the week. The following are examples and not exhaustive:

- A four-day week e.g. working 36 hours over 4 days
- A nine-day fortnight e.g. working 72 hours over 9 days

Voluntary reduced working time (V-Time)

This means reducing normal working hours and annual leave entitlement for an agreed period of time with an equivalent reduction in salary on a temporary basis. Working hours can be reduced for up to a year and then reverted back to previous hours but a review should take place to see how the arrangement is impacting on service delivery and the employee.

Part-time working

An employee who works part-time works less than the normal hours of work for their equivalent full-time contract. This is usually on a permanent basis and their associated salary, leave and any relevant benefits are pro-rata'd.

Term time only

This means the employee is contracted to work only during term times. This arrangement allows the employee to take time off during school holidays. Provided they meet the requirements, employees on this type of arrangement will still be able to take other leave, for example, dependency leave and parental & paternity leave.

Managers may consider one of the following as part of a change to term-time only working:

- Current annual hours remain unchanged, but are spread over fewer weeks.
- Annual hours are reduced because the employee changes to term-time only working without increasing their weekly hours. In this case salary and, where appropriate, other benefits and allowances affected will be reduced on a pro-rata basis.

If annual hours are not reduced, the employee will be paid as normal on a monthly basis. If annual hours are reduced, the revised annual salary will be calculated as 12 equal monthly payments and will include pay for pro-rata'd annual leave.

Term-time only is the most common type of arrangement in Camden where employees are contracted to work less than 52 weeks per year, but other arrangements can be considered subject to the needs of the service.

Annualised hours

This means working a defined number of hours over a year, which could mean set shifts that cover the majority of the year and unallocated shifts that the employee is asked to work at short notice. The employee would work full time hours over the year rather than a fixed number of hours a week.

Salary is paid on a monthly basis based on number of contracted annual hours regardless of number of hours worked in that month. Manager and employees must ensure hours are monitored in line with Working Time Regulations.

Job sharing

Job sharing is a form of part-time working, where two employees (or occasionally more) voluntarily share the responsibilities of a full time role. Most posts will normally be eligible for job sharing unless the Chief Officer or Head of Service excludes them. Where a job is excluded staff can appeal against this to the relevant Chief Officer. The Head of Service will decide the working arrangements, responsibilities and any changes to the job after consulting the job sharers.

9. Requests for flexible working

Wherever possible we will offer working arrangements that match the flexible needs of individuals. We positively welcome requests from employees to work part-time, job share or on another agile basis, but need to make sure that our services continue to meet the needs of our customers. We will seek to balance these as appropriate against the needs of employees.

While we believe that in most cases the employee and the manager will agree flexible working patterns as part of normal management discussions it is important to note that employees have a legal right to request to work flexibly and employers a duty to give reasonable consideration to that request.

Camden will consider all requests on their merits, however there is no right to agile and flexible working and we cannot guarantee all requests will be granted. Any request made will be considered upon a balance of meeting the needs of the service and the needs of the employee. When considering requests from employees we will endeavour to be as creative as possible whilst ensuring that any agreed requests meet the needs of the service.

For more guidance on the process for dealing with requests for agile working arrangements please refer to the Flexible Working Request Guidance on Essentials.

10. Agile working in practice

Both managers and staff are expected to identify and consider opportunities for how agile working might apply to their service area or individual role. When opportunities to improve and enhance service delivery have been identified it is up to both the managers and staff to discuss and consider their options and come to an agreement on how the service is best run and how individual roles fit within that.

Implementation considerations

- The **nature of the service**, how it functions and is currently delivered. This is to ensure that any changes will not be detrimental to service delivery. Particularly keep in mind where the service is front line and needs to be open and available for customers.
- The **roles carried out by staff**, the type of work staff do, which roles might be suitable for agile working arrangements. Identify which roles might not be suited to certain types of agile working, e.g. flexible-location working because their roles require a physical presence at a particular establishment.
- The **person doing the job** and any **learning and development needs** that will help staff deliver services in different ways. Whilst the skills and attributes required to carry out the role remain unchanged, it is possible that agile working will require additional skills e.g. the ability of individuals to work without direct supervision, self-motivate and meet deadlines/outcomes.
- The **team as a whole** – consider the impact on the team and working arrangements, for example team meetings, are they all going to be carried out via Lync or once a quarter will the team meet physically at a remote location.
- Proposed **agile working patterns** of the team and that staff working remotely are contactable. Ensure sufficient staff cover at lunchtimes or at the start and end of the day as well as an even spread of the workforce over working days, avoiding peaks in the first half of the week with much lower levels rates later in the week, particularly on Fridays.
- Operational feasibility and quality standards, including health and safety, information governance, legislation and security of equipment must not be compromised. Ensure you are clear about **the IT and accommodation requirements**. It is essential that the right technology is in place to enable agile working. Remember that should despite our best efforts agile working be seen to be not fully supporting service delivery that it may be withdrawn and more traditional working patterns re-established; employees having no contractual right to work flexibly.
- The organisational **ways of working** are important to successfully implementing agile working arrangements. See Section 11 for more on how agile working complements our organisational values.
- Develop **team agreements** - consider management arrangements and work as a team on the practical, organisational and communications arrangements to ensure that agile working will not be detrimental to service delivery. A template can be found on Essentials and it is expected that these are reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that there are clearly defined objectives and requirements agreed with staff, who are working remotely.
- Learn from other staff and managers who have implemented agile working and learn from examples of best practice.

Reaching agreement

In most cases the service manager, in conjunction with employees, should be in a position to agree flexible working patterns for their service area. Where this is the case the manager should ensure that employees are completely clear on what working arrangements are being put in place.

- Contractual changes to terms and conditions of service can only be agreed following careful consideration of the implications and proper understanding of the individual's circumstances. Where a new agile working arrangement results in a contractual change e.g. change in contractual hours, the manager should ensure appropriate consultation is undertaken. If an agreement is reached this will vary the employee's terms and conditions of employment and a change form should be completed and sent to HR Direct.
- When working hours are reduced the employee's salary and any benefits are pro-rated, Pension may also be affected. Staff can contact the Shared Pensions Team for further advice.
- In some situations it may not be possible for the manager to agree a new flexible working pattern and it may be necessary for the manager to request further advice and/or authorisation from their local DMT or a Chief Officer.

Review considerations

It is important to review any agile working arrangements after implementation. Teams are working to a set of principles to ensure agile working actually works where performance does not dip and employee whereabouts are transparent. Working remotely or from home is not a right and if a manager has cause for concern about an employee's performance, outputs or whereabouts then the manager will review the employee's agile working arrangements as this type of working is not suited to everyone.

Reviewing arrangements can include:

- Review your local team agreements to ensure that they are working.
- Set up monitoring mechanisms to check that the changes you have implemented are achieving your goals and aims and service delivery requirements.
- Engage with staff to receive feedback on how agile working is working for them and ensure that any issues are dealt with as they arise.
- Ensure that all necessary IT equipment, furniture and accommodation do not hinder your team's performance but enhance outcomes.
- Ensure that there are clear expectations for staff around communication, performance and learning and development.

11. Managing people in an agile working environment

When people are working in an agile way, managers will be exercising their management skills in a different environment. Most of the core skills are the same e.g. organising workloads, supervision, motivating, team building, ensuring quality and performance management, troubleshooting, listening and initiating improvements. The difference lies in the way managers interact with staff and how they measure work performance. The following sections provide a broad framework of things to consider, further resources can be found on the corporate learning and development pages on Essentials.

Management by results rather than presence

The key to making agile working succeed is to accept that visible presence is often a poor guide to a person's productivity and outputs. Outputs can be measured wherever a person is located and at whatever time they might be working. If your management style is not already focused on results, you will need to adapt:

- Start by breaking the job down into a list of duties and tasks, and then list the main outputs of the job.
- It may help to consider the employee's workload in terms of defined pieces of work e.g. writing a report, developing a project.
- Once these are decided identify the secondary outputs. These may include problem solving as part of a team or input into the performance review of others.
- Once the manager has assessed the tasks that make up a job, allocate each one reasonable time. In some cases they may already have data available to help with this, e.g. the average time it takes to finalise a type of project or the number of claims that can be processed to acceptable quality standards in a week.
- If this information is not available, estimate it or arrange a benchmark sample before flexible working starts, to monitor normal performance.
- Ideally, meet with employees and agree specific objectives in a defined performance period. It could be a week, month, or six-months depending on the nature of the job. In most jobs it would be up to the employee as to how they plan individual days, as long as they meet any requirements on being contactable.
- Secondary outputs are less likely to be more specific but should be noted and discussed with staff from time to time.
- Monitor progress and appraise staff just the same as if they were office based. Be clear with staff the expectations that they should be contactable whilst working remotely.
- Manage by exception – this means only performance manage staff on time where it is believed that there is a problem rather than monitoring all team members' hours as a matter of course.

Managing remotely

Some aspects of management that are taken for granted in the conventional office environment need to be treated more explicitly in a remote working situation. In particular staff will need:

- Clear performance targets and short-term goals.
- Regular feedback on performance and positive reinforcement of achievements.
- Regular communication and a schedule of team meetings.
- Phone calls with supervisors and colleagues to include some personal or social content, and not purely business content.
- Advice on dealing with isolation and/or distractions such as family, friends, neighbours, television, radio, housework.

Remote working is largely reliant on self-discipline and not suited to everyone. If there is an issue with an individual working remotely then the manager may wish to review the arrangements until outcomes, transparency and productivity is at the level required for the role.

Communicating from a Distance

Apart from telephone calls and e-mails, most employees have Lync which allows for video conferencing enabling up to 30 employees having a visual meeting. The range of ICT tools include:

- Instant messaging - allows two or more users to exchange text messages in real time. Messages are displayed as a continuous list in windows on the user's computer screen and they are made to run other applications or share documents at the same time. Please be cautious about the information discussed as these messaging systems have limited security and cannot be used for confidential matters.

- Video conferencing - can be useful for individual flexible-location workers who may attend meetings remotely if other participants are located together.
- Web conferencing – a more recent communication method in which participants all view the same web-based presentation and discuss it in instant message form at the same time. There are security issues to be considered and these can be discussed with ICT.
- Meetings at community hubs - if the remote worker needs to meet face to face or one or more colleagues for any length of time they would normally be asked to return to the office or other work accommodation. However there may be times when meetings from an alternative site are the easiest option.

Trust

"How do I know they are working if I can't see them" is a natural reaction by managers when home or remote working is being discussed. A high degree of trust between the manager and the employee is necessary, as well as clear expectations on what needs to be achieved is needed to successfully manage people from a distance. If this trust is lacking, then this is likely to be a problem whether the member of staff is working outside / inside the office or even when their manager is not around and will need to be managed accordingly. A facilitated discussion with support from HR is a suggested way forward where there is a trust issue between managers and staff.

Performance Management Tools

Clear systems also need to be in place for performance management. The council already has these in place. They should be no different for staff working remotely or from home. Please refer to the guidance on Performance Development on essentials. If managers are concerned about their employees' performance then they should refer to the Council's Underperformance Policy and Procedure.

Career progression

There's a common fear that "out of sight" means "out of mind". For remote workers, this can be a big issue. Extra care needs to be taken to see that all forms of remote workers get equal access to learning and development opportunities and consideration for promotion opportunities.

Isolation

There is a fear that employees who work away from the office will lose contact with their manager and colleagues and feel isolated. It is important that employees attend regular team meetings in the office and participate in any performance reviews to ensure that their development needs are discussed. Managers should ensure that they maintain regular contact with agile workers and that they are included in any correspondence that is circulated and any social events that are organised. Examples of good practice include, 'virtual coffee breaks', where a manager might agree to be available to speak to staff over the phone on a daily basis or scheduling in regular meetings where the employee can come into the office.

Concerns about agile working environments

Some critics of new, open flexible working spaces argue that people work best when in familiar surroundings or 'customised' spaces. Whilst this may be a common complaint, there are ways to combat these feelings. The introduction of 'break-out' areas, small 'quiet areas' for private concentration, generally improved accommodation and kitchen facilities and are all important factors to take into account when considering an agile environment. These can help make the environment more conducive than a traditional fixed-desk environment.

12. Fitting in with the Organisational values (the ways of working)

The following is a summary of how we see agile working fitting in with the organisational ways of working:

Deliver for the people of Camden

- We meet with our partners and customers in places and times that suit them
- Our support channels are broader and more far reaching
- We listen and get customer feedback using a wide range of tools and media
- We respond to our customers in ways that they have told us they prefer

Work as one team

- Collaborate – make the most of our work spaces
- Sit with the people you need to sit with to get the task done
- Get together in different ways – to share ideas
- Share information – appropriately and effectively

Take pride in getting things right

- Respond more rapidly to our customers. Identify the right knowledge and skills required to address a particular issue
- Know where colleagues are within the organisation
- Make it easier for us to quickly get people together when we need them
- Reduce the red tape

Find better ways

- Deliver services innovatively
- Different approaches to meetings
- Working with others across the Council

Take a lead

- Don't leave it to others. If you spot something that can be done innovatively, do it.
- Challenge things and question whether this is the best way to deliver value for money.

13. Sources of additional information and further assistance

Information on the following is available on Camden Essentials:

- Agile Working FAQs
- Flexible Working request Guidance – process and forms
- Flexible Working request FAQs

Information on the following is available on the Agile C Space:

- Agility within a framework: your agile working guide
- Agile working – your health and safety
- Remote working
- Tools and technology
- SharePoint
- One note
- Lync

We hope you find this guidance useful. If you require further assistance or you have more specific queries around agile working, contact the following:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| • HR | - | HR Direct on extension 6655 |
| • Health & Safety | - | via HR Direct on extension 6655 |
| • ICT | - | Corporate ICT on extension 4321 |
| • Telephony | - | Corporate ICT on extension 4321 |
| • Mobile phone contracts | - | email ictsupport@camden.gov.uk |

Further information on Flexible Working and Work Life Balance can be found on the following websites:

- [Department for Business, Innovation and Skills](#)
- [Local Government Association](#)
- [CIPD](#)
- [ACAS](#)

14. Changes to this document

These are Camden's Agile Working guidelines as at 1st October 2014. They will be reviewed on a regular basis in line with legislative changes and Camden's policies. As a consequence we may need to change this document in the future, but if we do, we will do so in consultation and will let staff know. If we need to do something different, we will always be fair and reasonable.

DOCUMENT ENDS