

Working Remotely from Abroad FAQS

We recognise that the majority of our workforce are now working from home and are continuing to deliver services to our residents, staff, visitors and businesses to the highest standard. As such, we want to ensure we're supporting our employees to have a good work-life balance whether they are working on site, from home, or from another country.

We have introduced our longer term approach to working from abroad. Depending on the circumstances, we have agreed to allow employees to work from abroad for an extended period of time as long as:

- they can fulfil all duties remotely;
- accept liability for any additional fees and incidents related to the travel;
- return to work in the UK/Camden for a set period of time agreed by the service.

The following FAQs set out our approach to managing working remotely from abroad requests. It's important to note, not all of our services operate in the same way so it may not be possible to accommodate working from abroad due to the nature of the role and the systems that you require access to.

Please contact your HR Business Advisor for advice on individual cases.

Working from Abroad	
Q1	How can an employee request to work remotely from abroad?
A1	<p>If you want to request working remotely from abroad, you need to complete the Working from Abroad Risk Assessment so any potential issues or impact can be considered before reaching an outcome. The completed form should be sent to the line manager for a decision, in conjunction with the Head of Service.</p> <p>All accepted working from abroad requests are subject to a weekly review where it may be decided that in practice, it is not feasible to support the request due to issues experienced that impact the employee or service delivery. In these circumstances, employees must agree to return to the UK immediately or take a period of annual or unpaid leave to cover the remainder of the trip. For more information, please see Q3&Q5.</p>
Q2	What is the criteria managers should consider when deciding whether to accept a working remotely from abroad request?
A2	<p>We recognise that due to Covid-19, employees have been unable to travel abroad for a period of time such as, to visit family or care for a family member. As part of our commitment to being a family friendly employer, managers should be flexible and consider whether the employee would still be able to complete duties effectively whilst working in another country.</p> <p>The following factors should be taken into consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the length of time requested going to cause detrimental impact on service delivery?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the risk assessment flag too many issues without any mitigation? • Will the destination's time zone mean that the employee would be unable to complete core day-day duties during the hours they are proposing to work? • Have you discussed expected outcomes/pieces of work to be completed from abroad as part of the agreement (being flexible and agreeing to review on a weekly basis)? • How will hours be covered where the employee may not be contactable e.g. team rotas, providing a reasonable response timeframe in 'out of office' emails, moving online team meetings to earlier/later in the day so everyone can join? • Will the employee need to handle high volumes of sensitive or personal data which is owned by a third party organisation? • Will the destination or work set up cause a negative impact on the employee's health and safety e.g. regular late night working, personal safety risks? • Have you agreed emergency contact details should you be unable to reach the employee when abroad? • Have you considered whether the proposed country has suitable IT/ network speed coverage and accessibility?
Q3	What happens if employees aren't able to work when they reach their destination abroad?
A3	<p>If employees aren't able to work due to network connectivity issues or imposed travel restrictions in the country, they will need to agree to take a period of annual or unpaid leave to cover the duration of the stay. Alternatively, employees can buy up to 3 additional days (pro-rata) with their line manager's approval via the Additional Leave Purchase Scheme.</p> <p>Managers and employees should have a contingency plan in place if a working from abroad request is accepted. The following factors should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employee may experience slow internet connectivity due to the country's available download speed. • The employee may cause accidental damage to their laptop or agile kit (Digital Services are unable to ship equipment abroad). • The employee may need to agree time back if they experience periodic system failures e.g. 'downtime' throughout the agreed working hours. • The potential cyber security threat which could mean the employee is temporarily blocked from accessing to our network from abroad. • The working from abroad arrangement may need to end if work is impacted on day-day basis. This should be discussed on a weekly basis and depending on the circumstances, the employee may be required to return to the UK as soon as possible (within 24 hours) or take a period of annual or unpaid leave. While the employee

	makes arrangements to return, this could mean a period of no cover for the service.
Q4	What happens if the employee experiences IT issues whilst working from abroad?
A4	<p>Employees should contact the Service Desk as normal during UK support hours: 08:00 – 18:00 Monday to Friday +44 20 7974 4321 (or extension 4321 from MS Teams)</p> <p>Outside of these hours, employees calling the Service Desk will be transferred to our support partner who will perform basic account/password resets and 1st line support tasks only. If the nature of the fault is something that cannot be resolved by the support partner, they will log a call for the Service Desk to commence investigation from 08:00 on the next business day.</p> <p>Staff who have Camden Council provided mobile phones and/or iPads should contact the Service Desk if they plan to work abroad to ensure that they are on the correct mobile/data plan with our provider. Please note, employees should be using WiFi to connect devices from abroad, however in exceptional circumstances we will enable access via a Camden mobile phone.</p> <p><i>If equipment is stolen, lost or damaged abroad, employees must notify their manager and the IT Service Desk immediately. They will be required to wait until they return to the UK offices to repair the device to a working condition. Please note, although we would repair/replace the agile kit upon return to the UK, this would be subject to a departmental fee.</i></p>
Q5	What liabilities will the employee need to accept if their working from abroad request is granted?
A5	<p>The employee will accept liability and not hold the Council responsible for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arranging adequate travel insurance cover • paying for flights or additional fees related to travel • ensuring passport validity and the correct visa is obtained ahead of the trip • complying with applicable public health guidance (e.g. quarantine periods) both in the host country and on return to the UK • accepting liability for any incidents that occur in the host country • ensuring personal safety, working from the host country at own risk • accepting that their employment contract remains subject to UK law and jurisdiction whilst working in a different country (salary will only be paid into a UK bank account and will be subject to relevant payroll deductions). • maintaining all the usual precautions to working safely remotely e.g. following the IT Code of Conduct, data protection guidelines

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accepting that they will need to use annual/unpaid leave or return to the UK immediately if their manager deems the working from abroad arrangements as unsuccessful. making additional tax and social security declarations, if required. <i>Employees won't need to pay local taxes for working abroad in most countries if the stay is shorter than 183 days in a rolling 12 month period. The EU, EEA and Switzerland allows UK employees to continue to pay into UK national insurance and pensions. In other countries where no agreement exists, the UK employer must continue to deduct employee UK NICs and pay employer NICs for the first 52 weeks. Employees are responsible for clarifying additional local tax/social security requirements for the specific country they want to travel to.</i>
Q6	Which countries will not be considered for working from abroad requests?
A6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> China Russia Saudi Arabia Belarus Burma/Myanmar Iran Kazakhstan Moldova Morocco Tunisia Ukraine <p>We cannot allow staff to work from any of the countries above as they do not allow encrypted devices and there is a risk of sensitive data being intercepted online.</p> <p>Countries that GCHQ/NCSC would deem to be relatively safe are the EU member states. The European Commission also recognises Andorra, Argentina, Canada (commercial organisations), Faroe Islands, Guernsey, Israel, Isle of Man, Jersey, New Zealand, Switzerland, and Uruguay as providing adequate cyber security protection.</p> <p>Requests to work in countries that are not specified, for example, Turkey will be considered on a case by case basis, with advice from HR, Information Rights and IT. Please note, the nature of your role and type of information accessed will be considered on case-by-case meaning that some requests may be declined.</p> <p>Employees who require access to Civica and Searchlight will not be able to work from abroad as these systems store data directly from DWP and HMRC (the Council has a data sharing agreement with these organisations which stipulates that this data cannot be accessed outside of the UK – we have no discretion over this term). Please note, other systems that store personal information provided by residents or service users for example, MOSAIC can still be accessed from abroad as this data is owned by the Council and our network operates on a secure VPN,</p>

	however employees are still required to maintain all the usual security precautions to working safely remotely .
Q7	How can working remotely from abroad be implemented in a front-line service where employees need to be present at specific times to serve customers?
A7	Not all types of flexible working will be appropriate for every service as we all work in different ways to deliver outcomes. For example, working remotely may not be possible if the role is front line face to face. Managers should consider alternative approaches to flexible working such as, compressed week working, or part time hours if the non-working day can be covered. The scope for making changes to working arrangements to balance personal commitments may sometimes be better considered across the team to ensure work can be adjusted so that service needs are met.
Q8	I have agreed a working from abroad request subject to review, how do I manage this and my team member?
A8	Along with considering all the above, managers should think about whether the request to work from abroad can be managed across the team for the proposed duration. Managers should hold review meetings every week to assess whether the arrangement is working in practice and consider the following: Trial first – to identify whether it is feasible. Ensure the employee is aware that they may need to take unpaid/annual leave for the remainder of their stay should they experience issues whilst abroad. Core hours/ collaborative hours – agree hours that employees must be contactable with flexibility around time zones. Employees should prepare to work evenings to ensure they are able to respond within a reasonable UK timeframe if they plan to travel further away. Ground rules – with any flexible working arrangement, agree general day-day expectations to ensure there is minimal service disruption. Health and safety – discuss whether the employee has an adequate work station set up , as well as making sure they feel mentally and emotionally well throughout their stay. Check ins – be flexible about team meetings and 121s, this could mean moving them earlier/later in the day/week so the employee can join in from overseas. Liability – ensure employees are aware that they will need to seek their own advice on host country requirements, and accept that they are working from abroad at their own risk.
Q9	What happens if the employee becomes unwell whilst abroad?
A9	If you become too unwell to work during your travel, you must follow the usual Sickness Absence Management Procedure to inform your manager of the reason and how long you expect to be absent from work. If you are still unwell at the end of the agreed travel period, you will need to provide a 'fit note' covering your absence from the 8th calendar day,

	<p>signed by a doctor stating what is wrong with you in order to receive sick leave. You should return to the UK as soon as you are well enough to do so.</p> <p>In circumstances where you are required to self-isolate abroad even if you are no longer sick, the service will need to identify whether it is possible to continue working from abroad during the period of isolation or agree an extended period of unpaid/annual leave to cover the absence. It is the employee's responsibility to arrange a flight back to the UK at the earliest possible date of return.</p>
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The following FAQs below set out the key principles clarifying when it would be appropriate to grant a longer term working from abroad arrangement.

	Working from Abroad for 6+ weeks
Q1	Can employees request to work from abroad for a period of travelling?
A1	<p>Employees should use annual leave when planning trips abroad for leisurely purposes or general travel. Working from abroad should not be used to take a 'normal' holiday.</p> <p>Your health and wellbeing is our number one priority – and now more than ever, it's really important for us to take time out to switch off and relax when we can so we encourage everyone to plan to use annual leave wherever possible.</p>
Q2	Can new starters request to work from abroad?
A2	<p>Employees must complete their probationary period before they can request to work from abroad. As more of us are working remotely, it's really important that managers provide a thorough induction experience for new starters so they are able to integrate into the team. The first six months of any new job should be spent understanding duties, how the team works and developing good working relationships to support you as you learn the role. This is why it is extremely important that new starters remain in the country and are able to travel into Camden when required.</p> <p>Click here for more information about being a new starter.</p>
Q3	When should I consider granting an extended working from abroad request?
A3	<p>We recognise that there are circumstances that require employees to travel abroad for an extended period of time. Rather than taking a period of absence or career break, managers should be flexible and consider whether the employee would still be able to complete duties effectively whilst working in another country.</p> <p>The following factors should be considered when assessing whether a longer term request to work from abroad should be accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it an exceptional familial emergency that requires the employee to stay longer than six weeks? • Is it a hard to fill role that will face recruitment difficulties if the employee had to leave the post to travel?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the length of time requested going to cause detrimental impact on service delivery if the employee is unable to be physically present? • Will the condition to return to work in Camden for a set period of time during the travel reduce the impact on service delivery? • Does the risk assessment flag too many issues without any mitigation? • Is the employee aware of all the liabilities and their personal responsibilities should the request be granted, including the requirement to return to the UK immediately or take unpaid/annual leave if they are unable to work during their travel (please view the risk assessment for details of liabilities)?
Q4	How often should the employee return to work in the UK/Camden?
A4	<p>As we are a placed based organisation, it's essential that all of our employees maintain a connection to Camden, its residents and service users. As we offer a range of services and work in different ways to deliver outcomes, each area will have differing requirements of when it would be appropriate for the employee to return to work in the borough. When deciding the timeframe that employees should return to the UK, managers should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the employee working on a project that will require on site collaboration time with other members of staff at certain milestones during the implementation? E.g. returning for 3 weeks during a specific set of dates • Does the nature of the role mean that the employee will need to return at certain times during the year? E.g. working in the office during February - March as we enter the end of the financial year. • Does the role require physical presence at regular intervals? E.g. returning to work on site once a month. <p>It's up to the service to decide what a reasonable timeframe would be, and managers should consult with their HR Business Advisor and Head of Service when determining this.</p>
Q5	How do I manage the employee's performance while they are working remotely from another country for an extended period of time?
A5	<p>Managers should continue to monitor performance regularly even if the employee is working from abroad. As an organisation, we do not measure performance by presenteeism so managers should focus on outcomes and trust – is the employee making a positive impact on their job, their team and the organisation overall even if they are not physically present?</p> <p>Communicate with your employee and agree a set of principles to help manage performance based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose working hours where you can make a positive impact on service delivery and balance personal commitments, time zone differences and practicalities. • Your hours can fluctuate, so keep your team informed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to deliver work on time, and work with your team to manage expectations. <p>Regularly check in with the employee to identify whether the working arrangement is having an impact on the delivery of pieces of work. Managers should use the council's Underperformance procedure if this begins to have a detrimental impact on service delivery. Please note, the Council's normal people management procedures will still apply to employees working from abroad.</p> <p>Click here for more information on managing remote teams.</p>
Q6	Can the employee request additional work equipment to be shipped to the host country?
A6	<p>No, we will not ship additional equipment internationally so the employee must ensure they have a suitable working environment if they choose to work from abroad.</p> <p>Before agreeing a request to work from abroad, discuss whether the employee has an adequate work station set up, as well as making sure they feel mentally and emotionally well throughout their stay.</p> <p>If equipment is stolen, lost or damaged abroad, employees must notify their manager and the IT Service Desk immediately. They will be required to wait until they return to the UK offices to repair the device to a working condition. Please note, although we would repair/replace the agile kit upon return to the UK, this would be subject to a departmental fee.</p>
Q7	Do HR Services need to be notified about working from abroad arrangements?
A7	<p>Copies of the risk assessment and decision for any type of working from abroad request (+/-6 weeks) should be sent to HR Services to be kept on file.</p> <p>Changes to working patterns should be recorded on ORACLE using Manager Self-Service, under My Team, Absences; Manage Work Schedules.</p>