

Location Independent Working

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Location Independent Working

Location Independent Working
consists of working at an alternative place rather
than an individual office

- Abroad
- Another site / location
- Home

Definition

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Individual

- Improved Work-Life Balance
- Reduce commute time
- Reduction in travel costs
- Reduced stress
- Legitimisation of home working

Employer

- Improve work flexibility
- Improve recruitment-attractive employer
- Reduce absenteeism and stress
- Reduce space needs
- Reduce pressure on car parking

Environment

- Lower carbon footprint
- Reduced congestion and transport burden
- Higher standard of teaching with innovation

Key Benefits

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Component	Options
Connectivity	Broad band (standard installation), or own provision
Contribution	£20 per quarter for heat/light
Phone	Smart phones
Furniture	Chair
IT	Laptop or home install thin client
Printer	Standardised inkjet colour printer/ scanner/ fax
Trolley bag	Standardised trolley bag
Router	Wireless router provided with broadband installation

Equipment

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- ***Voluntary*** opt in
- Expression of interest
- Decision on those to be included
- Training for participants and managers
- Individual consultations (new)
- Formal agreement to terms and conditions
- Equipment set-up and start-up

Participation process

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All who express interest will be considered for LIW Issues considered during selection

- Degree of required face to face contact with the “customer”
- Whether the role can be delivered LIW
- Impact on colleagues, especially those remaining in the office
- The extent to which work can be delivered and retrieved electronically
- Management agreement

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- Complete an expression of interest form
- Undertake a risk assessment
- Attend relevant training
- Agree objectives and arrangements with managers
- Sign a location independent working agreement

Before start-up, LIW employees must ...

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- regularly review the LIW arrangement with managers
- participate in team meetings
- inform their manager of any changes
- not increase the workload of colleagues
- not conduct meetings within their homes
- make suitable arrangements for child/dependent care
- be flexible with days when present on campus
- maintain appropriate communication via Outlook & CUOnline
- provide feedback

During LIW employees must ...

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- communicate regularly with staff
- set objectives in agreement with staff
- deal with any issues raised
- regularly review the LIW arrangement
- have regular progress discussions with staff

Managers will

Interim Evaluation Issues Covered

- Work Life Balance
- Impact on Travel Patterns
- Experience of Touch-down Space
- Relationships with Colleagues
- The Technology
- Concerns and Responses
- Lessons for Future Cohorts

Work Life Balance

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

1. Work Life Balance

2. Impact on Travel Patterns

3. Experience of Touch Down Space

4. Relationships with Colleagues

5. The Technology

6. Concerns and Responses

7. Lessons for Future Cohorts

- Positive comments about the pilot's impact on work-life balance include:
 - Greater flexibility, better quality of life and less stressed
 - Not working longer hours but working more productively as a result of new flexibility and uninterrupted working time/space
 - Necessitated better time management and organisation
 - Improved personal energy levels as a result of a less condensed working day
- In addition to these positive comments, two participants noted some negative observations:
 - Obsessive checking of email out of hours
 - There were some concerns about the appropriateness and functionality of the technology, especially Thin Client

Impact on Travel Patterns

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- The majority of participants have found that they have reduced the number of journeys that they make into campus by at least one day each week
- Use of public transport has increased by participants.
- At this stage of the pilot scheme the Carbon Footprint impacts achieved are negligible. Little impact has been noted in terms of increased home energy use, largely due to the time of year

Experience of Touch-down Space

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- **William Morris Building** - Participants suggested that the hotdesk space provided is readily accessible. However, concerns were expressed about the capacity of the room once further cohorts join the LIW pilot scheme
- **George Eliot Building** - For George Eliot staff, the lack of dedicated hot desk space has necessitated the use of different working environments. These have included the part-time lecturers room, libraries, cafes and colleagues offices
- **Futures Institute** - The hot desk space provided in the Futures institute is open to all Faculty staff and not just LIW pilot participants. However, it is largely underused and, therefore, readily available

Relationships with Colleagues

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- Participants' relationships with their line managers have either continued in the same fashion as they were prior to LIW or have evolved positively over the course of the pilot period
- Participants did not report any negative comments or reaction from colleagues as a result of them working LIW
- A number of colleagues have been extremely positive in offering support in terms of storage and meeting space

The Technology

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- Participants are overwhelmingly positive about the LIW kit and its fitness for purpose. In addition, all participants (UNPROMTED) noted the quality and responsiveness of technical support provided
- Where minor technical difficulties have been experienced they typically relate to university wide IT infrastructure such as poor connectivity to campus wireless networks
- Several participants continued to express concern over the Dongle. Download limits appear to be reached very quickly, especially when working abroad. Clearer guidance needs to be provided about what the actual usage allowances are

Concerns and Responses

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- ***Understanding and flexibility of colleagues:*** Non-LIW staff need to meet participants half way in terms of their flexibility around organising and conducting meetings, for example, in considering the use of online technology
- ***Concerns about a culture of presentism:*** Participants' feelings of guilt about working off-campus have generally diminished over the course of the pilot
- ***Diminishing social contact:*** Whilst the majority of participants have not experienced this to date, they are expressing concerns about the possibility of it occurring over time
- ***The loss of office space:*** Initial concerns about the loss of office space have not yet been realised

Lessons for Future Cohorts

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- New participants need to be offered bespoke training in the use of the LIW equipment prior to them commencing the scheme. This should include simulated practice and focus on the differences between accessing university systems remotely compared to on-campus
- Independently initiated meeting involving participants, their line managers and technical support to explore and practice new methods of communicating and holding meetings (i.e. web cams etc.)

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- Wireless printing facilities should be made available within hot desk rooms. The current set up is potentially unsustainable over the longer term as numbers of LIW staff increase
- The Faculty have to consider whether it is reasonable or realistic for to sustain the level and quality of IT support provided to participants without the commitment of additional resources
- Arrangements for the storage of Green Boxes, course files, marking and key text books need to be clarified
- A useful addition to the LIW handbook would be a list of commonly asked questions, problems and issues and how to solve them

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- Preliminary meetings with line managers/colleagues to openly share and discuss what LIW is about and what it will mean for all parties
- A more interactive approach to the recruitment phase of the pilot scheme which utilises the experiences of current participants and presents the reality [not just the theory] to potential future participants
- Explore the potential of creating a formal LIW community that will help in facilitating formal interaction between participants

University Cost Benefit Analysis

- This cost has been calculated on the basis of total property costs divided by total space (Property costs included, heat, light, rates, maintenance, support, waste, cleaning)
- Added to this are staff telephone equipment, calls, furniture, IT connectivity and support.
- **Total cost of employee = £4603 p.a.**
- Remote working cost per employee (Use of shared offices, touch down space, remote IT support, an average 2 days spent away from office) = **£3332 p.a**
- Cost saving of : **£1271** per person per year
- Savings for individuals – on average £450 per person per year through less parking and petrol costs.

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