

# Agile Working - Guidance for Managers

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## 1. Introduction

Agile working is about bringing people, processes, connectivity and technology, time and place together, to find the most appropriate and effective way of working to carry out particular tasks. The aim of agile working is to create a more flexible and dynamic organisation, meeting service needs and increasing performance. Work is an activity we do, as opposed to a place where we go. Agile working offers a range of different working practices across organisational sites, other bases, at home or as agreed between an employee and their employer.

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals (the Trust) recognises that the COVID pandemic has highlighted the need for opportunities to work in a range of different ways, enabling employees to maximise their performance and productivity, creating a more responsive, safe and efficient organisation. The need for agile working can be driven by a range of factors including (but not exclusively) business continuity, staff engagement, recruitment and retention, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Working successfully in this way is dependent upon the provision of appropriate support, including technology, management and communication channels which focus on delivering results and performance. Any request for reasonable adjustments eg. additional equipment, should be discussed with the line manager and approved via the normal requisition process.

## 2. Definitions

**Agile working can include:**

### 2.1 Homeworking

When an employee occasionally, or for a limited or agreed duration, works from home, but their main base remains onsite.

### 2.2 Remote working

When an employee works from a location other than their main base, or home as defined in 2.1.

## 3. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide practical guidance, for both line managers and employees considering or engaged in an agile working arrangement.

## 4. Scope

This guidance applies to all Trust employees. It is recognised that not all roles are suitable for agile working arrangements, as some require the employee to

be onsite to perform their duties. For permanent changes to working arrangements which affect an employee's contract of employment, please refer to the Trust's **Flexible Working Policy**.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### 5.1 Employee

- To complete the [Agile Working Assessment including DSE Risk Assessment](#) and review the [Manager's Guide to supporting the transition from office to agile working](#).
- To work with both their Line Manager and the Trust Redeployment Team if their role does not lend itself to be performed remotely, but their health requires them not to attend the Trust's sites (if shielding from COVID 19 for example). To identify alternative duties which they may be able to perform, perhaps with additional training.
- To behave as any other member of the Trust bound by the same Terms and Conditions, Policies and Procedures and the Trust's Values.
- To install the Trust Staff Engagement App onto their mobile device to support ongoing communication and engagement.
- To comply with the requirements of the Trust's Code of Confidentiality and remember that there is personal liability under the Data Protection Act 2018 and their contract of employment for breach of these requirements.
- To only remove service user or staff manual records from the Trust site(s), with managerial consent and even then to ensure the removal of Trust paper records has been risk assessed.
- To not let any unauthorised person have access to the records. This means that other members of the employee's family and/or their friends/colleagues/visitors/ contractors must not be able to see these records or affect any access in their absence.
- To ensure such information is stored on a secure network drive.
- To remember to press CTRL-ALT-DEL or the Windows & L Key to lock the PC or laptop when not in use.
- To only access networked services by an IT approved method of access, such as the Trust remote access token (VPN). [See the Cyber Security/Fraud/IT Device Guidance for Agile Working document](#) for further details.
- To stay vigilant to phishing, smishing and vishing attacks from cyber criminals who are becoming increasingly more sophisticated. See the [Cyber Security/Fraud/IT Device Guidance](#) for Agile Working document for further details.
- To comply fully with all Trust Health and Safety policies and procedures, taking the main responsibility to ensure their work will not expose any members of their household or members of the public to risk for their health and safety.

- To work with their Line Manager to agree how their agile working arrangement will operate and deliver outcome based measures of performance.
- To discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing with their agile working arrangement, with their Line Manager as soon as possible to resolve the issues. A resolution could be an adjustment to the working arrangement or a return to onsite working.
- To attend meetings, training and other work on site as required.
- To ensure their mortgage/tenancy agreement and home insurance is not affected if they occasionally work from home, or do so for a limited period. Failure to inform domestic insurers may result in insurance cover being rendered invalid.
- To notify the Trust of any pre-existing health condition, that may affect/be affected by working agilely.
- To report all accidents/incidents that occur whilst carrying out Trust work, using the normal accident/incident reporting procedures on DATIX.
- To ensure that appropriate contact with their manager and wider colleagues is agreed and maintained.
- To ensure the availability of a suitable work environment (see the [Manager's Guide to supporting the transition from office to agile working](#) and [Agile Working Risk Assessment](#))
- To take reasonable care of all office equipment provided by the Trust and inform the Trust immediately of any loss or damage.
- To ensure they take regular breaks as set out in the Working Time Regulations i.e. 20 minutes for every 6 hours works, however, micro-breaks of 5 minutes every hour are recommended for habitual DSE users.

## 5.2 Line Manager

- To complete the Agile Working Assessment including DSE Risk Assessment with the employee, retaining a copy locally and pass any queries to the appropriate support team for advice.
- To work with both the employee and the Trust Redeployment Team, if the role does not lend itself to be performed remotely, but the employee's health requires them not to attend the Trust's sites (if shielding from COVID 19 for example). To identify alternative duties which the employee may be able to perform, perhaps with additional training.
- To work with the employee to agree how their agile working arrangement will operate and monitor outcome based measures of performance.
- To ensure all their employees working agilely, are fully aware of their Information Governance responsibilities to the Trust.
- To continually review the employee's performance in line with the outcome based measures agreed and the Trust's **Capability Policy** and **Supervision Policies**.
- To discuss any difficulties they (or the employee) may be experiencing with the employee's agile working arrangement, as soon as possible to

resolve the issues. A resolution could be an adjustment to the working arrangement or a return to onsite working.

- To ensure that appropriate contact with the employee is agreed and maintained.
- To recommend the employee install the Trust Staff Engagement App onto their mobile device to support ongoing communication and engagement.

### 5.3 Human Resources

- To provide advice and guidance to employees and managers in relation to agile working, to ensure the guidance is applied fairly and consistently.
- To keep a record of all employees approved to work in an agile working arrangement and ensure this record is updated and maintained. (Data will be recorded in ESR).
- To notify the line manager when any risk assessments are required in line with relevant guidance at that time.

### 5.4 Facilities Management

- To provide Health and Safety advice and guidance to the employee and Line Manager (e.g. on DSE use, lone working, first aid, electrical safety, fire safety, accident reporting etc.).
- To provide advice and guidance to persons conducting necessary risk assessments including [Agile Working Risk Assessment](#) and [Staying Covid-19 Secure in 2020 \(Offices\)](#)
- To arrange the supply of specialist equipment to an employee should an assessment identify them as necessary, however, this will be provided at the site where they predominately work and not across multiple sites.

### 5.5 Health Work and Wellbeing

- To make available to employees working agilely, appropriate resources and support for both physical and non-physical wellbeing. See [Staff Wellbeing Guide](#) for additional detail of services available and how to access these.
  - To access support for physical wellbeing, you can contact Health Work and Wellbeing direct on 0151-430-1985 or email [hwwb.admin@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:hwwb.admin@sthk.nhs.uk) or see [links for further advice](#).
  - To speak to a nurse adviser contact 0151-430-1985 or self-refer via the email link above. [For a list of Mental Health First Aiders, see link.](#)
- To offer additional support for employees working agilely, please refer to the Trust's **Stress Management Policy**.

### 5.6 Education, Training and Development Team

- To enable employees to complete quality appraisals remotely.
- To enable employees to complete Statutory and Mandatory training remotely through the Trust's Learning Management System.

- To work with managers to establish what development is required to support staff working agilely and if this can be delivered remotely, or if it requires attendance on site.
- To curate and make available through the [Manager's Guide to supporting the transition from office to agile working](#) supportive guidance and advice about managing effective working relationships in line with this document.
- To develop and deliver management and leadership support for managers with agile working teams or individuals.

### 5.7 Staff Engagement and Communication

- To utilise a range of communication technology options to maintain effective staff engagement including Skype, MS Teams and the Staff App.
- Use of quick 'Pulse Surveys' to monitor the experience of those working in an agile manner.
- Managers to ensure that the monthly "team brief" is verbally communicated to their teams.
- Managers responsible for local departmental team meetings on a regular basis, ideally face to face or via Skype.

### 5.8 Informatics Service

- To provide IT advice to those identified as agile workers which may include; appropriate mobile IT and support equipment to enable them to fulfil their role, in line with the **Mobile Device Policy**.
- To provide set up support and ongoing support for IT issues. (Please see [Home working Assessment](#) for set up support for Computer Installation, Email, Skype, Video Conferencing and Virtual Desktop, etc.).
- To encrypt all removable media devices supplied to employees working agilely.

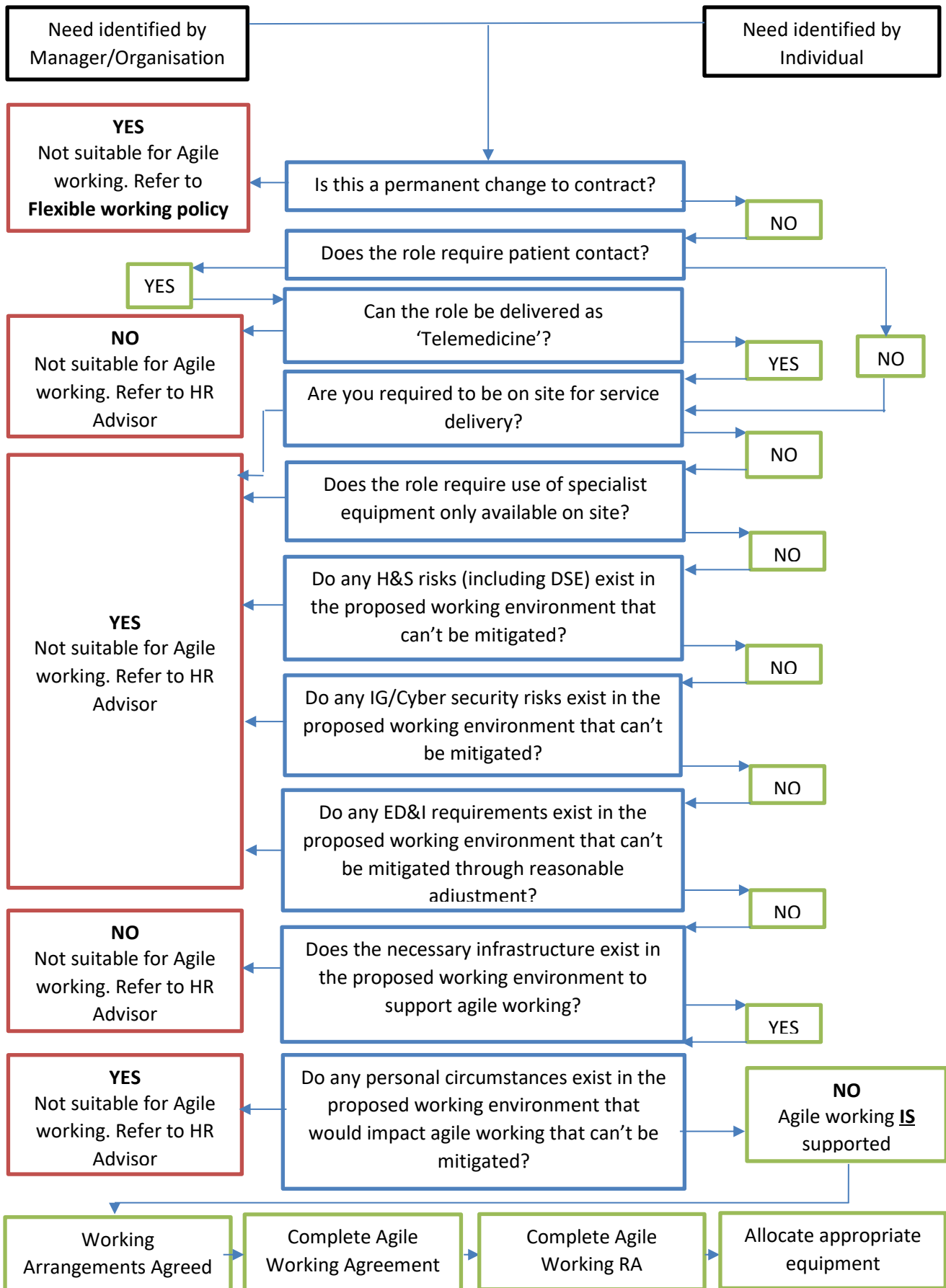
### 5.9 Information Governance

- To ensure all employees working agilely are fully aware of their Information Governance responsibilities to the Trust. [See Cyber Security/Fraud/IT Device Guidance for Agile Working](#).
- To monitor, through audits, any inappropriate activity on Trust systems through date and time stamping.
- To support the investigation of any breaches under the Trust Disciplinary procedure and/or other relevant Trust Policies and Procedures.

## 6. Sickness Absence Reporting

Normal rules governing management and reporting of sickness absence will apply for any employee with an agile working arrangement. It is particularly important that employees, who become ill during a period of Agile working, should notify their line manager as soon as possible.

## 7. Process Flowchart for Agreeing Agile Working Arrangements





Any agreement to work agilely must not be seen as creating any specific new right or obligation to work from home and will not constitute a change to an employee's base place of work.

#### **8. Review and evaluation of arrangements**

A date for a formal review should be agreed by the line manager and the agile worker, to review and evaluate the arrangements. Such arrangements must detail a date for the review (as a minimum at the 3 month point) and the subjects that will need to be discussed.