

Case Study, Working towards Dynamic Working.

We support the provision of work based blended and distance learning courses to industry including degree apprenticeships, so most of our work is online. However, the pandemic challenged us to think of how we work and live in many ways. It was a massive change to adapt to working from home, especially for those who are in customer facing roles, however new technology such as Teams enabled this to be done with relative ease.

So, there is light at the end of the tunnel, and we now have to think about how we return to campus. The introduction of the concept of dynamic working was, initially, difficult to understand, however the guidance notes and the Day in the Life scenarios helped to put it into context.

My manager, Aman Gill-Knobbs, discussed this at our weekly team meetings and asked us to come up with a proposal of how Dynamic Working would work within each of our respective professional services staff teams. Each team has a different remit, so one size would not fit all.

I circulated the notes from OD to my team asking them to read through it, and we would discuss at our next team meeting. They were asked to come with ideas and suggestions. At the meeting we talked about what considerations we needed to take into account such as what our service is and stakeholder expectations. We also spoke about what reasons we would need to attend campus for such as student inductions; face to face meetings with students/employers/academic colleague/wider stakeholders; supporting teaching activities, etc. Out of these discussions also came the need for social interaction with others, and the need to plan. Working through these steps helped to put the Dynamic Working principles into context, and remind us of the services we need to continue to provide.

As a result, it was clear that we were hybrid workers, ie, the need to be on campus, but could work elsewhere at other times. We also went on to discuss what dynamic working would look like, and there were several ideas that went into the pot for consideration. There was a consensus that yes, we do need to be on campus some of the time, but not all of it, so how would be the best way to manage this?

I asked the team to go away and think about it and come back to me with a proposal. The team met on their own, and decided that they would like a pre-determined rota. Each staff member would be allocated time in the office, with the rest of the time working dynamically. This meant that at least one person would be in the office during normal working hours, to manage ad hoc visitors; face to face requests from stakeholders, etc.

The team decided that a rota would be phased in with each member of staff working two days per week, building up to full time once all lockdown restrictions were lifted. In addition, all members of the team will attend for a full day once per week, when a face to face team meeting will be held. This would help to maintain a team spirit and team ethos.



Carol Winder, APEC manager

The team have also arranged a review after four weeks of phased return, and a further review after the full implementation of the rota. If the plan is not working, it will be updated, and this will continue. The rota is published on the team's Visual Board within the work area, so that it is visible.

I have kept my manager informed whilst discussions were taking place with my team and the outcome, which has been approved by both herself and the College's Senior Management Team.

We have welcomed the introduction of dynamic working as a positive step that will introduce flexibility into the service that is provided for all our stakeholders.

Carol Winder
APEC Manager Aston Professional Engineering Centre
College of Engineering & Physical Sciences.