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PAS 3000:2015

Smart Working – Code of Practice



Cabinet Office

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Foreword

This PAS was sponsored by the Cabinet Office. Its development was facilitated by BSI Standards Limited and it was published under licence from The British Standards Institution. It came into effect on 30 November 2015.

Acknowledgement is given to Andy Lake, as the Technical Author, and individuals from the following organizations that were involved in the development of this PAS as members of the steering group:

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- Cabinet Office
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- Working Families

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Any user claiming compliance with this PAS is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

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Presentational conventions

The provisions of this PAS are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is "should".

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

The word "should" is used to express recommendations of this standard. The word "may" is used in the text to express permissibility, e.g. as an alternative to the primary recommendation of the clause. The word "can" is used to express possibility, e.g. a consequence of an action or an event.

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Notes and commentaries are provided throughout the text of this PAS. Notes give references and additional information that are important but do not form part of the recommendations. Commentaries give background information.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. "organization" rather than "organisation").

Contractual and legal considerations

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a PAS cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Particular attention is drawn to the following specific regulations:

- The Flexible Working Regulations 2014 [1]

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0 Introduction

0.1 General

Organizations face the central challenge of doing more with less. This means delivering more or better quality products and services while managing the inputs as efficiently as possible. Smart Working provides methods for meeting this challenge through the modernization of working practices while at the same time providing improved work environments and benefits for employees. Employees benefit by having greater choices about their working pattern and opportunities for improving the way work interfaces with the rest of life.

Smart Working takes a strategic and business-focused approach to flexible working, combining benefits to the employee with benefits to the business and benefits to the environment. It does this by adopting a strategic rather than a reactive approach to workplace flexibility. So rather than making decisions about working patterns on a case-by-case basis in response to individual employee requests, it embeds flexibility as the norm in the way work is organized.

It does this by basing work flexibility on the activities within the work, rather than on individual roles. Using new technologies and new forms of workplace design, work becomes something that can be done in a wider range of settings in the workplace and beyond, and at different times. The new technologies and new work spaces form the platform for work, and a new culture for work is developed that focuses on results. This allows employees more autonomy about how they organize their work, subject to any constraints intrinsic to the nature of the work.

The result is a form of working that enables organizations to reduce their property requirements, travel and other resources used for work, while increasing efficiency and productivity.



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0.2 Smart, flexible and agile working

The terms "Smart Working" and "flexible working" are sometimes used interchangeably within organizations to describe a programme of changes to working practices, workplaces and technologies. However, flexible working is often used to describe a range of specific working patterns defined within Human Resources (HR) policy. Typically these are particular patterns of work (such as part-time working, compressed hours, homeworking) for which an employee can apply and can be approved as a change to the previous or established pattern of work.

NOTE *Attention is drawn to the Flexible Working Regulations 2014 [1]; it enables all employees to request flexible working after 26 weeks continuous employment with an employer.*

Flexible working under the statutory process and in many organizational policies requires initiative on the part of the employee to request an exception to a normal way of working. Smart Working by contrast is business-focused in enabling a wide range of flexibilities based on the nature of the work being done, rather than on individual requests from employees. Flexibility becomes the norm, rather than the exception, subject to the requirements of the work.

"Agile working" is a term also sometimes used as a brand for programmes of Smart Working within organizations, as are other terms such as New Ways of Working or Better Ways of Working.

NOTE 1 *The term "agile" can also refer to agile project management, a method of managing engineering, IT and new product or service development in a highly flexible and interactive manner. The use of the word "agile" in relation to Smart Working does not include this sense of the word.*

NOTE 2 *The Agile Future Forum has defined agile working as allowing an organization to establish an optimal workforce to support an organization's objectives in terms of time, location, role and the sourcing of labour (Agile Future Forum, 2012 [2]).*

Smart Working incorporates the benefits of increased flexibility and organizational agility by introducing the changes to working practices, working environments, processes, technologies and organizational culture that are outlined in 3.1.

0.3 Smart Working across sectors

The benefits of Smart Working are not confined to particular sectors. As increasing amounts of work move to digital platforms, it is important not to think rigidly of sector requirements. For example, the traditional image of retailing may be of shops and other retail outlets that customers visit to view and buy goods, and it might be thought that Smart Working is not suitable for the sector. However, retail now includes online shopping which can be operated from a range of locations using digital platforms. It may even be entirely third-party based for fulfilment, with retailers not involved in directly handling goods. So the working environments in such instances are less constrained by traditional retail requirements. Increasingly, retail involves a hybrid of digital and physical activities. The same is also true for many forms of manufacturing.

Most large organizations across all sectors also have many functions such as marketing, design, HR, finance, strategy, IT, etc. that work in similar ways. The adoption of Smart Working is therefore relevant to all sectors. The existence of particular requirements that act as constraints on flexibility and mobility for some types of work are not seen as ruling out Smart Working for the whole of the organization. In delivering services, organizations in all sectors can still review how the delivery of these services can be improved, particularly by utilizing the potential of flexible working arrangements and reviewing the physical environment in which the staff operate and the tools and processes they use.

Embracing the Smart Working principles (see Clause 4) does not imply doing everything recommended in this PAS that is relevant to an organization all at once. A Smart Working organization is one that has embarked on a journey, not reached a destination. A culture of continued change (see 10.9.5) means that even small steps taken on a regular basis should give rise to accumulating benefits. It remains essential, however, to develop an integrated strategy for achieving the benefits.

This PAS is intended for leaders and managers in all employing organizations. It aims to help them to understand the range of actions that need to be taken across the people, property and technology functions to implement Smart Working successfully.

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1 Scope

This PAS gives recommendations for establishing good practice for the implementation of Smart Working. It covers changes to working practices, culture, working environments and associated technology.

It is intended for use by the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, for large organizations and small. It is intended for use by leaders and managers in employing

organizations, and those charged with implementing Smart Working programmes.

It is not intended to specify a particular product or detailed solutions.

This PAS is intended to provide a strategic framework for good practice in the Smart Working space.

2 Terms, definitions and abbreviations

For the purposes of this PAS the following terms and definitions apply.

2.1 Terms and definitions

2.1.1 activity-based work settings

organization of the workplace into a range of shared spaces designed for different work activities

2.1.2 agile working

form of work organization involving Smart Working techniques and flexible deployment of the workforce

2.1.3 collaboration technologies

information and communications technologies (ICT) equipment and software that enable people to communicate and work together in a flexible way, wherever they are located

NOTE For example, communications technologies that enable video and audio conferencing, use of shared screens, working on documents simultaneously, conducting remote meetings, etc.

2.1.4 conferencing

communication technique for meeting virtually using voice, video or the web

2.1.5 culture

organizational culture encompassing assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours and management styles

NOTE This covers both the formal and informal ways that people interact in the workplace and in their dealings with colleagues and external parties.

2.1.6 flexible working

any kind of working that is considered to be outside the traditional working pattern

NOTE 1 It includes changes to the time, location and contractual arrangements of work.

NOTE 2 A traditional working pattern is one including features such as fixed hours, fixed location, fixed desk and face-to-face interaction by default.

2.1.7 footprint of work

impact of work in terms of energy use and resource consumption

2.1.8 homeworking

working from home, all the time, part of the time or just occasionally

NOTE This covers both working at home, and working using home as a base for working in a range of locations.