IT support to work remotely – frequently asked questions

If you are a member of University staff or postgraduate researcher who uses our IT systems or software you should consider how to connect to University services from a personal computer or device. These FAQs support the information we have already published on StaffNet:

- IT support to work remotely – StaffNet news article
- Working remotely at The University of Manchester – A guide from IT Services

Note about hyperlinks to the IT Support Portal/Knowledge Base: If you get an error message when selecting a link to an article or form in the list below, ensure you are signed into the IT Support Portal and then try the link again.

1. What options are available for connecting to University services remotely?

There are two options for connecting remotely:

1. Using the GlobalProtect Virtual Private Network (VPN)
2. Via Remote Desktop connection.

If you only need to access your University email or personal network storage (P: drive), you can do this via the web:

- Outlook Web App
- P:Drives on the web

2. Do I need to set up remote working if I have a University managed laptop?

No. If you have a University managed laptop you are most likely already setup to work remotely using the GlobalProtect VPN an 2-factor authentication from Duo, and shouldn't need to do anything more.

3. How do I setup remote working using the GlobalProtect VPN?

Most University services can be accessed via the web using the GlobalProtect VPN and 2-factor authentication from Duo. You'd need to ensure that your work is stored on a University network drive such as a 'P:Drive' to be able to access it. If you already have the Microsoft Office suite installed on your personal computer, then this may be the best option for you.

You will need to:

- Install and connect to GlobalProtect
- Ensure none of the files you require to access are saved on your computer's hard drive. Read Locate and backup files saved locally
- Ensure you know the file paths for your P: drive and shared/research drives. Read Find the path of a shared area/drive. The P: drive location for all staff and students is \\nask.man.ac.uk\home$
- Connect to ('map') shared network drives.

- Access your email via the Outlook desktop application or Outlook Web App

Detailed information is available in our extensive "Working remotely at The University of Manchester" downloadable guide:

- Read: Working remotely at The University of Manchester – A guide from IT Services

4. How do I setup remote working via Remote Desktop connection?

Once set up you can use your personal computer to connect to your University managed computer and have access to all of your programs, files and network resources as though you were accessing your University computer in person. We have streamlined the setup process so that in most cases you do not need to call the IT Support Centre but can instead self-serve using the Software Centre and WakeIT service on your University computer.

While on campus, you will need to:

- Go to the Software Center and install the Remote Access Setup application. This will set up your University managed computer so that you can access it remotely
- Register your University managed computer on the WakeIT service
- Reboot your University managed computer and ensure that it's kept on before you leave

Note that you do not need to contact the IT Support Centre to perform the above steps.

When working remotely, you will need to:

- Install and connect to GlobalProtect on the computer you are using remotely
- Connect to your computer via Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS and iOS, Linux or Chromebook.

Detailed information is available in our extensive "Working remotely at The University of Manchester" downloadable guide:

- Read: Working remotely at The University of Manchester – A guide from IT Services

5. What tools are available for communication and collaboration?

IT Services support the use of email, Skype for Business (Lync if you are on Windows 7), and SharePoint for internal collaboration. BT conferencing is available for voice calls if you need to involve people external to the University. Note that there are charges to the University for using the BT conferencing service, and setup instructions are available in the Working Remotely Guide. Media Services have also extended their licence for the Zoom video conferencing tool so that all staff can use it.

6. How do I get setup for Skype for Business?

Skype for Business is already installed and setup on most University managed computers – you can use it to make video and audio calls, and exchange chat messages with other members of staff and postgraduate research students.

Skype for Business can be accessed on a personal computer if you are connect to your University computer via remote desktop connection. You can also download it and install it directly from the [Microsoft Office site](#), following the installation instructions detailed in the [Working Remotely Guide](#).

Note that Skype for Business does not work on Mac – Mac users can install **Sky** as an alternative.

There's more information about Skype for Business in the [Working Remotely Guide](#), or in the [Skype for Business Knowledge Base article.](#) You can also get support from the [Skype for Business Help Centre](#), which details how to set up and join meetings, calls and chats.

7. Can I use Zoom or PowWowNow for conference calling?

Zoom is a video conferencing tool that can be used if one of the above are not suitable. Media Services in The Directorate of Estates & Facilities have extended their existing educational license used for the central Video Conferencing service. Now every member of staff at the University has access to a professional license with Zoom. This gives the ability to host meetings of unlimited length and of up to 300 participants at a time. [Visit Media Services' Zoom information page](#).

The PowWowNow conference calling tool is not a supported or free service and we recommend you do not use it. As a premium phone service, the user is personally billed for any charges.

8. Can I get Microsoft Teams?

Microsoft Teams, part of [Office 365](#), is not yet a fully supported service. New users or new Teams cannot be added at this time and any requests to do so will not be progressed. If you've already got it as an Early Adopter you can continue to use it but keep in mind that only a limited number of staff have it. Teams is only used for internal collaboration within the University.

9. Can I get a laptop?

Due to the evolving situation we are currently not able to process any new requests for laptops. As part of their contingency planning, Faculties and Professional Services have started a process to identify any critical roles that require a laptop device where this is not yet available and will plan to fulfil those requirements where possible.

10. Can I take my desktop computer home?

No. You must not take your University owned desktop computer home. It is not supported and will not work. You can however take your monitor, mouse or keyboard with you, if it is safe to do so.

11. I need help setting up remote working on my computer – who can I contact?

Please refer to the [Working Remotely Guide](#) in the first instance, but if you cannot find an answer to your question there, then contact our IT Support Centre either online through the [IT Support Portal](#) or via telephone on +44 (0) 161 306 5544.

12. I don't have internet at home. How can I get online?

In the event that you need to use mobile Wi-Fi to work remotely, you can order a Wi-Fi dongle and a SIM card by following instructions from IT Services: [Network: Dongles and mobile Wi-Fi](#). Before doing so please

use the [Vodafone network status checker](#) to ensure that you will be able to get a strong enough signal when working remotely, ie from home. Note that you will need to supply a finance code to order these items, or claim back the costs via expenses.