

# **SoSS Guidelines on Core Hours and Inclusive meetings for Staff**

These guidelines aim to promote a healthier work-life balance, be inclusive of all colleagues and accommodate caring responsibilities of staff. They seek to reduce barriers to participation in the intellectual life and governance structures of the School.

## **Core working hours are 10:00 to 16:00.**

The following activities fall under the 'core hours' guidelines:

1. Committee meetings, bilateral meetings between staff and/or students, research seminars, team meetings. There is [information online](#) about booking workspaces for virtual meetings.
2. These guidelines do not include teaching – this should be addressed through the existing University [flexible working policy](#) and [the carers policy](#).
3. These guidelines do not include one-off events such as Away Days, Annual Lectures, Celebration events, Graduation etc. but it is good practice to provide plenty of notice (at least 2-4 weeks) so that colleagues can arrange replacement care, etc.

For meetings falling under #1 which are to be held outside 'core hours', the convenors need to provide a rationale to the Head of Department indicating that the core guidelines have been considered.

## **Inclusive meetings:**

- Arranging times to meet colleagues and/or students within and beyond core hours is acceptable, if the people involved are happy with this. Staff, particularly senior colleagues, who are arranging such meetings should be mindful of how they check if the timing is detrimental, especially if the individual being asked might feel awkward about saying no.
- The format of meeting needs to be clearly specified and agreed in advance – any last-minute changes can be tricky for those with access requirements (for example, some colleagues may need to arrange personal assistance, in advance, when attending meetings) and/or childcare considerations.
- Hybrid meetings are often the most inclusive type and should be encouraged where practicable.
- Consideration should also be given by managers to staff who work part-time or flexible hours and may be unable to attend meetings/seminars even if scheduled within core hours. Managers or the relevant senior colleagues should plan how any staff affected will be included in discussions and/or receive information, which can be either in advance or shortly after meetings have taken place.

- Consider [accessibility needs](#) of colleagues. It is good practice to complete an [Equality Inclusivity Assessment](#).
- Be mindful of any major religious festivals when scheduling events/meetings. The [EDI Directorate](#) can offer advice and information that may be helpful.
- Avoid scheduling meetings and events during the University's designated 'meeting light weeks', which should be communicated via Staffnet. Where possible, consider school holidays.
- Check that any key event or meeting does not clash with other big events within the School or Faculty. This can be done by checking Staffnet and/or contacting the Engagement and External Relations team.
- Rotating the timing and format of the meetings may help colleagues with different working patterns

END