

'Working from anywhere' at VU Amsterdam: our vision for the future

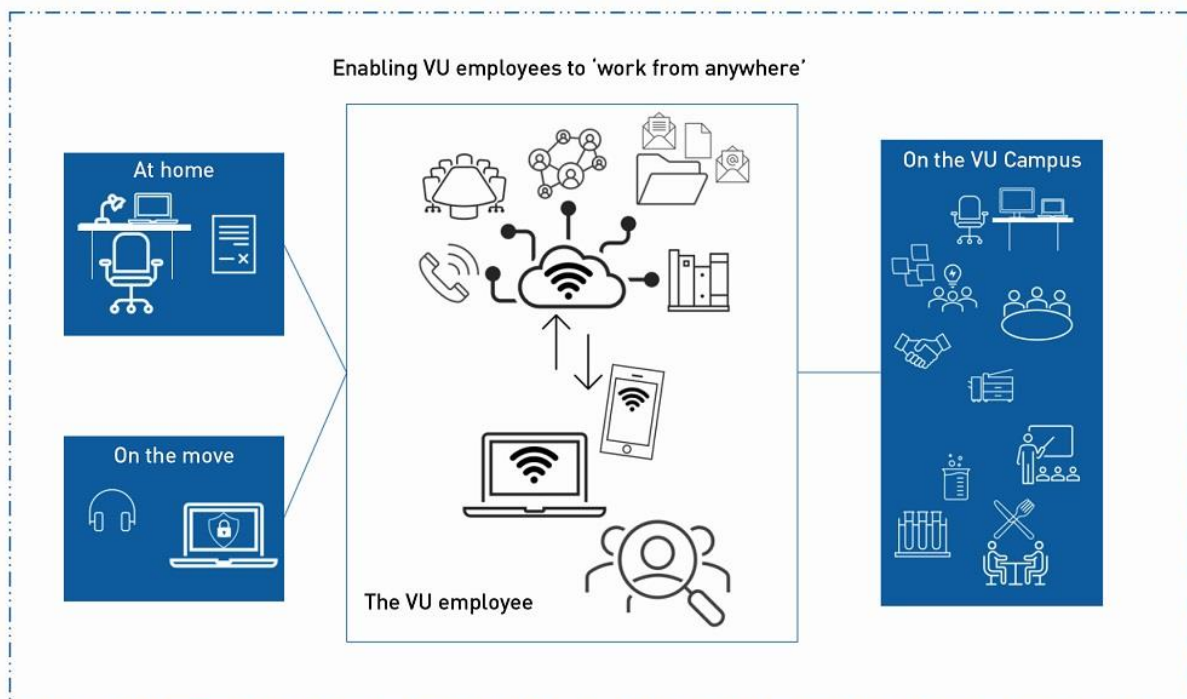
VU Amsterdam provides its employees with a safe and pleasant working environment that befits our research, education and valorization activities, support services and the way that we aspire to work together. Hybrid working is becoming the norm, and this means enabling people to work on-campus, off-campus or on the move, and allowing our employees to choose a safe, pleasant and suitable workplace that works for them. We are supporting employees and managers by providing workplaces and IT facilities, and also by helping them to gain the skills they need to collaborate effectively in a hybrid work situation.

Use of the working environment

Hybrid working facilitates employees, regardless of where they choose to work. This could be somewhere on the VU campus, but it could also mean working from home, on the move, or somewhere else. Employees should be free to work from anywhere and choose the work location that suits them best at any given time. On campus, employees can also choose between different types of workplaces, depending on what kind of work they are doing. There are spaces for meetings, consultation and teamwork, for example, and also spaces for focus and concentration. We allocate these workplaces in order to make optimum use of the space available. Workplaces are therefore no longer allocated to a particular employee, unless the nature of the work or the use of specific facilities means that there is no other option. Online or hybrid meetings are going to become just as 'normal' as in-person meetings. This will enable us to distribute occupancy better across the week and reduce the number of people who need to travel for work.

Agreements

Hybrid working can only work properly if employees and managers make clear agreements, trust one another and make allowances for each other. The focus is on the results that are achieved rather than on being physically present. Changes in the team, in employees' personal circumstances or in the work to be done may make it necessary to update those agreements. Teams will regularly need to check that those agreements are still working properly for everyone. Teams should also make agreements about availability and team meetings.



Support

We are helping employees and managers to adopt hybrid working. Employees have VU mobile devices that they can use either at home or on campus, helping them to work from anywhere and switch easily between workplaces, with easy and secure access to documents and information no matter where they choose to work from. In addition, VU Amsterdam offers support for setting up a health and safety-compliant workplace at home. We are equipping our employees with the skills they need to collaborate, such as taking part in hybrid meetings and staying connected online, but also how to use data and files smartly and securely, at home or from anywhere. Managers receive support in how to manage hybrid teams. In addition, there will be a special focus on social cohesion, so that we still feel part of a team even when we are working remotely.

Meeting each other

VU Amsterdam is a campus university where colleagues and students can meet and inspire one another. Our campus helps colleagues to connect and feel part of the university. The campus is designed to be an attractive and lively home base for all kinds of meetings, collaboration, inspiration and debate. Units and departments are free to develop their own styles, and staff and students make an active contribution to our lively campus. In addition, there are quieter workplaces where employees can concentrate, so that those who do not have a suitable workplace at home are still able to work effectively.