Teamworking in a Hybrid Environment

There are many advantages to Hybrid working both for the University and members of staff. Teamworking in a hybrid environment can provide challenges which are not present in an office environment when everyone is working in the same space. The guide provides some suggestions on how to maximise working relationships with your colleagues when you are operating in different locations. There a five main areas to concentrate on:

1. **Communication**
Good communication is the key to successful teamworking:
   - Practice open, honest and respectful communication as this is the basis for good teamwork.
   - Be contactable when you are working from home. Share your working patterns with colleagues to provide clarity on where you are working and when. You could do this by adding it to you e-mail signature for example.
   - Schedule regular catch up meetings with your colleagues to check-in with them and provide updates on what is happening in your team
   - Practice workplace etiquette for e-mail communications. The tone of an e-mail can be misinterpreted more easily than face to face conversations.
   - Hybrid meetings – these can be challenging. Employees joining virtually may find it more difficult to be heard and may have an overall poorer experience of the meeting. During the meeting, ensure that everyone is given an equal opportunity to speak. The default should be to turn your camera on, unless there are particular circumstances which don't allow this.
   - If something isn't working within your team speak to your line manager.

2. **Maximise teamworking opportunities**
   - Identify and schedule tasks which involve teamworking for when you are on campus and can do these when all those involved are in the office.
   - Have an open door policy when you are on campus to encourage interactions with others in your department
   - Be flexible – you may have to rearrange your working from home day to attend an important in person meeting
   - Don't expect your colleagues in the office to deal with an increased workload because you are working from home. If they regularly have to cover your tasks, make sure you reciprocate and help to ease their workload.
   - Interact with others on a social level as well as a work one. Think about organising something that will encourage this – anything from a shared coffee break, to a bake-off or a team night out.

3. **Support**
   - Check-in with colleagues. If someone is behaving differently from normal, or out of character, this may indicate that they are struggling and support from team members may be welcomed. Some people may be able to mask if something is wrong so remember to check in on those who seem okay too. Social relationships and interactions are important for everyone's wellbeing. Be mindful of the personal circumstances of others

4. **Inclusion**
   - Be aware of your own potential for unconscious bias, especially towards those who you work in closer physical proximity with.

5. **Wellbeing**
   - Hybrid working can result in improved work-life balance but the opposite is also true. Bear in mind that colleagues who are working from home are entitled to proper breaks to ensure they are managing their own wellbeing.
   - Share ideas with colleagues on how to manage wellbeing when working remotely.
   - Above all – be kind!