



The OVO Way Of Working

We know you are at your best when you can bring your whole self to work - and that means making sure you have time to do the things that are important to you, both in and outside of work. Sometimes life can be messy; we know things won't always fit neatly into schedules and we want to make sure this is reflected in the OVO way of working.

We care about you. We want OVO to be a place where you can invest in your career while balancing other aspects of your life. Changes to how we work during the coronavirus pandemic have shown us that working flexibly can be effective across many, if not all parts of our business, and we will use this momentum to embed far more choice into our day-to-day working lives.

We believe that...

- You should have individual choice around where and/or when you work on a day-to-day basis, wherever possible.
- Teams thrive when we come together to collaborate, communicate and connect.

To support this freedom of choice we have developed some principles to clarify the OVO way of working. Some of this is work in progress, it may not all be in place yet, but we will work together over time to help this live.

The OVO way of working principles

A decorative graphic in the bottom left corner consisting of several overlapping, stylized green leaves or petals. The leaves are rendered in various shades of green, from a vibrant lime green to a darker forest green, with some areas showing a fine, diagonal line texture.

Do the right thing

Think about the OVO culture when making choices to work flexibly. We have a culture of high trust. We trust you to do the right thing for your lifestyle, for your team connectivity and collaboration, and importantly the right thing for our customers.

Give permission

Managers should start from the position that all work is flexible unless it can be proven why this is not possible. Role model flexible working so that it becomes a core part of the culture and not something that feels different.

Performance matters

Choices around flexible working should not be to the detriment of either individual or team performance and/or productivity.

One size doesn't fit all

For some roles and projects, flexible working may take different shapes and forms. This comes down to the requirement of the role and what is needed to deliver. Equally some individuals may prefer to work from the office or work fixed hours.

Teams should actively discuss and agree if/how flexible working can be accommodated at a local level with their managers; always considering the default of choice and flexibility.

It's a two way street

When everyone is working flexibly all sides need to make it work. It's everyone's responsibility to actively include colleagues who are both physically present and working remotely. Just because you're not working in the office, or at a particular time, should not mean you miss out on important information, opportunities, etc. If you need a meeting to be face-face please make this clear in the invite issued.

Keep people updated on your plans

Make sure you notify your team so they are aware of your working arrangements, how they can contact you and when you are (or aren't) available.



So what does the OVO way of working look like?

Put simply, this is about flexibility. There are a couple of ways that we think about flexible working. The first is 'choice-based' which are the day-to-day decisions on where and when you work that are not written down. We want this to disrupt the need for more formalised agreements because they are simply no longer needed to the same degree. The second is formalised agreements around the way we work that are approved and written down.



Choice-based flexible working



This sits at the heart of our culture of trust, it is a fluid way of working. Although you are employed at a specific OVO site, wherever possible, you are autonomous in making your own choices on where and/or when you work on a daily basis. These choices need to reflect the needs of your role, team and the wider organisation, which is why flexible working may look different in various parts of our business. Sometimes for operational reasons, we may need people to be in a particular location at a particular time.

Where you work

These are choices to work remotely (eg at home) or in the office. Remote working would need to be in a location suitable for work purposes and in your home country. An example of this in a given week could include working from home for most of the week and then joining your team in the office for a day or two to collaborate on a project.

When you work

These are choices around when you start/stop work, taking shift patterns and core hours into consideration. For example, choosing to finish early as you have completed all of your objectives for that day. Or it could be about taking time out during the day to go to the gym or pick shifts that work best for you. We see core business hours as defining the etiquette when most meetings will be set/business activity conducted, not determining when you must be working.

What this means in practice



To make this work for many, the practicalities need to be kept simple:

Team

Teams need to discuss and agree flexible working options at a local level. We would encourage teams (unless fully remote communities) to spend some time in the office together each week e.g. one day, to support connection, collaboration and communication.

Managers

Supporting teams who work fluidly across different locations often requires more energy to be invested in proactive connectivity. Consider how you can virtually connect your teams - Whatsapp groups, chat channels, informal video chats, picking up the phone over email, etc.

Working environment

It will be for individuals to assess whether they can effectively do their work remotely (eg from home) given everyone has different personal circumstances. Working remotely should not become a substitute for caring responsibilities.

Get to know each other

In a remote working scenario, think about making time to chat to your colleagues eg 'how was your weekend?', 'how is everyone doing today?' before jumping straight into the agenda.

Equipment

Where you are choosing to work remotely, normally a laptop and relevant software will be provided by the company and for some roles monitors and headsets. Other specialised IT equipment, desks and chairs will not normally be provided unless special circumstances apply.

Wifi access

Individuals need to ensure they have adequate wifi access available with sufficient bandwidth to ensure remote working is effective.

Home based expenses and other allowances

Given this is a choice and will therefore be variable, no allowances or expenses will be paid over and above normal salary and benefits.

Health and safety

This remains paramount. If you have any safety concerns about working flexibly, please come and speak to the People Team.

Meetings

Wherever possible a virtual meeting option should be offered to support freedom of choice. In a more remote environment it is helpful for everyone to know when a meeting needs to be face-face and requires everyone to be in the office (which can be flagged in the invite). This will help people feel integrated and part of the community.

Setting boundaries

It's up to you to set boundaries for your personal and professional life so that the two work well together. When working remotely it can be easy to continue working as there is less of a clear line when work ends and personal time starts. When you are working remotely, this does not mean you are expected to be available all of the time.



Formalised flexible working

These are arrangements that are specifically agreed and written down. This may be contractual home working arrangements and/or part time/ different working patterns. These are often requested due to a change in circumstances; for example returning from parental leave, taking on caring responsibilities, starting to study or wanting to make considerable changes to your work/life balance. In the first instance, this would always be discussed with your line manager.

There may be more complexity to these arrangements as in most cases they require advance approval and in the case of contractual home working, more requirements around health and safety, equipment, entitlements and expenses and IT set-up.

Different working patterns

If you wish to make a formal request for different working patterns eg part-time, please see The OVO Way Of Working policy in the policy section on the intranet which can provide full details. Those who have a formalised agreement to work flexibly can also take advantage of choice-based flexible working options.

Contractual home working

Contractual home working (documented in your employment contract) will normally only exist where there is no OVO site (could be serviced office) within a reasonable distance from your home. This may occur where we have talent availability issues and need to hire you in a remote location or where we have closed sites and want you to continue working with us. If you are a contractual home worker, you can also take advantage of choice-based flexible working options. Please see The OVO Way Of Working policy which provides full details of the provisions.

