

Ways of Working Policy

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Overview

This policy is for RadHR workers to crystallise and make explicit our existing ways of working. It outlines the practices and processes through which we manage our work, in line with our [values](#).

Our practices come under three main categories:

1. [How we approach our work](#)
2. [How we manage our time](#)
3. [How we look after one another](#)

These categories are outlined in more detail below.

Background

We prioritise ways of working together that feel radical, respectful, and supportive of one another. What this means in practice is a constant work-in-progress. So far, these practices have often been negotiated and carried out informally between us, but it is important to write them down so that we can: 1) use and adapt them more effectively, and b) ensure they can be conveyed to new starters to RadHR as we endeavour to work with a wider range of people.

Principles

Our ways of working should be aligned with [RadHR's principles](#), and therefore attempt to:

1. Redress wider social, racial and economic injustices;
2. Value different types of work equally and 'see' contributions and types of knowledge that are often less seen;
3. Provide both reliability and flexibility, in recognition of different needs.

This policy is intended to be read in conjunction with the [RadHR Pay Policy](#), which outlines how we decide our rates of pay between ourselves as well as our model for uplifts; the [RadHR Leave Policy](#), which outlines our flexible and generous approach to holiday leave and pay; and the [Decision-making Policy & Process](#), as it relates to processes for agreeing various arrangements outlined below.

What we mean by worker

We use 'worker' to refer to everyone who works at RadHR. This includes freelancers as well as PAYE staff, and Core Team members and associates.

Core Team decision-making in this policy

While this policy applies to all workers involved with RadHR, some of the decisions outlined are *not* made by all workers. Rather, the Core Team at RadHR is generally responsible for most organisational decision-making.

We define the 'Core Team' in our [RadHR Core Team policy](#) as

'the main decision making body for RadHR Ltd, as per the [RadHR Decision Making Policy and Process](#). It is the group of people who currently carry out most of the day to day work associated with RadHR.org, RadHR events and the running of the organisation.'

If you are not part of the Core Team, but are affected by any part of this policy and would like to discuss it, **talk to us**. We try as much as possible to be flexible about how we approach our ways of working together.

Practices

How we approach our work

Group culture

Our group culture informs how we try and approach our work as a team. We see group culture as the conditions we create together that shape how we work and, at RadHR, we work to ensure that these conditions align with our [principles](#).

Some of the things we aim to do as part of a values-based approach to working together include:

- **Support one another to clarify and state our own boundaries** e.g. Asking ourselves if there are ways of working, such as very long meetings or working solo for long stretches, that we find particularly stressful, and trying to avoid them;
- **Respect one another's boundaries** e.g. If someone says they don't want to be contacted outside of working hours, except in exceptional circumstances, we will avoid doing so;
- **Actively discuss when two people's boundaries are at odds with one another** e.g. One person prefers written communication, while the other prefers verbal communication; how can we both be flexible to support the other person's needs or preferences?;
- **Make proactive space for differences to be discussed** e.g. 'Maintenance meetings', Check-ins, 1-2-1 conversations;
- **Support one another's whole selves/lives** e.g. Enabling flexible working and encouraging the time off we all need for our lives to feel better, happier—or at least more manageable!

Building in rest

We try to honour a *culture of rest*. Put simply, this means trying to keep our work in perspective so that it can be sustainable for the long-term. We are conscious of the all-encompassing sense of urgency that can occur when you are connected to the work you're putting out in the world, especially when this work is part of a broader commitment to supporting and engaging in social movements. We are familiar with how this tendency can lead to burnout, and that burnout is especially prevalent in not-for-profit spaces.

We believe that RadHR is an important resource, but we also remind ourselves that it is not frontline work. There are some specific practices we follow as part of this acknowledgement, in an effort to work gently and sustainably so that we can continue to do what we do. These are:

Realistic capacity planning

As part of our commitment to [Unlimited Paid Holiday](#), we plan our work as an organisation using a general rule of around **80% annual capacity** in addition to **deducting minimum holiday entitlement**.

This looks like:

(# of workers multiplied by # of hours they work per week)

minus **(# of workers multiplied by pro rata minimum holiday entitlement)**

minus **20%**

equals our **realistic capacity**

Though this is a blunt instrument, it is part of a broader commitment to planning our work in a way that feels gentle, responsive, and realistic.

This planning happens on an annual basis as part of our strategy days and we check-in about how it is going on a quarterly basis.

Breaks from Core Team work and shut-downs

We don't do Core Team work (e.g. meetings and other Core Team contact points) on

- UK bank holidays
- Two weeks over the Christmas and New Year period every year
- Two weeks over the Summer, usually in the final two weeks of August

During this time, workers are free to keep working if they like, or else take the time as paid leave. A full explanation of how we manage leave can be found in our [Leave Policy](#).

Comms outside of standard working hours

For urgent matters, the Core Team communicates through a Signal chat, but we generally reserve Signal for things that need an immediate reply.

Switching off

We encourage workers to set their own boundaries about work contact and communicate them to other RadHR workers as much as possible.

In-person work

Although RadHR is a generally remote organisation, some level of in-person work is expected throughout the year, whether for external work (workshops, events) or internal (team days). We try and ensure that participating in in-person work is as accessible as possible.

Team Day Location

Team Day locations are agreed by the Core Team as part of the planning before each Team Day, and are subject to change depending on the different needs being juggled across the team (e.g. childcare arrangements, public transport considerations, personal commitments, etc.).

Expenses

Where expenses are incurred as part of a workers' RadHR hours, these can be claimed and will be reimbursed by the organisation. We consider expenses to include any cost that would not otherwise occur related to:

- Food and drink;
- Travel, including public transport, and private transport if necessary (taxis, petrol).

Core Team members have their own RadHR bank cards which they can use to cover these expenses. Other workers can claim these expenses back via an invoice. Where cost is an issue, workers may request that RadHR covers these costs up front. We will do this wherever possible.

In general, we try and spend RadHR money in ways that align with our organisational values. This is subject to interpretation and ongoing conversation as we don't currently have a formal policy in place, however considerations we have come upon so far have been:

- Prioritising public transport over car/aeroplane travel wherever possible
- Prioritising hostels, hotels and independent B&B-style accommodation over AirBnB
- Organising team day meals at independent restaurants and cafes as opposed to big chains

How we manage our hours

Flexible working

Flexible working is our standard way of working together. Flexible working includes, but is not limited to:

- Compressed/stretched hours (i.e. working our weekly hours over more/fewer days - eg. 3 days in 2.5, or 3 days in 4);
- Seasonal hours (i.e. working different hour patterns depending on the season);
- Flex-time (i.e. working different hours depending on the day - e.g. a shorter day but with some evening work one day, and a longer day the next)

In addition, all RadHR workers are remote as standard.

Workers are generally free to set their own hours as long as they are sufficiently able to carry out their work. For Core Team members, they must also ensure that they:

- a) Are able to attend regular [Core Team contact points](#) (e.g. the weekly Team Meeting; Team Days)
- b) Are regularly available for internal and external meetings, most weeks

This is to ensure that the Core Team has sufficient space and time for team collaboration and decision-making.

Overall capacity

The difference in overall hours between the Core Team member with the fewest hours and the Core Team member with the most should not exceed 2:1.

This may change if there is a Core Team member who wishes to voluntarily opt out of this ratio in order to work fewer hours. We would like to avoid long-term situations where there is a significant disparity between hours. Therefore, opt-outs must be re-agreed with the Core Team on a biannual basis (e.g. every six months).

When work isn't getting done

If an issue raised about a colleague relates to that colleague's work not being done, it should be treated initially as a 'Work Support' question. A third colleague will then kickstart a process via the '[Work Support Policy](#)' to help the colleague to meet their responsibilities. This could include both individual support (e.g. peer to peer coaching, or help with navigating relevant medical systems) and structural change (e.g. readjusting responsibilities across the team).

Freelancing & other work

Workers are free to take on other work outside of RadHR as long as it does not impact their ability to complete their work at RadHR, and as long as they raise and mitigate any potential conflicts of interest, in line with their RadHR contract.

Overwork and working time regulations

Currently, no one at RadHR works more than 3 days per week. We know that sometimes workers may go over (or under) their hours slightly depending on workload. However, as a rule, we generally try to avoid situations where people may be susceptible to regular overworking.

Where a worker is going significantly over their hours on a regular basis, the Core Team will meet with them to discuss what support might be useful. This may include:

- Adjust how organisational responsibilities are held across the team;
- If collective capacity is stretched already, remove or pause areas on the *Work Areas* sheet;
- Incorporate some new reasonable adjustments, in cases where the overwork is linked to unmet support needs;
- Any other kind of adjustment as agreed by the Core Team.

Additionally, while we encourage workers to create a flexible working schedule that works for them, we generally discourage compressed hours where schedules extend beyond a 10-hour day, except in one-off situations (e.g. a team day).

Working time regulations

In general, RadHR strongly discourages workers from exceeding the UK's [Maximum weekly working hours](#), also known as the working time regulations, which are calculated as an average of 48 hours or more per week.

If a worker's work outside of RadHR pushes their weekly hours over the working time regulations (for instance, if they take on a 3 day/week job alongside their 3 day/week job at RadHR), they must let the Core Team know and sign an opt-out agreement.

In general, we would prefer to avoid workers opting-out of the maximum working hours, and will work with the worker to explore alternative solutions wherever possible.

Core Team contact points

Core Team check-ins

The Core Team meets weekly to check-in with one another and go over any work that needs to be discussed as a team. It is generally expected that all Core Team members attend.

The Core Team is open to changing the time and date of the weekly check-in if needed and if agreed by all team members.

Team Days

We arrange regular team days where Core Team members come together to work in person. We generally aim for **at least 3-4** team days per year.

How we look after each other

Considering the size and relative nascence of RadHR, we are privileged to have the flexibility to support one another in ways that feel pretty tailored to our respective needs. Here is an outline of the current ways we look after each other, based on the current needs of our existing team.

If at any point a new or existing RadHR worker needs a kind of support that is not outlined here, they can flag this via [one of the Core Team contact points](#). The Core Team should then meet to discuss how this support can be best extended.

Buddy meetings

We offer all Core Team members a 'buddy' with whom they are able to meet regularly. A 'buddy' is someone else from the Core Team who is able to provide a listening ear and support workers in raising any specific requests (such as around specific working patterns, tasks, hours, or reasonable adjustments).

Buddy meets are generally carried out for at least the duration of the induction process (approx. 12 weeks) but can extend beyond this period or be reintroduced if needed/useful.

Non-Core Team workers do not have a buddy, but they will generally have someone in the Core Team who acts as their point of contact. Though they do not have regular meetings in the same way as a buddy, the Core Team contact should endeavour to ensure that other workers have the support they need and are able to raise any requests with the Core Team as needed.

Accommodations and reasonable adjustments

Accommodations and reasonable adjustments are provided for everyone who needs them, and can include (but are not limited to) things such as:

- Communication preferences (written, verbal)
- Timekeeping needs (e.g. needing regular rest breaks during meetings)
- Work boundaries (e.g. not contacting someone outside of work unless urgent)
- In-person working considerations (e.g. around location, care responsibilities, energy levels);
- Anything else relevant.

Generally, a worker should outline their accommodation and reasonable adjustment needs during their induction process, in a conversation with their buddy. Workers can also raise new needs after induction has ended via either a [Core Team contact point](#) or, if preferred, in a 1-1 conversation with their buddy.

Where an accommodation relates to something new, for instance a new medical condition or a pregnancy, the Core Team should actively reach out to the worker and check if they need any additional accommodations. This is in addition to any required risk assessments.

Access to training & materials

All staff members have access to a budget for materials and training. Currently, this budget is:

- **£500** per person annually for training
- **£200** per person annually for materials

The budget between training and materials costs is flexible, which means workers have some wiggle room in exactly how they split costs.

Additionally, as we all work remotely, new starters will receive a one-off budget of **£500** to cover any materials required to set their home workspace up. The budget is flexible and exact purchases are to be agreed with the Core Team. However, examples of purchases include:

- Stationery
- Laptops, desktops
- Desk chairs
- Software

For anything purchased using the materials budget, the expense is covered in full by RadHR, and any materials purchased are owned by RadHR.

Upon leaving RadHR, workers may be able to 'buy back' their work laptops at a discounted price if they wish to keep them beyond the end of their contract.

Future additions

There are some things we'd like to include in this policy in a longer-term way, but which we haven't agreed formally. We are keeping a running list of these things here:

- Expenses to cover care costs (in cases where it is not a usual working day)