

# Board of Management

## People & Culture Committee

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Wednesday 1 November 2023</b>
<b>Paper No.</b>	<b>PCC1-F</b>
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Subject of Paper</b>	<b>Hybrid Working</b>
<b>FOISA Status</b>	<b>Disclosable</b>
<b>Primary Contact</b>	<b>John Gribben – Vice Principal People and Corporate Support</b>
<b>Date of production</b>	<b>June 2023</b>
<b>Action</b>	<b>For Discussion and Decision</b>

### 1. Recommendations

The Board are asked to review the responses to the hybrid working survey and take findings into consideration when planning the future of hybrid working at City of Glasgow College.

### 2. Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the People & Culture Committee

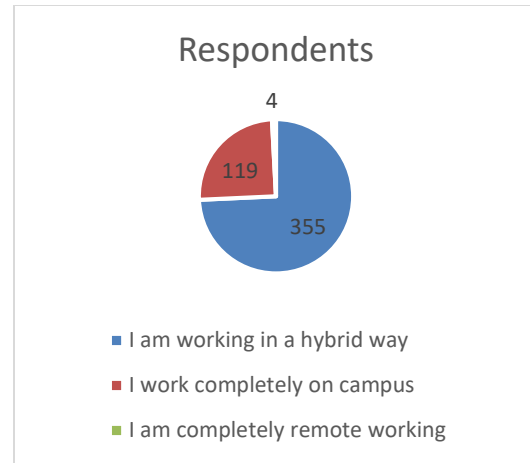
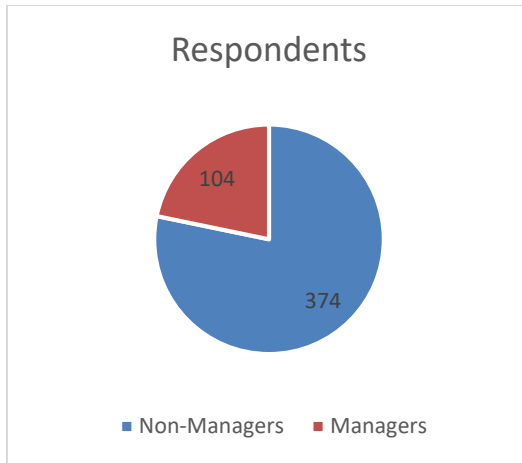
on the uptake of hybrid working and summarise the impact of this at City of Glasgow College. Additionally, this paper will indicate potential challenges and opportunities which have arisen from the pilot so far. The Executive Leadership Team and Senior Management Team were provided with this update in June 2023 and recommended continuing the hybrid working pilot for an additional 12 months.

### **3. Context**

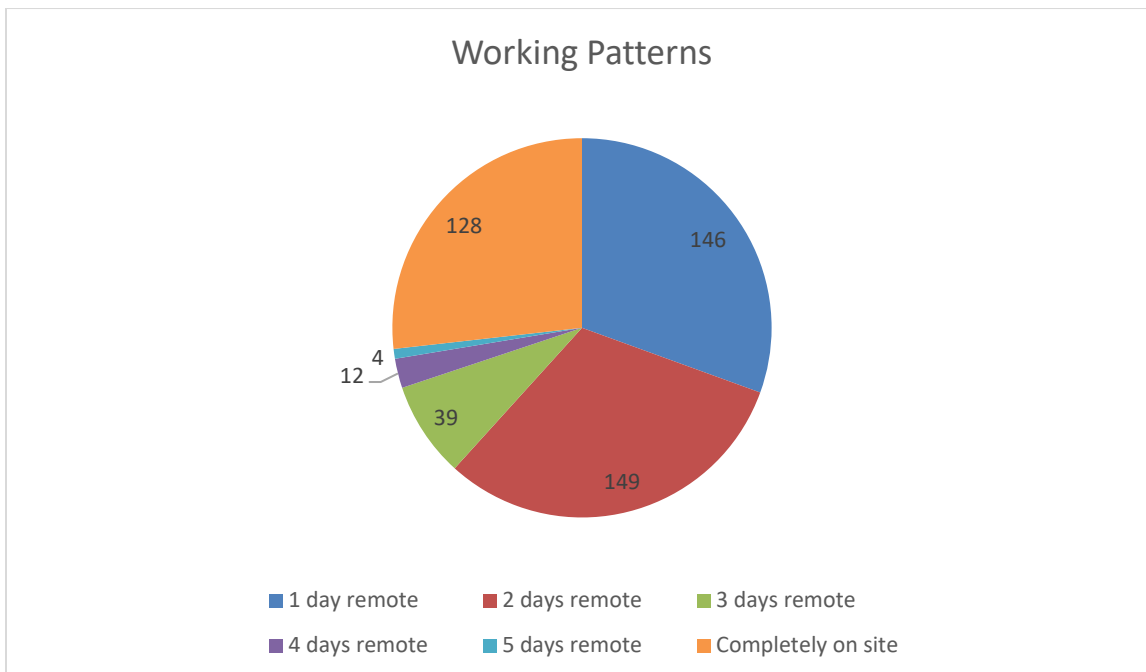
- The College communicated the intention to 'trial' hybrid working, through a series of 'town hall' gatherings led by the College Principal in May and June 2021.
- The trial period began in August 2021 and a hybrid toolkit was designed. The toolkit covered some guiding principles that were fed back from managers and then directly from all our staff through the Robertson Cooper Wellbeing Survey.
- Two hybrid working surveys were conducted in February 2022, one for managers and one for staff, both seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of hybrid working.
- A further survey was conducted in September 2022 to understand the impact and effectiveness of hybrid working after 1 academic year. This survey was open to all staff, with specific questions for both hybrid and non-hybrid workers and sought both quantitative and qualitative responses.
- Key areas covered in the survey were:
  - Hybrid working patterns
  - Impact of hybrid working on non-hybrid workers
  - Hybrid toolkit – evaluation of guiding principles
  - Challenges and opportunities of hybrid working.
- Responses to the survey were also sought from employees who worked completely on-campus, aiming to understand the impact that the hybrid working pilot had on their roles. This information was not sought in the previous February 2022 survey. A distinct set of questions were asked relating to their experience of the hybrid working pilot as a non-hybrid worker.

### **4. Key Findings**

- In total, 478 responses were returned, with the following demographics:



- City of Glasgow College’s hybrid working toolkit was designed to trial 2-3 days onsite, and 2-3 days remote working. The CIPD have also found 2-3 days remote working to be the most common variation of hybrid working (CIPD, 2023, *Hybrid Working and Flexible Working Models in 2023*). For survey respondents following a hybrid working pattern at the College, the average weekly hybrid working patterns identified were as follows:



- Due to the volume of survey results, only an overview of the key findings of the survey results are provided in the body of this document. Full details of all responses to quantitative questions for the survey can be found in Appendix 1.
- **81.97%** respondents identified that hybrid working was an **important factor in their employment**; and **91.42%** respondents wished to see **hybrid working continue** at the College.
- A number of positives were seen across the survey to support the continuation of hybrid working. **90.79%** responses identified that **hybrid working supported their wellbeing**; and **86.4%** respondents identified that they felt hybrid working had made them **more productive**.
- Potential negative impacts of hybrid working were also identified through the survey and should be considered when decided the future of the hybrid working pilot. **10.66%** respondents felt that hybrid working was **being misused**. Reasons given for perceived misuse of hybrid working include frustrations at being unable to reach those who were working from home, that it is being underutilized or poorly planned, and that it is seen as an option when people are unwell and would previously have been absent from work.
- Trust was a positive trend throughout the survey, with **97.69%** of respondents feeling that their **manager trusts** them to do their job when they are **on campus**, and **93.3%** of respondents feeling that their **manager trusts** them to do their job when they are **working remotely**.
- The potential impact of hybrid working on the availability of First Aiders, Fire Marshalls, Fire Wardens, Person's in Charge and Duty Managers on campus was queried through the survey. **68** respondents identified that they held such a role at the College, with **38.23%** of those **disagreeing that those roles were a priority** for them when planning their hybrid working arrangements. It is understood that since the survey rotas have been introduced and additional training has taken place within the College to ensure adequate cover across these key roles.
- The hybrid working toolkit states that line managers should "...discuss and agree with individuals and teams, if and how hybrid working can be applied.". However, a **lack of clarity** in why roles were **unsuitable for hybrid working** was a theme among non-hybrid workers, with **67** respondents **disagreeing** that they **understood why their roles were unsuitable** for hybrid working and **75** indicating that their **manager had not discussed with them why their roles were unsuitable** for

hybrid working. Additionally, almost half (**51 of 114**) of those respondents **disagreed** that they felt **valued for their contribution as on-campus workers**. Several supporting comments from this group included a request to be able to take part in hybrid working.

- Overall, the response to hybrid working for hybrid-workers was largely positive and respondents were keen for hybrid working to continue. The response to hybrid working for non-hybrid workers was more mixed, with responses suggesting that more could be done to make access to hybrid working more equitable.

## 5. Impact and Implications

A high percentage of respondents identified through the survey their perceptions that hybrid working positively impacted them, through wellbeing, increased productivity in self and organization and increased ability to focus. Similarly, the Office for National Statistics identified that 47% of home and hybrid workers identified that it had a positive impact on their wellbeing and provided a quieter place to work with less distractions (2022, Office for National Statistics, *'Is Hybrid Working Here to Stay?'*). This, combined with high levels of support for hybrid working to continue and the high importance placed on hybrid working for employees considering their employment should be taken into consideration when deciding the future of the hybrid working pilot, as they may impact on attracting and retaining talent.

Harvard Business Review estimate that the trend for flexibility in work will increase, with front-line staff seeking equitable flexibility to hybrid working (Harvard Business Review, 2023, *'9 Trends That Will Shape Work in 2023 and Beyond'*). This potential future trend, coupled with negative survey responses from non-hybrid workers relating to their feelings of value as a non-hybrid worker should be seriously considered in future plans for hybrid working. Clearer communication on why roles are unsuitable for hybrid working and as suggested by Flexibility Works (2022, *'Flex on the Front Line'*) involving those employees in exploring alternative opportunities to increase flexibility for their roles may alleviate any potential negative impact.

## 6. Recommendations of Next Steps

The Board are asked to note, following consideration of the findings of this review, the recommendation for consideration will be to extend the hybrid working model for a

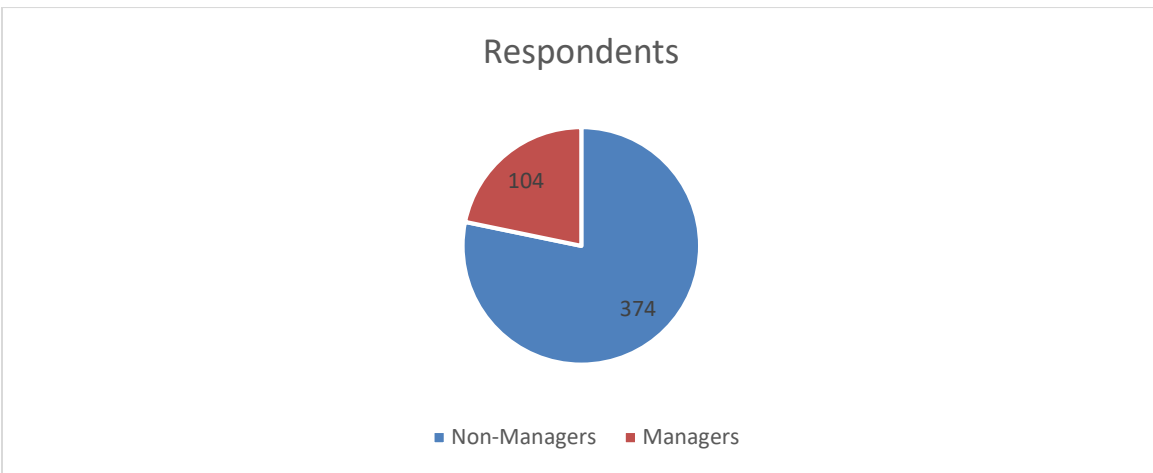
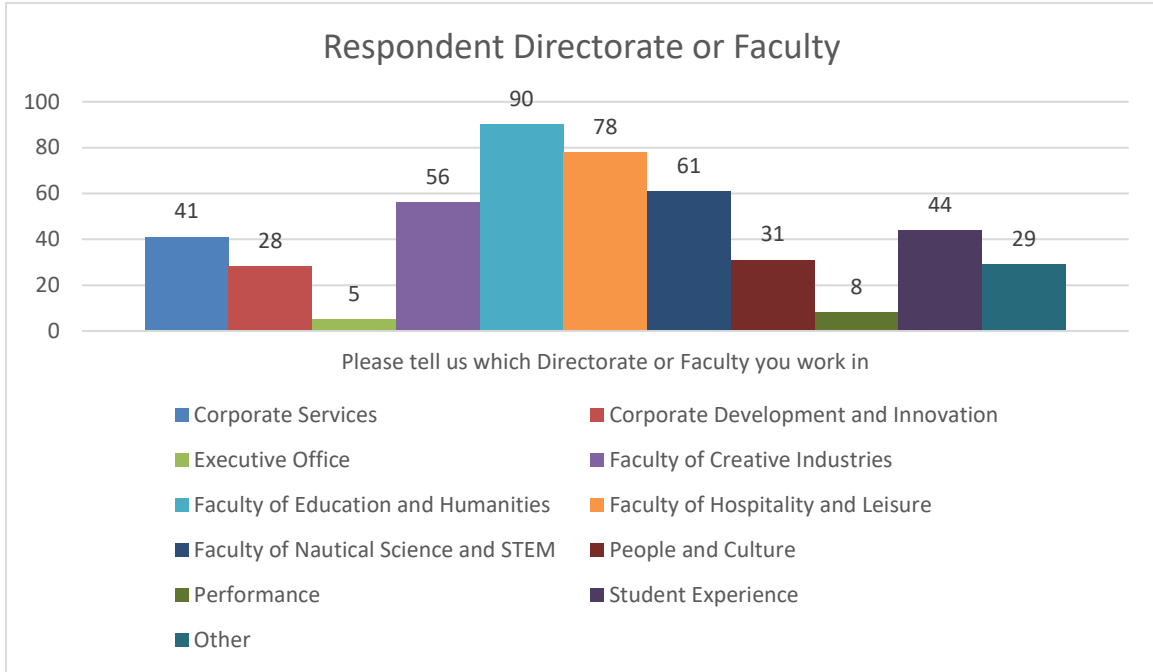
further 12 months under the current parameters. This will enable further and detailed evaluation into effectiveness to be complete before any final decisions are made.

# Appendices

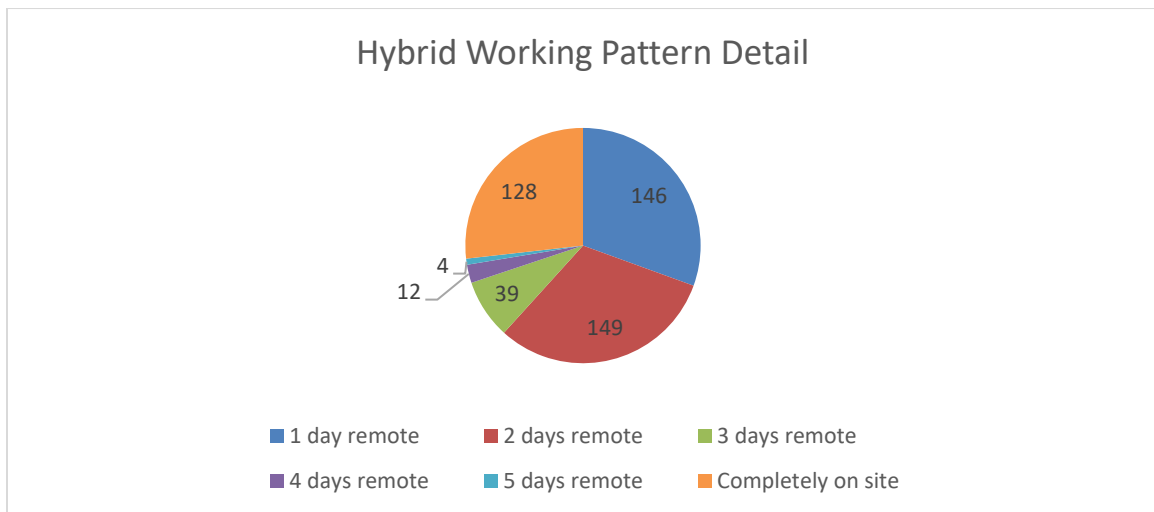
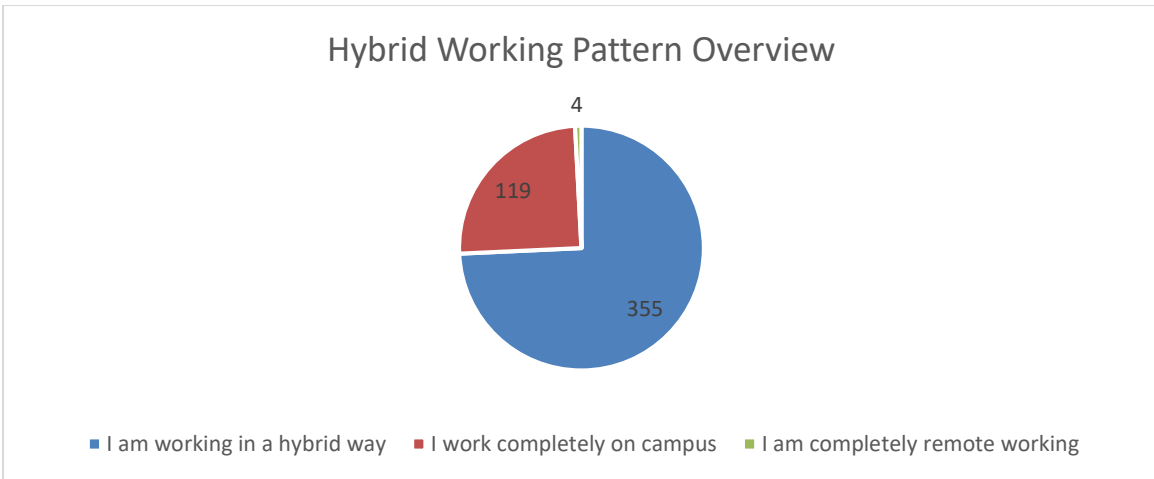
## Appendix 1

### Full responses to quantitative survey questions.

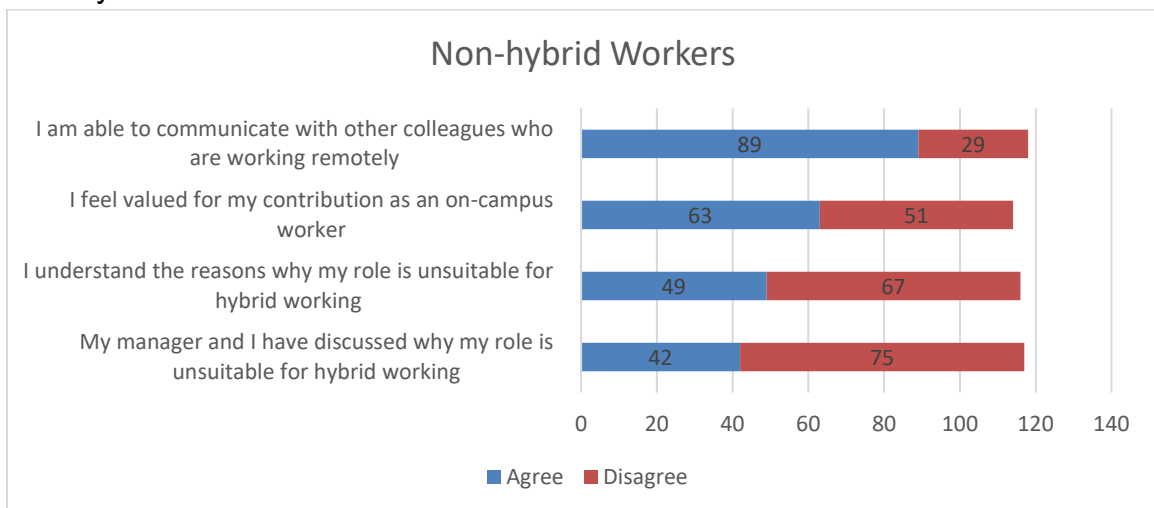
#### 1. Respondent Demographics



## 2. Working Patterns



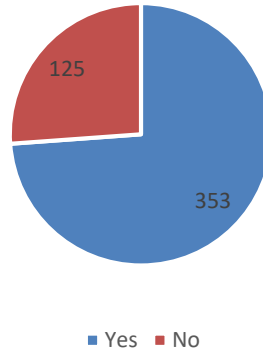
## 3. Non-Hybrid Workers Questions



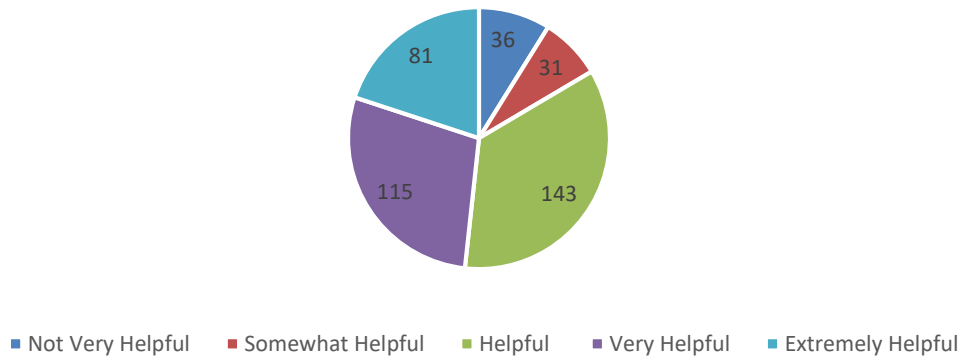


#### 4. Hybrid Working Toolkit

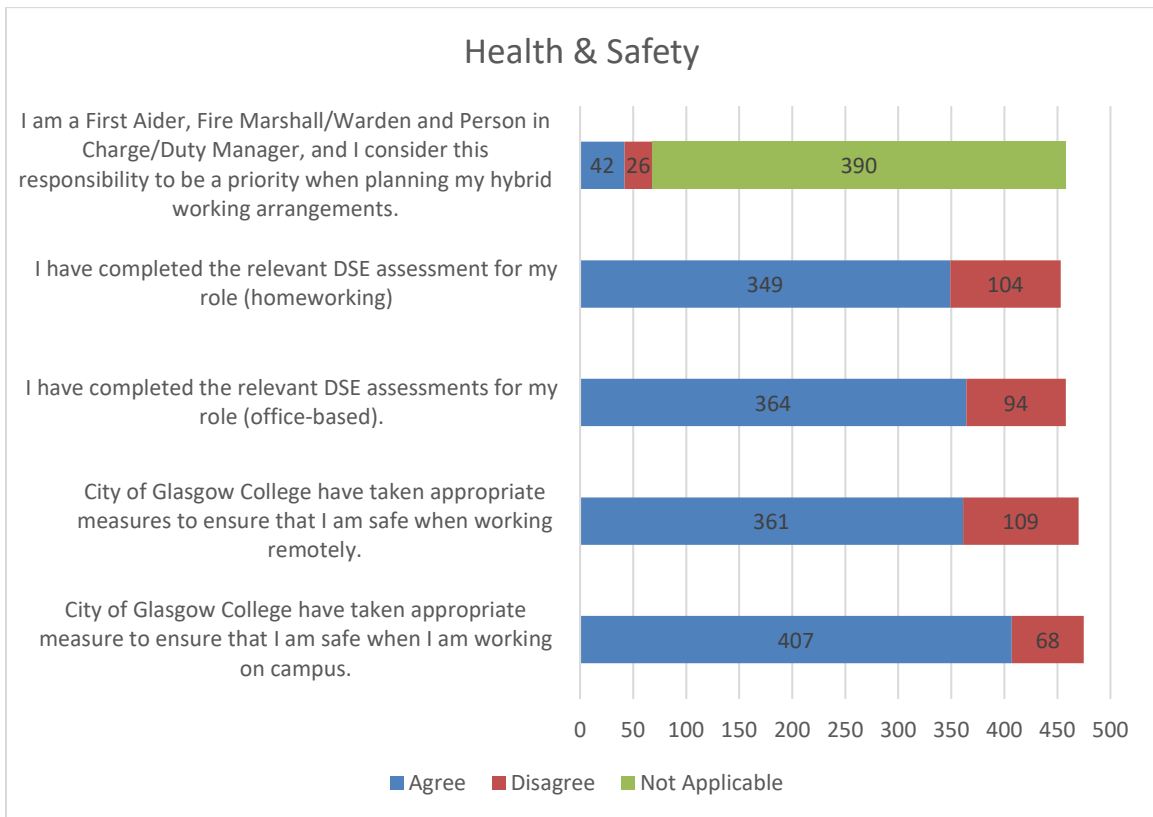
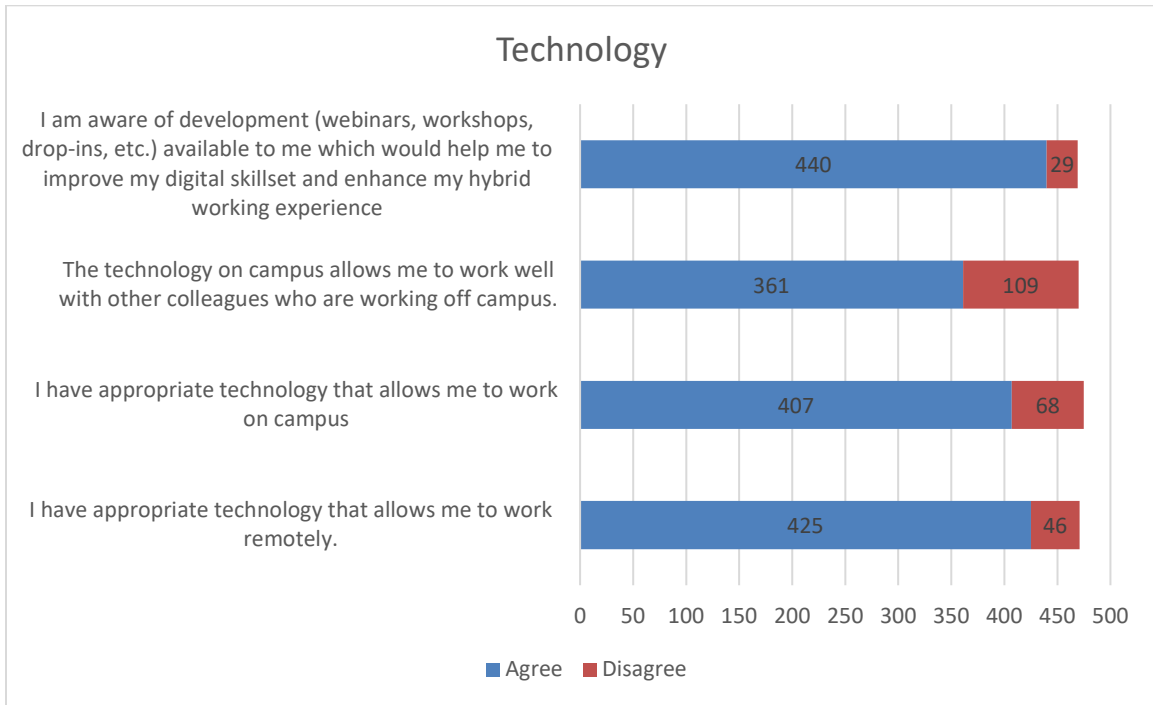
I have read the hybrid working toolkit



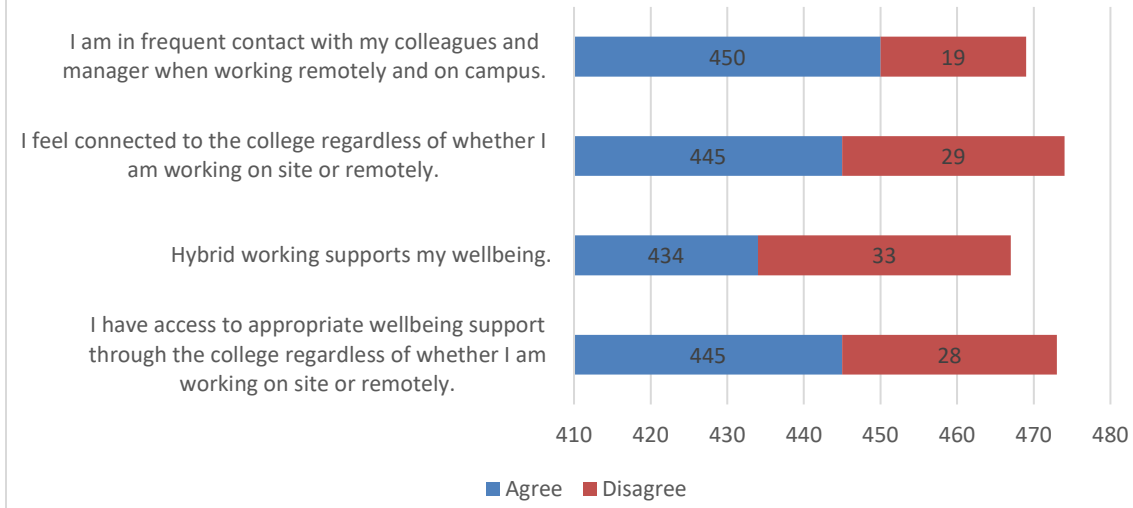
How helpful has the hybrid working guide been in enabling you to transition to hybrid working?



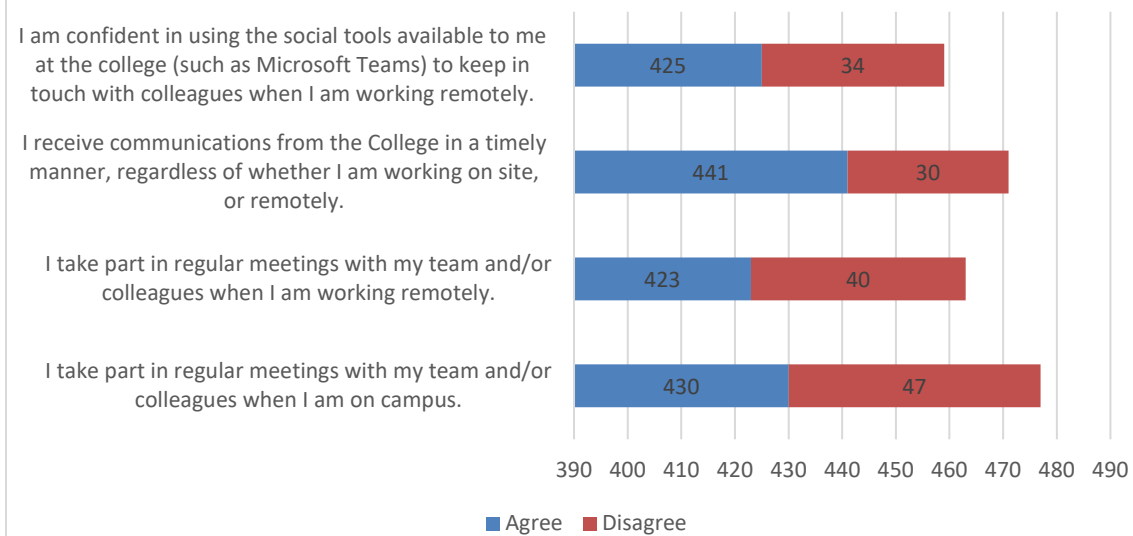
## 5. Guiding Principles



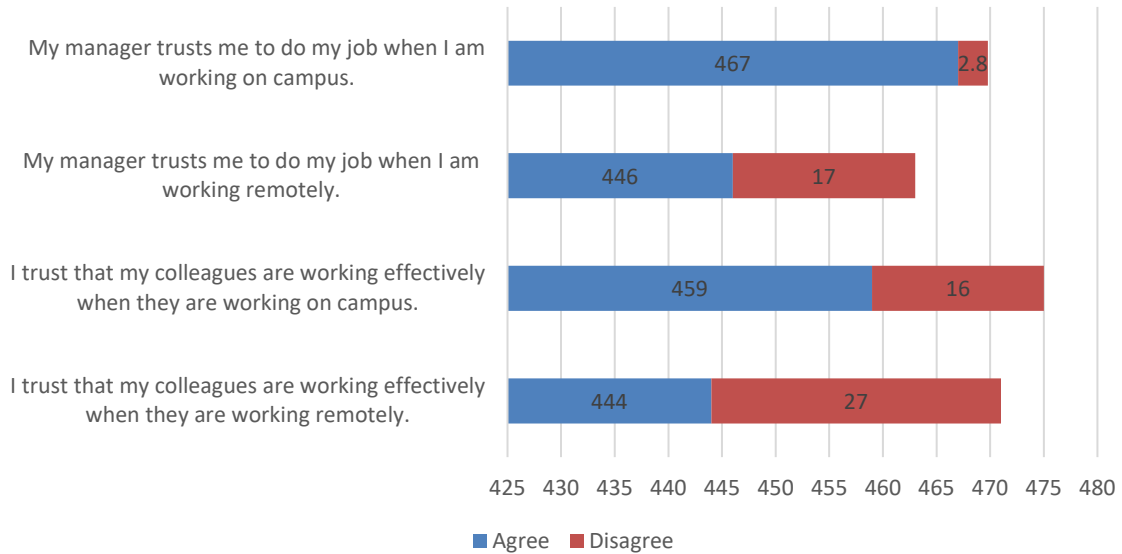
## Wellbeing



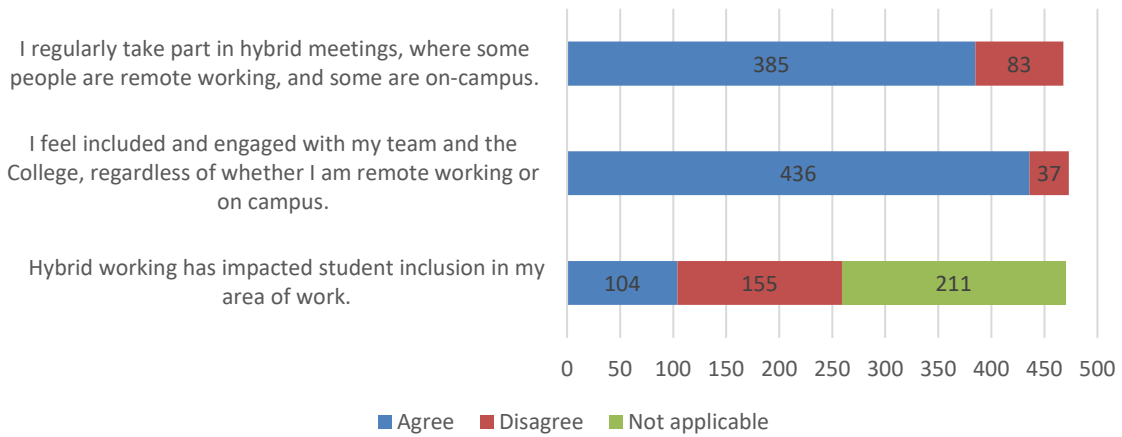
## Communication



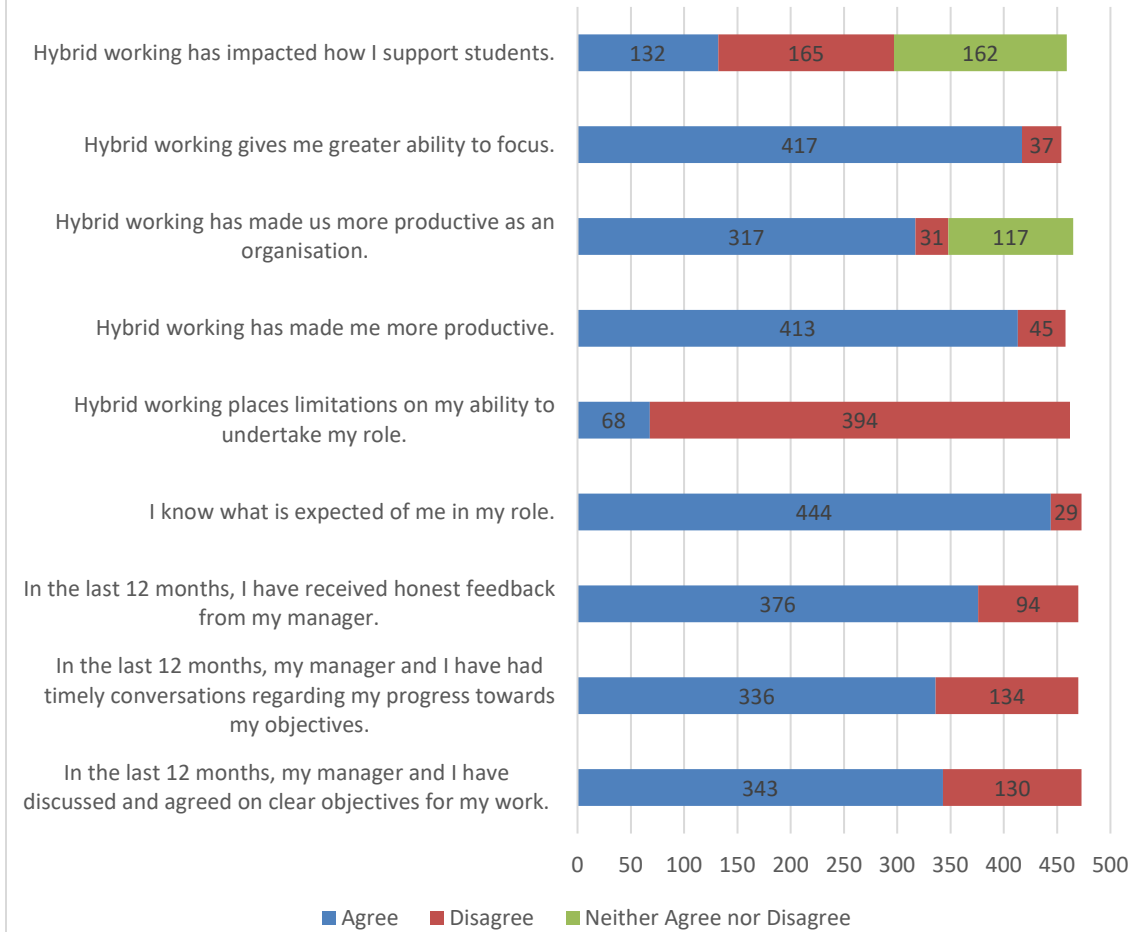
### Trust



### Inclusion



## Outcomes-Based Performance



## Continuous Review

