



Universität Heidelberg, Seminarstraße 2, 69117 Heidelberg

To all employees of
Heidelberg University

Circular No. 11

Heidelberg, 1 August 2022
**Service agreement on telework |
Recommendations and new web page**

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Dear staff members,

On 14 April this year, together with the Staff Council, we signed a new, up-to-date service agreement on telework at Heidelberg University. Since then we have been able to further operationalise this important topic and attend to detailed questions regarding its implementation.

In the context of our trustful cooperation, the administration joined with the Equal Opportunity Commissioner, the Disabled Employee Representative and the Staff Council in a frank, constructive and critical discussion of questions regarding the agreement, its models and the responsibilities involved. Responses were repeatedly positive within the university, too, e.g. in the Senate, at manager-level meetings and elsewhere. In the end, we reached agreement on almost all points. With respect to the extent of telework, however, things look different. Although we consider an amount of generally up to 40% of individual hours worked per weeks to be feasible in many areas of work, this is unfortunately not possible in all areas. Where and how telework can be arranged is therefore to be decided in the university institutes and facilities in individual employee conversations.

The implementation of the new service agreement as of 1 September 2022 will show where we have shown foresight in our planning and at which points adjustments may be required. I am sure that, with the service agreement, we have paved the way towards a modern organisation of work at Heidelberg University.

Below you will find the main recommendations on telework. For all university institutes and/or supervisors, they give guidance for handling the service agreement in a way that gives legal certainty and is appropriate to the respective tasks.

The main recommendations at a glance:

- The new service agreement applies to all employees at the university with the exception of those whose staff administration takes place through the Heidelberg University Hospital. We aim to find a solution here in the near future.
- Key criteria for arranging telework are the individual capacity of the employees and the suitability of the tasks to be carried out without any loss of quantity and quality.
- Two models of telework are possible: regular and temporary. Regular telework takes place on set days at set times at the teleworkplace. Temporary telework can be agreed flexibly in cases of short-term need.
- The decisions as to whether, and to what extent, telework is arranged will no longer be taken in the central administration, as in the past, but directly on the spot, between employees and their supervisors.
- Telework arrangements will apply at most for one year. If the preconditions continue to exist, they may be extended each time by a further year.
- An employee conversation shall take place before the agreement and, as appropriate, the extension, mentioning the framework conditions for successfully implementing telework, along with the topics of occupational safety, data protection and IT security. A risk assessment for the teleworkplace must also be carried out.
- The institute/facility will provide the IT resources and IT equipment needed to perform the service activity at the teleworkplace. The employees will provide the furniture, lighting and IT access for their work area.
- The supervisors will check, with the aid of work results and feedback, on whether the same amount of work is performed in telework as on campus. The employees will guarantee that they can be reached to the same extent as when they work at their usual workplace.

I am particularly pleased that we can present you with the signed service agreement, the recommendations and the forms for telework in the new web design of Heidelberg University. After logging onto the telework website with your Uni-ID you will find all the information and opportunities for contact on the topic.

To conclude, it is a concern of mine to highlight the importance of a culture of academic presence at Heidelberg University. In all its areas, the university lives from the presence of its members, particularly through their tasks in teaching, research, transfer and academic self-government. The experiences from the Covid pandemic have memorably confirmed this once again.

Interpersonal exchange, including getting to know one another as individuals, cannot be replaced in many respects by digital formats – for example, when it comes to guaranteeing the inclusion of staff members in all work processes, or raising awareness for networking and service-oriented work. And certainly a direct, personal interchange also fosters loyalty to our institution and identification with our Ruperto Carola.

I wish you and your loved ones a refreshing summer break. And continue to stay healthy!

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Schroeter' in a cursive style.

Dr. Holger Schroeter
Kanzler