

Landward Research

RIGHT TO DISCONNECT POLICY

LANDWARD
RESEARCH

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1 Policy Statement

The health and wellbeing of our staff members is of the utmost importance to Landward Research and we encourage and support our staff members to prioritise their own wellbeing. Disconnecting from work is vital for wellbeing, and to help achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

The right to disconnect means that every staff member is entitled to switch off outside of their normal working hours and enjoy their free time away from work without being disturbed, unless there is an emergency or a prior agreement to do so.

To encourage and support our staff members in balancing their working and personal lives Landward Research has adopted this Right To Disconnect Policy, which includes best practice guidance around wellbeing, working hours, the use of technology and more.

The right to disconnect is not the same as an obligation to disconnect, and Landward Research and this Policy is designed to allow staff members a level of self-management, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach.

Landward Research staff members are encouraged to work flexibly and many welcome the ability to work irregular hours, with the capacity this gives them to work at whatever hours suit them, such as in the evening when children have gone to bed and/or on weekends to fit around other jobs.

The right to disconnect policy forms part of Landward Research's overall approach to attracting and retaining employees by being able to offer suitable working patterns which facilitate a better balance between work and life commitments.

This policy demonstrates Landward Research's commitment to fostering long term careers and promoting equality in the workplace.

This procedure applies equally and fully to all Landward Research Ltd staff members and to staff members of all subsidiary companies of Landward Research Ltd (on 13th January 2022: Landward Research Teoranta, Landward Limited Liability Company and Landward Limited).

2 Company Obligations

Landward Research remains fully compliant with all statutory duties under employment working time legislation. We will always take steps to ensure that all staff members, are:

- Informed of what their normal working hours are reasonably expected to be
- Not asked to exceed a 48-hour working week
- Able to take relevant rest breaks and rest periods as specified by contract
- Able to take annual leave as specified in contract and not be asked to conduct work during this time

3 Employee Obligations

Landward Research expects all staff to comply with the following in the course of their work. They must:

- Ensure that they manage their own working time
- Consider their obligation as an employee, while at work, to take reasonable care to protect their health and safety and that of co-workers
- Cooperate fully with any appropriate mechanism utilised by Landward Research to record working time, including when working remotely
- Be mindful of colleagues', clients', and partners' working hours
- Notify their line manager in writing of any rest period or break to which they are entitled to and were not able to avail of on a particular occasion, and the reason why
- Speak with their line manager if they feel their workload is preventing them being able to take the rest breaks/periods they are entitled to

4 Working Hours

Normal working hours are set out in each staff member's contract of employment. As staff within the organisation work to different schedules, work in different time zones, and in many cases work irregular hours, it is important to note all staff members have the right to disconnect in the context of their own particular work pattern.

5 Communications

Where possible, e-mails should be checked or sent only during normal working hours. Due to differing and irregular patterns of work in Landward Research, some staff members may send communications at times which are inopportune for other staff members, such as evenings and weekends. The sender should give due consideration to the timing of their communication and potential for disturbance, and the recipient should understand that they will not be expected to respond until their working time recommences.

There is not expectation for staff members to respond to social communications from colleagues outside of their working hours and it is entirely down to them if they choose to do so. Communications on social media platforms are acceptable means of communication in our workplace.

As part of regular performance management discussions, line managers will speak to any team members if the line managers notice that staff are sending emails at odd hours or logging in excessively – this may be a sign that they are finding it difficult to manage their workload or ‘switch-off’.

6 Meetings

Landward Research and our staff members respect people’s time by only inviting them to meetings where they play an active role and have something to contribute. Staff members should be mindful of and manage how much virtual communication they have each day. Staff members will not be expected to attend meetings if they fall outside their usual hours or during their usual rest break, such as at lunchtime (if they work regular hours).

7 Automatic Replies and Email Signatures

Staff members may choose, if they wish, to put an automatic email response in place to auto-reply to emails received outside normal working hours, and/or include a line in their email signature, confirming that the emails will be when they are next at work.

The below are templates to use:

‘My normal working hours are from X to Y. I will respond to you when I am back at work.’

'I am currently working flexibly so while it suits me to send this email now, I do not expect a response or action outside your own working hours.'

'I work part time, irregular hours and will respond to your email when I am next available.'

8 Work/Life Balance

Landward Research is committed to ensuring that staff members enjoy both a personal life and a professional life. If staff members have any concerns in relation to their workload or the work patterns required by their role or their ability to maintain a reasonable work/life balance, they should contact their line manager to address the issue.

9 Wellbeing

Staff members working from home are encouraged to schedule post-work leisure activity, in order to create some separation from the end of their workday and the beginning of their personal time. Staff members are reminded to switch off from work, to monitor their working hours and to take breaks away from work devices in accordance with their contract of employment. Staff members must take reasonable care of their health and safety.

10 Grievances

If any staff member experiences difficulties in asserting their right to disconnect, they should first raise the matter with their line manager and seek to resolve the matter informally. If they cannot reach an agreement, they will need to raise a formal grievance in line with the procedures set out in our Grievance Policies and Procedure.

11 Other Related Documentation

Where necessary, this policy should be read in conjunction with other Landward Research Policies, such as:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Performance Management Procedure

- Code of Conduct
- Grievance Policy and Procedure

Relevant Legislation:

Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Working Time Regulations 1998

Workplace Relations Act, 2015

12 Review

Landward Research will review this policy on an ongoing basis and carry out a formal review not less than every 3 years. Such review shall take into account the operation of the Policy since the last formal review, any legal or regulatory developments, an assessment of current best practice and any other relevant information.