

The Flex Report

UK Edition

January 2024



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About the Flex Report

2023 was a big year for Flex Index! In the 11 months since our launch, we're now tracking over 8,000 companies across 60,000 offices. These companies collectively employ more than 100,000,000 people. This robust dataset has allowed us to understand the state of flexible work in America and identify trends on where we might be headed.

Our [2023 reports](#) primarily focused on the US market. In 2024 we are starting to expand our reporting to cover flexible work in other geographies.

This report focuses on trends in work location flexibility in the UK. Flex Index covers nearly 5,000 UK employers who collectively employ nearly 3,000,000 people in the UK. That enables us to get a pretty good sense of how work location flexibility is trending across the pond!

As we dug into the data, we quickly learned that while the US and the UK share some key similarities regarding flexible work policies, there are also some meaningful differences. This report digs into the state of flexible work in the UK, how that varies by company size and geography, and how that compares to the US.

Read on for the most comprehensive view of UK work location flexibility put together to date!

Key Findings

1 Nearly 3/4 of UK employers offer work location flexibility for their corporate employees.

72% of UK employers offer hybrid or fully remote work for their corporate employees; only 28% require full time in office work.



2 Structured Hybrid is the favored flexible work model.

44% of UK employers have adopted a Structured Hybrid model, where they set specific expectations on how much time workers must come into the office each week.

3 When it comes to time required in office, there are three major groups.

28% of UK employers require 0 days of onsite work. 28% require full time in office, and 38% require 2-3 days in the office.

4 Hybrid employees tend to be in the office mid-week.

The average UK employer with a Structured Hybrid arrangement requires employees to be in the workplace about 50% of the time, most commonly Tuesday - Thursday.

5 Small companies tend to offer the most work location flexibility.

76% of firms with less than 500 employees offer Fully Flexible work to their employees; only 17% of firms with 25,000+ employees offer Fully Flexible work.

6 Technology companies lead on work location flexibility.

97% of UK employers in the Tech industry offer work location flexibility, the highest of any industry. UK employers in the Restaurants & Food Services industry are most likely to require full time in office.

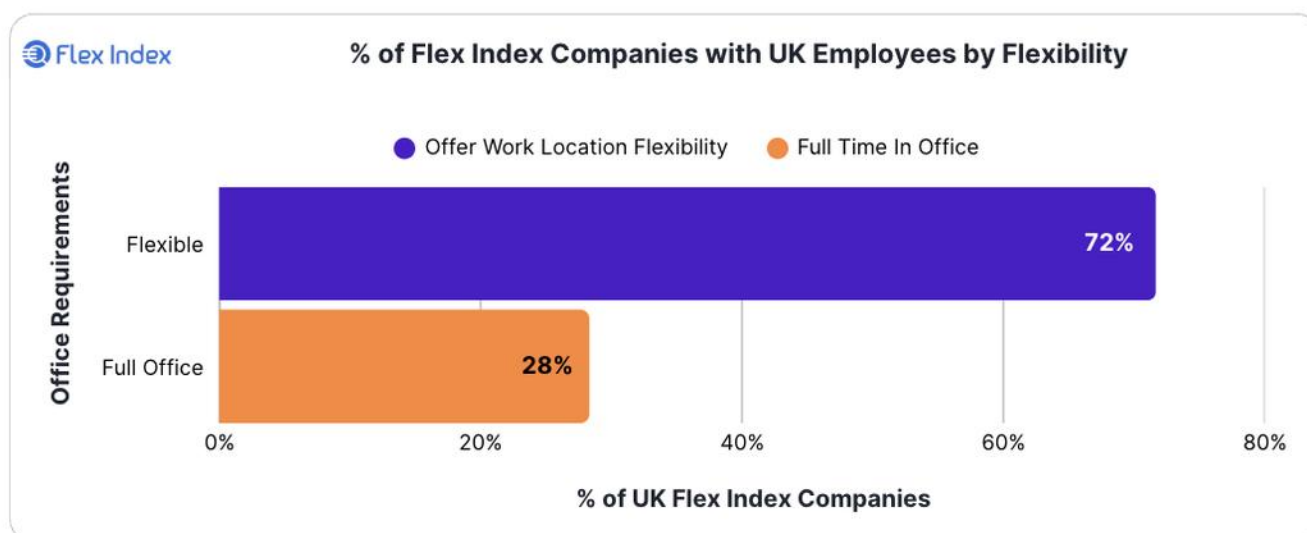
Deep Dive

Flexible Work in the UK

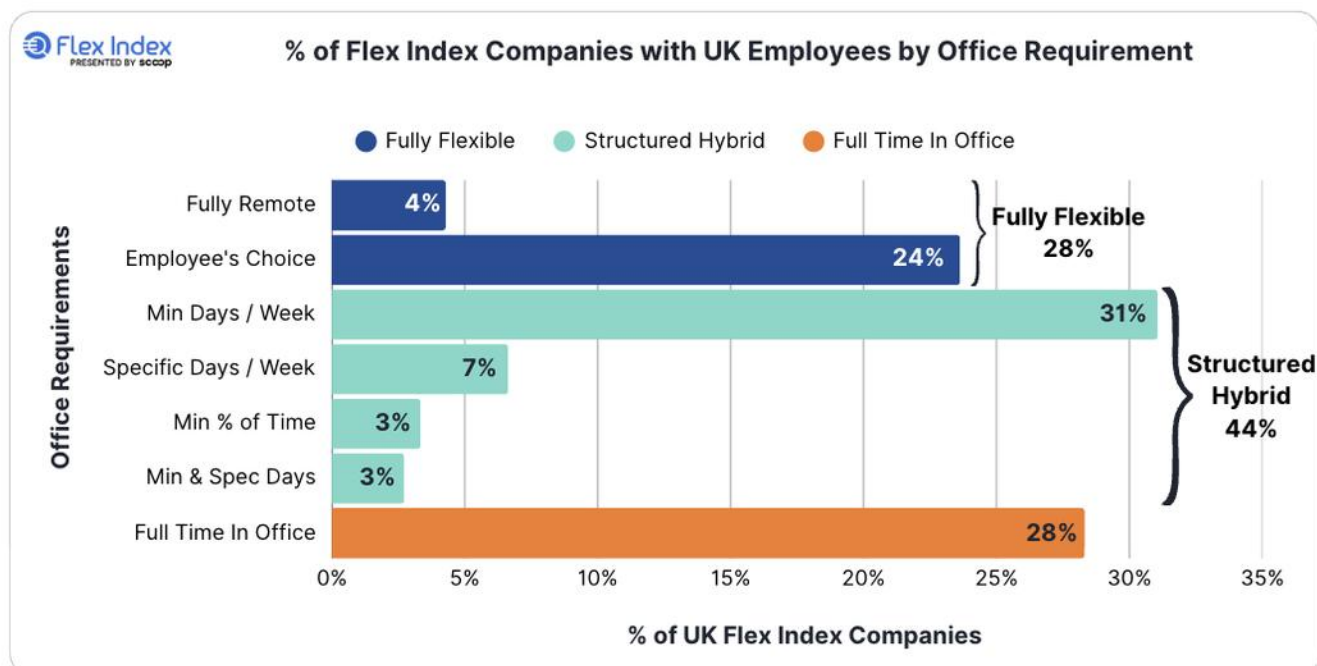
WORK LOCATION FLEXIBILITY

72% of UK employers offer work location flexibility for their corporate employees. Only 28% of UK employers require full time in office for their corporate employees.

44% of UK employers have a Structured Hybrid model, meaning they set a specific expectation on how much time employees are expected to be in the office. 28% of UK employers are Fully Flexible, meaning employees can choose how often to go into an office or not at all.



Source: [Flex Index](https://flexindex.com) (flexindex.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on corporate office requirements for companies with employees in the UK, N = 4,848 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the [EMP13: Employment by industry](#) dataset to better approximate the UK working population.

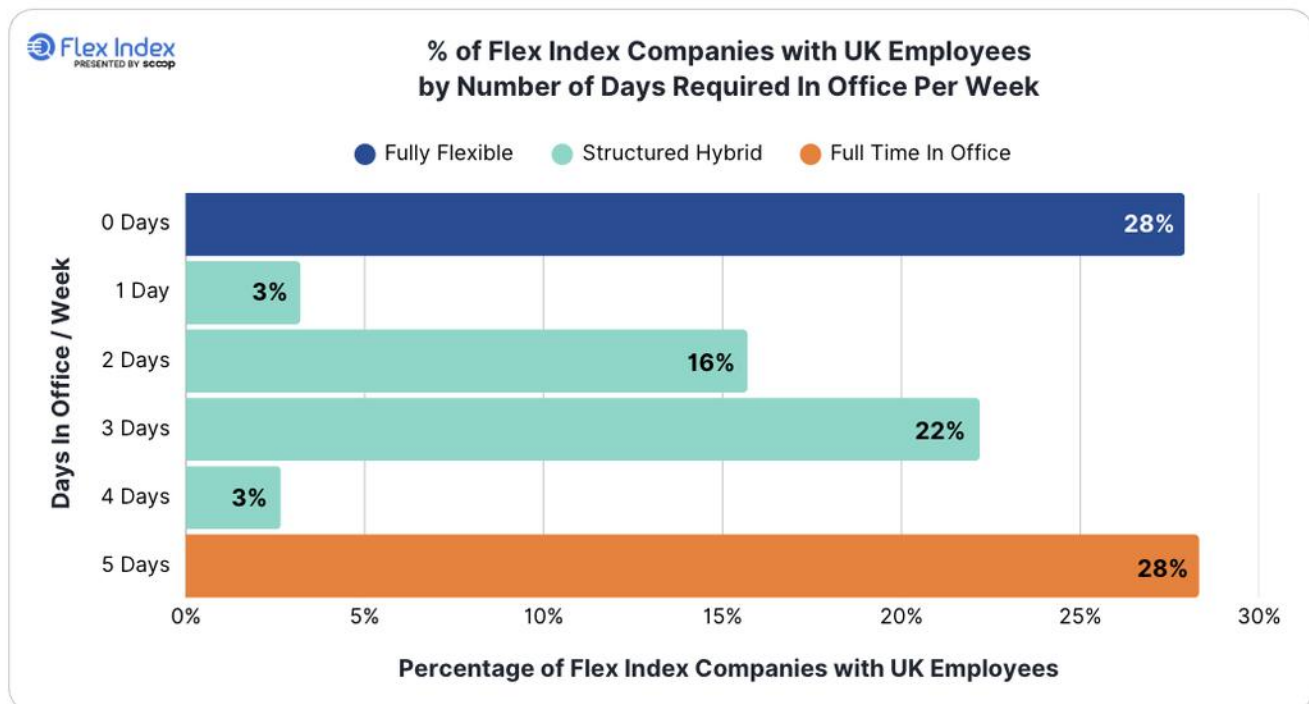


Source: [Flex Index](https://flexindex.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on corporate office requirements for companies with employees in the UK, N = 4,848 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the [EMP13: Employment by industry](#) dataset to better approximate the UK working population. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).

TIME REQUIRED IN OFFICE

An equal number of companies require full time in office, or no office time at all! 28% of UK employers require 5 days a week, and 28% of UK employers give employees discretion on where to ever come into the office.

38% of UK employers require 2-3 days in office. Only 3% of UK employers require one day or 4 days/week in the office for corporate employees.



Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on corporate office requirements for companies with employees in the UK, N = 4,848 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the [EMP13: Employment by industry](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employment-and-labour-markets/employment/datasets/emp13) dataset to better approximate the UK working population. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).

Key Insight

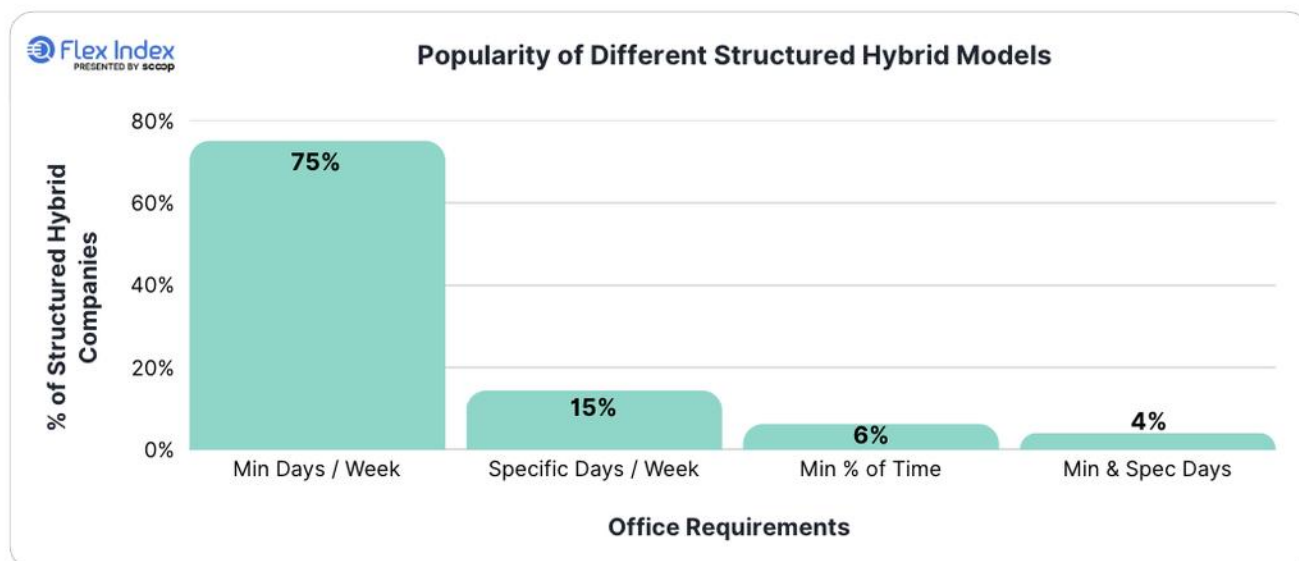
If you're a UK employer, there's not too much value in requiring four days per week in the office. Requiring four days per week means your policy is less flexible than the vast majority of companies that offer work location flexibility. You won't get much credit with employees or prospective hires for requiring four days per week in office.

At the same time, you won't get as much time together in the office as companies that require five days per week. It might be more effective to make a decision one way or the other — lean into hybrid work with 2-3 days required per week, or lean into full time in office and attract candidates that want that type of environment.

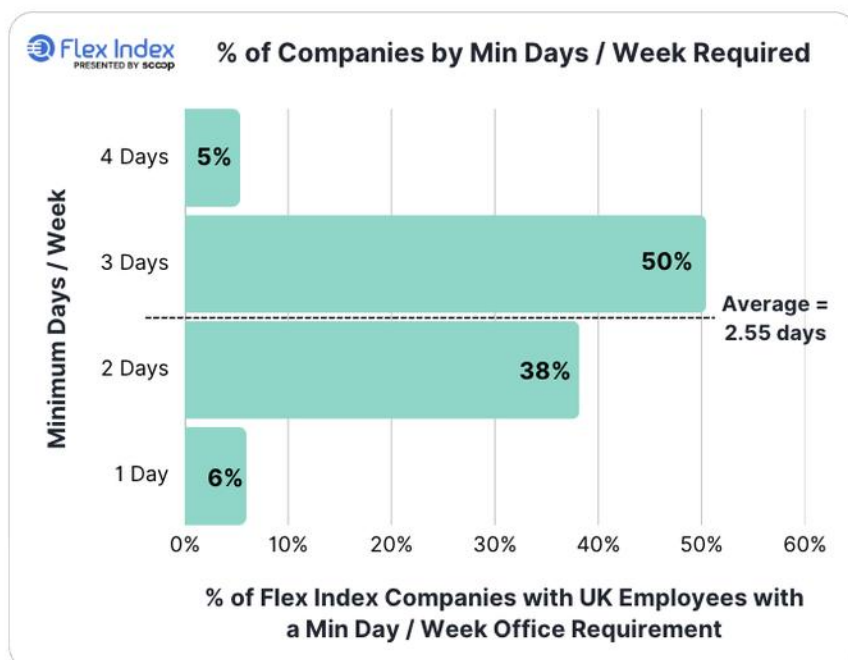
STRUCTURED HYBRID: DAYS / WEEK REQUIRED

Minimum Days / Week is overwhelmingly the most popular Structured Hybrid model. 75% of Structured Hybrid UK employers require Minimum Days / Week, and 85% of Structured Hybrid employers have some minimum element to their policy.

88% of companies with a Minimum Days requirement choose two days or three days.



Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on companies with UK employees with a Min Days / Week office requirement. N = 1,492 companies. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).



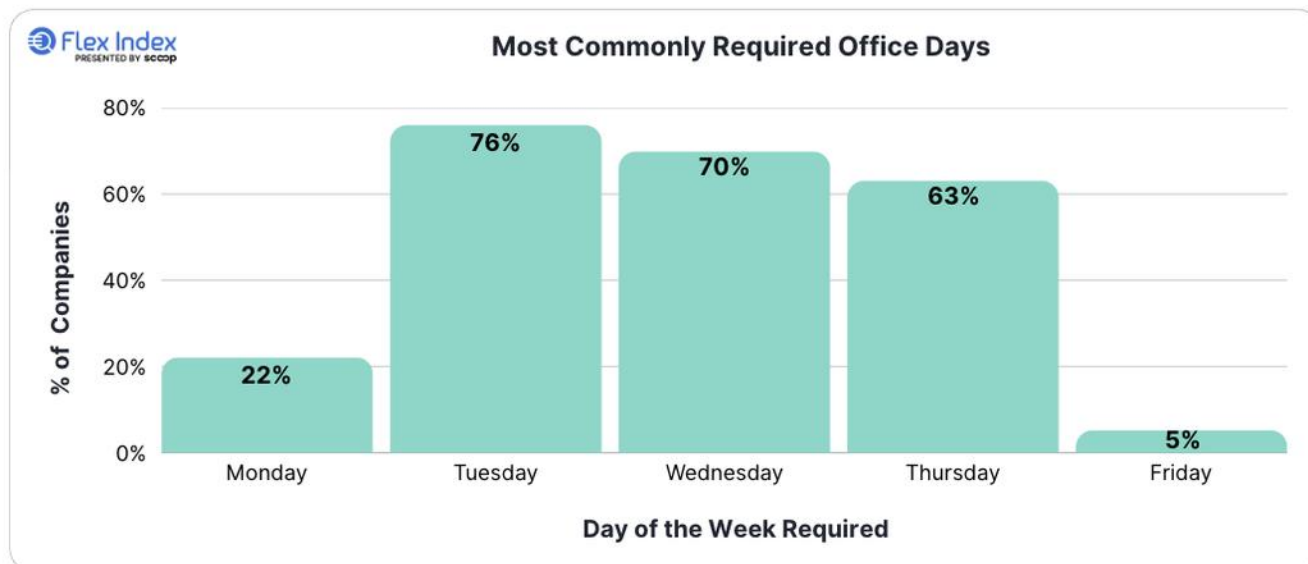
Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on companies with UK employees with a Min Days / Week office requirement. N = 1,492 companies. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).

Good to Know

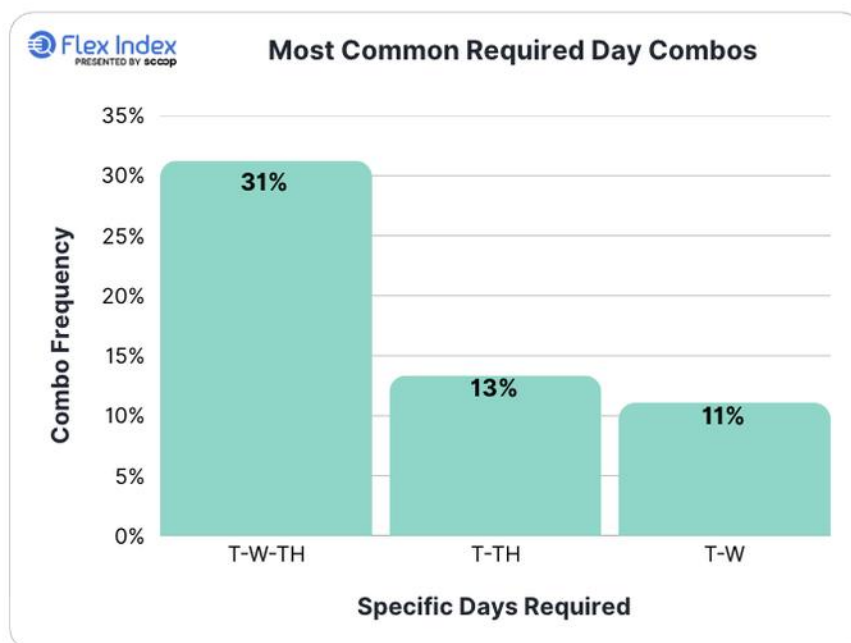
If you join a Structured Hybrid company, expect to spend about 50% of your time in the office. That expectation is very consistent across both UK and US Structured Hybrid employers, who both require roughly 2.5 days per week in the office.

STRUCTURED HYBRID: SPECIFIC DAYS / WEEK REQUIRED

For companies requiring specific days in the workplace, Tuesday is the most favored at 76%, followed by Wednesday at 70% and Thursday at 63%. While 22% of firms want to start the week off with employees in the office, a scant 5% require them to show up on Fridays.



Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on companies with UK employees with a Specific Days / Week office requirement. N = 325 companies. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).



Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on companies with UK employees with a min day / week office requirement. N = 1,492 companies. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).

Good to Know

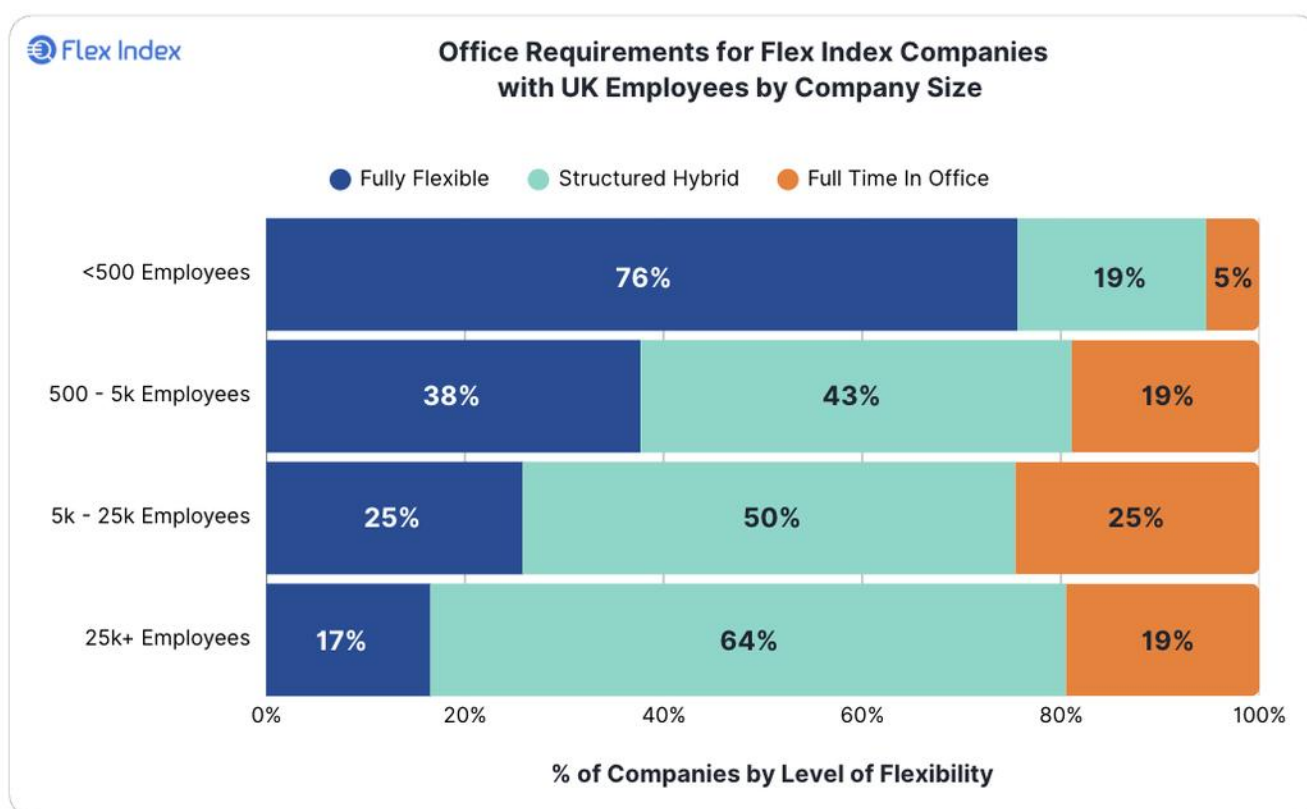
If you join a company that requires specific days in the office, expect to spend the middle of the week commuting.

The most common required day combo is Tues-Wed-Thurs (31% of companies with a specific days requirement).

FLEXIBILITY BY COMPANY SIZE

Some trends hold, regardless of location, and company size correlating to flexibility is one of them. Small employers in the UK are overwhelmingly flexible, with 76% of companies under 500 employees offering Fully Flexible work arrangements.

But as companies get bigger, we see a divide emerge. Only 17% of UK employers with 25,000+ employees offer Full Flexibility; most are Structured Hybrid.



Source: [Flex Index](https://flexindex.com) (flexindex.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on corporate office requirements for companies with employees in the UK, N = 4,848 companies.

Key Takeaway

If you want to work at a larger company, you should generally expect to spend more time in the office. The percentage of companies requiring time in office grows from:

- Under 500 employees: 24%
- 500 - 5,000 employees: 62%
- 5,000 - 25,000 employees: 75%
- 25,000+ employees: 83%

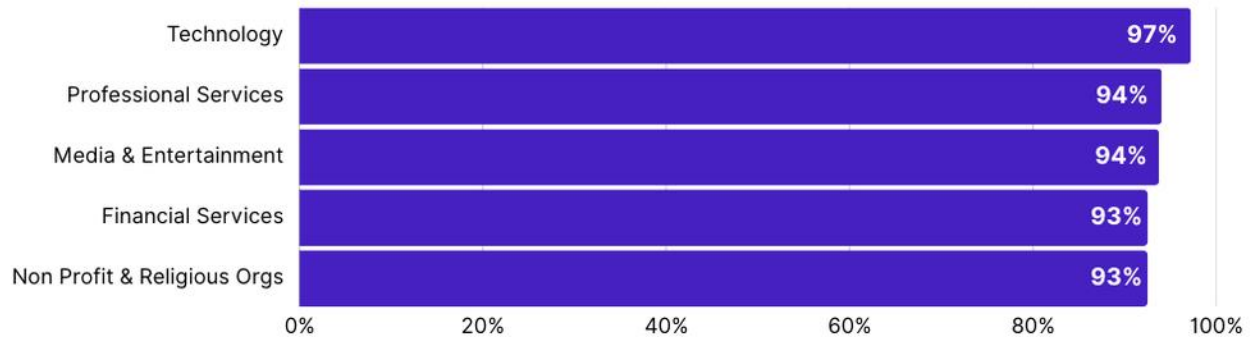
You'll most likely find the most flexibility at the smallest employers.

FLEXIBILITY BY INDUSTRY



Top 5 Most Flexible Industries in UK

● % of Companies That Offer Work Location Flexibility

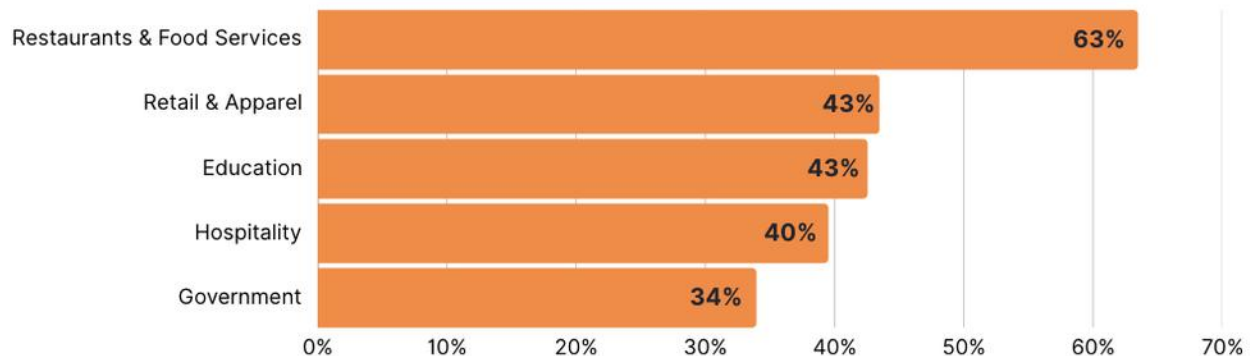


Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on corporate office requirements for companies with employees in the UK, N = 4,779 companies. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).



Top 5 Least Flexible Industries in UK

● % of Companies That Are Full Time In Office



Source: [Flex Index](https://flex.scoopforwork.com) (flex.scoopforwork.com) employee surveys and publicly available data on corporate office requirements for companies with employees in the UK, N = 4,779 companies. Flex Index is presented by [Scoop](https://scoopforwork.com) (scoopforwork.com).

Most Flexible

Tech companies lead the way on flexibility; 97% of UK employers in Tech offer work location flexibility.

Professional Services, Media & Entertainment, Financial Services, and Non-Profits round out the top 5. More than 90% of companies in each of these industries offer work location flexibility for corporate employees.

Least Flexible

Companies in the Restaurants & Food Services industry are most likely to require full time in office. 63% of these employers expect corporate employees in the office five days per week.

Other industries that lean toward full time in office tend to be dependent on foot traffic to be successful. Retail & Apparel, Education, and Hospitality all require a lot of office time.

In Closing

In Closing

How flexible is the UK when it comes to work location?

UK employers have embraced work location flexibility to an even greater extent than US-headquartered companies. 72% of UK employers on an industry-weighted basis offer work location flexibility, compared to 62% of US-headquartered companies.

The UK is a stronger adopter of Structured Hybrid work than the US. 44% of UK employers have a Structured Hybrid model, compared to 28% of US-headquartered companies. It's important to note that in the UK, like the US, the larger the company, the more likely it is to embrace Structured Hybrid. While only 19% of companies under 500 employees in the UK leverage a Structured Hybrid model, 64% of companies with over 25,000 employees champion it.

One point of parity across the US and UK is the required time in office for Structured Hybrid companies. As we've observed stateside, employers expect workers to be onsite ~50% of the time, mostly mid-week. The same holds true for UK bosses, who also want workers to be in the office about half the time.

Another similarity is the industry mix championing flexible work. As in the US, nearly every technology company in the UK (97%) offers some degree of work location flexibility to their corporate staff, while industries that rely heavily on service and in-person sales tend to be the least flexible work environments.

2024 promises to be an interesting year; will we continue to see the UK lead on work location flexibility, or will there be some reversion back to full time office work? [Predictions](#) are all across the map; wherever we head, we'll keep tracking it!