**Calendar Guidelines and Good Practice**

The aim of these guidelines is to promote an efficient and standard approach to the use of electronic calendars in Outlook.

Corporate Board and Directors fully endorse the use of Outlook calendars, to enable the organisation to gain maximum benefit from the investment in Exchange/Outlook and to support Smarter Working Principles.

Meeting scheduler should be used to organise meetings as outlined in the 'E-mail Guidelines and Good Practice' document and officers must electronically record and share their availability. Refer to [**Meeting Scheduler**](https://connect.dudley.gov.uk/documents/shared/Learning-and-Development/Outlook%202007%20Meeting%20Scheduler.pdf) for details.

**Calendar Guidelines and Good Practice**

1. Directors will promote and implement the use of electronic calendars throughout their directorates.
2. Senior managers should lead by example and use Outlook calendars to schedule all meetings.
3. The onus is on individuals to ensure that calendars are kept up to date.
4. All staff must record absence from work, in their electronic calendar. This includes part time working arrangements, leave and other planned leave. Use the appointment **<Recurrence>** feature to record regular non-working time.
(The <Recurrence> button is available from the Appointment tab).
5. All staff must ensure their calendars are published for a minimum period of **12 months**, enabling meetings to be scheduled up to 12 months in advance, this should be set automatically. If your calendar is not displaying appointments for 12 months in advance, please contact the ICT ServiceDesk.
6. All staff should set their calendar permissions, to enable members in their directorate/division to view details of their availability.
Ensure <**Reviewer**> permissions are set for your directorate/divisions <**Exchange Distribution List**>. Refer to [**Sharing Your Calendar**](https://connect.dudley.gov.uk/documents/shared/Learning-and-Development/Outlook%202007%20Calendar%20Essentials.pdf) (page 14 onwards).
7. Confidential appointments should be marked as <Private>. This indicates that you are busy, but does not display details of your appointment, even when sharing your calendar with others (unless you specifically grant permission to view private items). Click on the **<Private>** button from Appointment in Outlook 2007.
8. **<Reminders>** should be set when scheduling meetings, to prompt attendees that they need to attend a forthcoming meeting. Click on the drop down arrow to the right of <Reminder> in Outlook 2007, to allocate a reasonable period of time for the reminder to appear before the meeting is due.
9. When physically out of the office, **<Show time as>** (**Show As** in Outlook 2007) should be recorded as **<Out of Office>** and not left to the default of <Busy>. This applies to part time working arrangements, working from home, leave and meetings held outside of the office. Click on **down arrow in <Show As>** in Outlook 2007, to access **<Out of Office>** in Appointment indicated by a purple border.
10. If you are out of the office for more than one day, you should use the **<Out of Office Assistant>** to indicate when you are next in the office and to advise who to contact (name and telephone number) in emergencies. The nominated person (s) availability during the period of absence should be checked. <Out of Office Assistant> is accessible from Mail/Tools, refer to [**Out of Office Assistant**](https://connect.dudley.gov.uk/documents/shared/Learning-and-Development/Outlook%202007%20Out%20of%20Office%20Assistant.pdf) for further details.
11. Use **Hyperlinks** to minutes and agendas in meeting requests where possible, as opposed to attaching documents. Notes entered in the appointment detail are acceptable for informal meetings. For details on how to insert hyperlinks, refer to [**Attachments & Hyperlinks**](https://connect.dudley.gov.uk/documents/shared/Learning-and-Development/Outlook%202007%20Attachments%20and%20Hyperlinks.pdf)**.**
12. All staff should include Dudley's Public Holidays in their Outlook calendars and Dudley's School Holidays where appropriate to business needs. <Show time as> is displayed as <Free> by default and should be amended as necessary. Refer to [**Calendar Essentials**](https://connect.dudley.gov.uk/documents/shared/Learning-and-Development/Outlook%202007%20Calendar%20Essentials.pdf) (page 24).
13. Managers must make the commitment, for all staff to attend appropriate training courses, to optimise the use of calendars. It is recommended that all new starters attend a Dudley Council MS Outlook training course.

For details of courses available contact the ICT Services Training Unit on Ext 4383 or view IT Training Courses using Yourself.

**Benefits of Using Outlook Calendars**

* Shared rooms and resources can be created and booked electronically by individuals, freeing administrative staff from this duty.
* Meeting rooms and resources can be scheduled quickly and efficiently, and the <Autopick> feature can be used to automatically determine the earliest time that a meeting can be scheduled.
* <Reminders> are particularly useful to prompt attendees of forthcoming meetings etc. and to ensure maximum attendance.
* Links to minutes and agendas in meeting invitations help to reduce the amount of emails circulated, saving valuable space on servers.
* Using the <tracking> feature enables meeting responses to be easily monitored.
* Frequent meetings or appointments can be created in one single action using the <Recurrence> feature in Appointment.

 If you require help to perform any of these calendar functions, please contact the ServiceDesk on Ext. 4922 or raise an incident using [**MyICT**](http://appsrvr1/logit/).