

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS: POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

Equality and Diversity

This Policy will be applied in a non-discriminatory way, in line with the School's Equality and Diversity policies.

POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 The School recognises that flexible working arrangements may assist some staff to combine the demands of employment with those of family or other personal commitments and responsibilities. The School is committed to considering, and agreeing wherever possible, requests for flexible working in order to help staff to successfully combine these family and work responsibilities.

1.2 This document outlines the process for staff to apply for flexible working arrangements. **Annex A** outlines some examples of flexible working arrangements which the School is prepared to consider. The arrangements under this procedure are not intended to cover ad hoc variations in the normal working pattern, for example, where someone works from home on an occasional basis.

1.3 Staff applying for and undertaking flexible working arrangements will be treated fairly and consistently to ensure equality of opportunity, and to ensure that no discrimination occurs.

1.4 Terms and conditions resulting from the revised working arrangements may apply on a pro rata basis, depending on the nature of the arrangements.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Statutory arrangements are in place for certain categories of staff - parents and guardians of a child aged under 17, and/or a disabled child under 18 who receives Disability Living Allowance (this is a tax-free benefit for disabled children and adults to help with extra costs), and carers of adults to request flexible working. However, the provisions set out in this document apply to all staff and so exceed these statutory requirements.

2.2 Requests for flexible working arrangements from all grades of staff, regardless of length of service, will be considered sympathetically, having due regard to the requirements of the post, and the needs of the Department and the School.

3. PROCEDURE AND TIMETABLE

3.1 Staff wishing to apply for flexible working arrangements should discuss their proposals with the Head of Department in the first instance. Where a member of staff is employed on soft funds, the budgetary and other implications must be worked through. The agreement of the Dean of Faculty (for academic departments), Secretary & Director of Resources & Planning/Chief Operating Officer (for Central Services) or the Dean of Studies (for the Division of Education) to the detailed arrangements will be required. Advice may be obtained from HR, who must be advised of all requests for flexible working arrangements.

3.2 A timetable for the procedure outlined below is given in the flow chart attached at **Annex B**.

3.3 The member of staff should complete the form at **Annex C** and send this to their Head of Department, with copies to the Dean of Faculty, the HR Department, and any other individuals involved in their line management (e.g. a grantholder). The application should include specific information explaining what the employee thinks will be the effect of the proposed change to the School, and how in their opinion any such effect might be dealt with. Your Head of Department will then discuss with the Dean of Faculty, Dean of Studies or Secretary & Director of Resources & Planning/Chief Operating Officer as appropriate who will sign off the request.

3.4 Within 28 days after the application has been received, the Head of Department must arrange to meet with the member of staff. The immediate line manager may also be present at this meeting, if they are someone other than the Head of Department. The meeting will provide an opportunity to explore the desired working pattern in depth, and to discuss how best it might be accommodated. It will also provide an opportunity to consider other alternative working patterns should there be problems in accommodating the desired work pattern outlined in the application. Staff have a right to bring another member of School staff to the meeting. Where a member of staff is on maternity leave, this meeting may be conducted by telephone.

3.5 Within 14 days after the date of the meeting, the Head of Department will write to the member of staff either to agree a new work pattern and a start date, or to provide a clear explanation as to which of the business grounds for refusal applies in relation to the application. It must also be accompanied with a sufficient level of explanation as to why the business ground for refusal applies, and must inform the employee of their right to appeal.

3.6 The possible grounds for refusal include:

- burden of additional costs;

- detrimental effect on ability to meet the demands of students or other stakeholders;
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- inability to recruit additional staff;
- detrimental impact on quality;
- detrimental impact on performance;
- insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work, or
- planned structural changes.

3.7 Records of individual requests for flexible working and the outcome of those requests should be maintained by departments, and notified to the HR Department.

4. APPEALS

4.1 A member of staff has the right to appeal against any decision to refuse an application. Appeals must be lodged with the Head of Department within 14 days after the date they receive written notice that their request has been rejected. When appealing against a refused request the member of staff will have to set out their grounds for making the appeal and ensure that the appeal is dated. There are no constraints on the grounds under which the employee can appeal.

4.2 The appeal meeting will be held within 14 days after receiving notification of appeal. The member of staff may bring another member of School staff to the meeting. The appeal will be heard by a Dean of Faculty, or the Secretary & Director of Resources & Planning/Chief Operating Officer, or the Director.

4.3 The member of staff will be informed of the outcome of their appeal in writing within 14 days of the date of the appeal hearing.

4.4 In specific circumstances, employees who remain unhappy with the outcome will be able to pursue their request with third party involvement. This may be by referring their request to ACAS, to an employment tribunal, or by using another form of dispute resolution.

Further information on this procedure is available from the HR Department

Accessibility

If you require any document in an alternative format, for example, in larger print, please contact the HR Department.

ANNEX A

EXAMPLES OF FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Part-time work

Part-time work is defined as any arrangement where the member of staff works for any period less than the normal basic full-time hours. In many cases, this will provide the flexibility needed for individuals to undertake family and other personal responsibilities. Part-time work may entail working for certain hours each day, or for part of the week only. The pay and benefits offered to part-time employees will be on a pro rata basis to those offered to full-time staff. Staff opting to work part-time should make themselves aware of the consequences in terms of national insurance, social security benefits, and unemployment benefit.

Flexible Working Hours

Flexible working hours is defined as any arrangement where the member of staff works full hours, although the pattern of hours worked may be varied to enable individuals to undertake family and other personal responsibilities. For example, to travel outside the 'rush hour' for medical or other reasons.

Job Sharing

Job sharing is a system whereby two or more people share a full-time job and share the pay and benefits in direct proportion, whether on a daily basis, weekly or bi-weekly.

Working from home

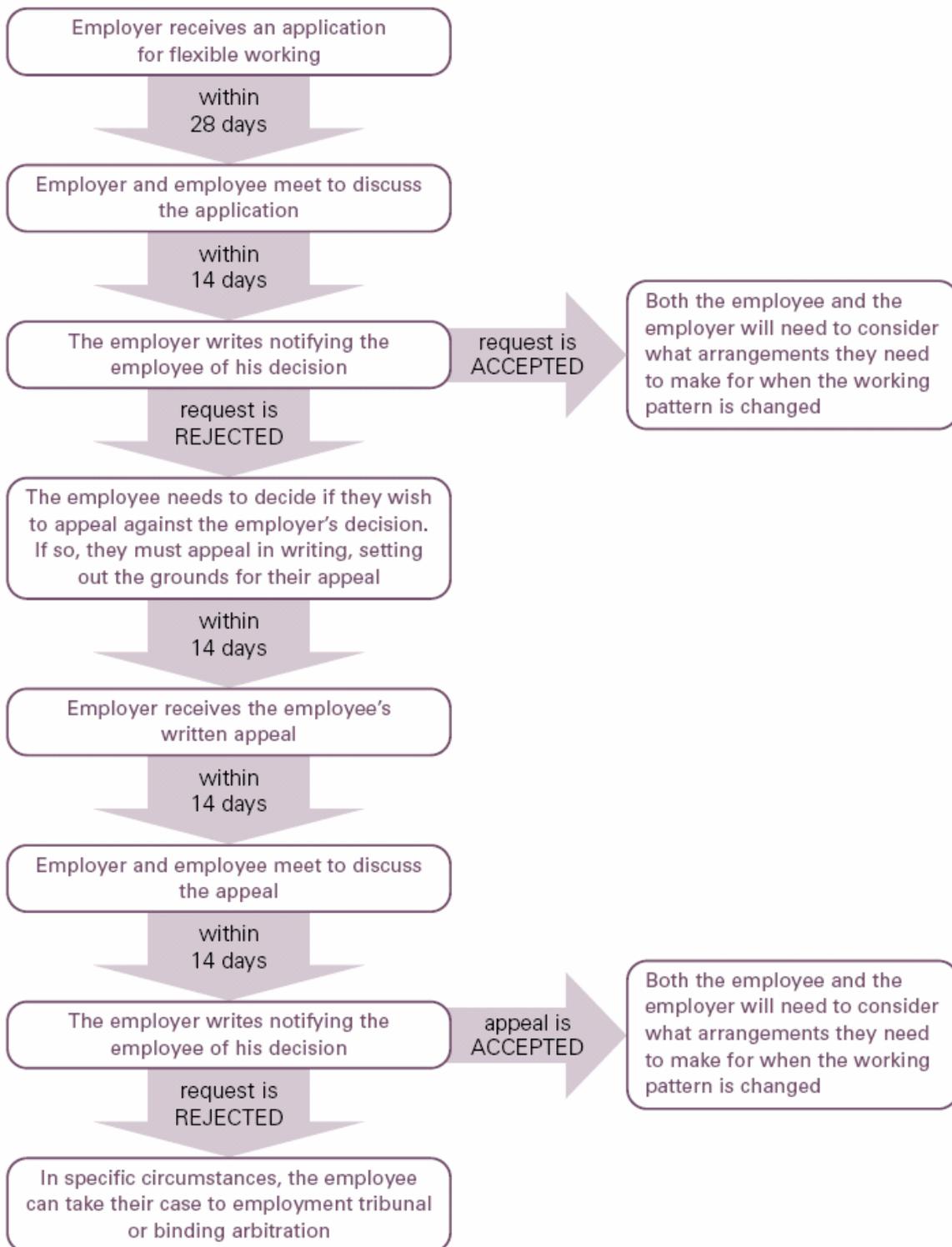
This involves staff undertaking work in their own homes, visiting the School's premises to collect and/or deliver work, or to attend meetings. Staff who are permitted to work from home do so under arrangements approved by their Head of Faculty. An unfair burden in terms of teaching, administrative and other duties must not be placed on colleagues. In some instances it may be possible to provide home computing facilities. Those members of staff primarily working from home will require a risk assessment of their home working environment to be undertaken.

Term-time contracts

Term-time contracts may be particularly suited to the needs of parents with children at school. A typical term-time contract might allow a member of staff up to ten weeks away from the School during school holidays, in addition to the ordinary leave entitlement (calculated pro rata to the leave entitlement of full-time staff). The annual salary, adjusted to take account of the reduced working time, may be paid in equal instalments so that stable earnings may be maintained throughout the year.

ANNEX B

Summary flowchart of process



ANNEX C

REQUEST FORM: FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Name:

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Department/Faculty:

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Date:

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I would like to apply to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern.

Reason for request: (please give a brief explanation for requesting flexible working arrangements):

Flexible working arrangements requested: (please provide details of the new working pattern being requested):

Impact of the new working pattern:

I think this change in my working pattern will affect the School and colleagues as follows:

Accommodating the new working pattern:

I think the effect on the School and colleagues can be dealt with as follows:

Effective Dates: from to

Now pass this application to your line manager, with copies to your Dean of Faculty/
Dean of Studies/Secretary & Director of Resources & Planning/Chief Operating
Officer (as appropriate) and the HR Department.

I approve/do not approve this request*

Reason for decision

Line Manager:

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..... Date:

(Please now pass to the Dean of Faculty/Dean of Studies or Secretary & Director of Resources & Planning/Chief Operating Officer for signature)

Dean of Faculty/Dean of Studies or Secretary & Director of Resources & Planning/Chief Operating Officer:

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..... Date: