



# Formal Flexible Working Requests Policy

Version 3 / March 2023

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

- 1.1 The University recognises the beneficial and positive impact that a hybrid and flexible operating culture has in helping to support the development and advancement of:
- Overall business efficiency;
  - Service delivery and output for our students, employees, and internal and external customers;
  - Employee work life balance;
  - A positive and inclusive environment ;
  - A happy and healthy place of work and study.
- 1.2 For a wide range of roles within the University, hybrid ways of operating and levels of flexibility are either naturally afforded or required, and are exercised with a mutual benefit for both the University and the employee at a local level.
- 1.3 However, some employees may require a formal agreement to make a permanent change to their working arrangements that reaches beyond the scope of our general approach to hybrid ways of working. This could be due to a number of reasons, that may include, but are not limited to, a change in personal circumstances (e.g. caring responsibilities), or wanting to enable a career development goal or lifestyle goal such as retirement plans.
- 1.4 In these instances, a formal request for flexible working should be made following the process outlined in this document. For non-contractual changes to the way of working, such as Agile Working, Hybrid Working or Remote Working, please view the [Hybrid Working Guidance](#).

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all University employees and the requirements of the business will determine if a formal request for Flexible Working is appropriate.
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- A change to the amount of hours of work;
- A change to the times of work;
- To work your hours over fewer days (compressed hours);
- To work remotely for an agreed number of days per week or month;
- Phased retirement - employees who may be considering flexible retirement should review the [Flexible Working into Retirement Policy](#).

3.2 A flexible working request can be permanent or for a limited time (for example a 6 month period).

#### **4. ELIGIBILITY**

4.1 Flexible working will be considered for all employees regardless of length of service. However, it is not a requirement or an automatic right. Each application will be

- The burden of additional costs
- Inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer and/or student demand
- Detrimental impact on performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural changes to the institution

6.6 If the line manager deems the original request cannot be accommodated, it is their responsibility to initiate further conversation(s) with the employee to offer and explore alternative options.

6.7 The University reserves the right to operate a trial period, normally expected to be between 1-3 months, unless otherwise agreed. It is expected that there should be regular reviews during the trial period to assess whether the needs of both the business and the employee are being met, or whether any further modifications need to be made to the arrangements. Following the trial period, a final decision will be made as to whether the request can be accommodated or not. If at the end of this period, it is deemed that the new pattern is not suitable by either party, the employee will revert to their original

permanent. Working beyond the date of the agreed trial period will be deemed to have been an acceptance of the formal flexible working request.

## **7. FORMAL REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING**

7.1 Before making an application employees



## **9. THE RIGHT TO APPEAL**

- 9.1. If after completing the above process an employee is dissatisfied with the outcome, they should initially raise this informally with their line manager. It can help to:
- explain why you feel the decision was wrong or unfair;
  - share any information that was missed or not available when your employer made the decision;
  - share any evidence if the request was not handled reasonably;
  - listen to your employer's reasons for their decision;
  - suggest any compromises you are willing to make.
- 9.2 If an employee wishes to formally appeal they should do so in writing to their People Business Partner within 10 working days of receiving the written notification of the decision, setting out the reasons for the appeal.
- 9.3 The People Business Partner will then arrange for the appeal to be heard by an appropriate manager who has had no prior involvement in the case. The appeal hearing will be a review of the decision and will be supported by an independent PPC representative.
- 9.4 The employee will have the right to attend the hearing and to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or other representative. The line manager who made the initial decision regarding the request may also attend if appropriate.
- 9.5 The decision may be given at the appeal hearing and will in any event be confirmed in writing within 10 working days of the hearing. The decision following the appeal shall be final.
- 9.6 The appeal process must be completed within 3 months of receipt of the original flexible working request.