

FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

The University has agreed to the introduction of a flexible working hours scheme which may be introduced in any department at the request of the Head, following consultation with their staff.

Managers, through consultation with their staff, will allow flexibility of working arrangements within the scheme subject to the overriding factor that the University's business and the work of the department should not suffer. The introduction of the flexi-time working will not affect the basic working hours for staff. Prior to commencement of the scheme, staff will be informed of who their designated manager will be.

It is management's responsibility to ensure that the section is covered between 8.45am and 5.00pm (5.15pm on Mondays) to service the needs of the University.

The scheme will apply to all full time staff and all grades. Part-time staff will not be covered by the scheme and should adhere to their normal working pattern. However, they will have the option to clock in and out at the beginning and the end of their normal working day or as appropriate.

Individuals will have the right to opt into or out of the scheme at the end of the six month trial period. The options open to staff are as follows:-

a) Existing Employees in the Scheme

At the end of the six month trial period staff will be asked if they wish to remain in the scheme or opt out. If an individual decides to remain in the scheme, he/she will only be able to leave at a later date with the specific approval of their Head of Department. Staff opting out of the scheme will revert to normal contractual hours which are 8.45am – 5.15 pm on Mondays and 8.45 – 5.00pm Tuesday to Fridays. Those opting out at the end of the trial period will be able to join the scheme at any time providing they have agreement of their Head of Department and Section Head.

b) New Employees

If a Department is operating flexible working hours, a new employee will join the scheme for a period of six months. At the end of the period the individual will decide whether or not they wish to remain in the scheme. If they decide to remain they will be only be able to leave a later date with the specific approval of their Head of Department. Individuals opting out of the scheme at the end of the six month period will revert to the normal contractual hours (see (a) above). However they may rejoin the scheme at anytime providing they have the agreement of their Head of Department and their Section Head.

c) Departments Joining the Scheme

If a Department decides to operate flexible working hours, the scheme will be introduced on a six month trial basis. Everyone must participate during this time. At the end of the trial period, the Head of Department, in consultation with his/her staff, will decide if the scheme is to continue. Each member of staff will decide whether or not they wish to remain in the scheme. If an individual decides to remain, they will only be able to leave at a later date with the specific approval of their Head of Department. Staff opting out of the scheme will revert back to normal contractual hours (See (a) above). However, they may rejoin the scheme at any time providing they have the agreement of their Head of Department and Section Head.

Where a member of staff is dissatisfied with any aspect of the operation of the scheme s/he may utilise the University Grievance Procedure.

2. HOURS OF WORK

The day must be split into flexible time and core time as shown below. Staff must be present from the beginning of and throughout the core periods but can arrange their own working pattern during flexible periods. During these defined periods staff are generally free to start and finish work as they wish provided their approximate times of arrival and departure are acceptable to their Manager and are consistent with the need to ensure that sections are covered during normal working hours (8.45am – 5.00pm and 5.15pm on Mondays).

Staff who are employed on a part time basis will continue to work their normal contractual hours. Alterations to normal hours of work will be made only with the manager's prior approval.

Core Time fixes the latest possible starting time and the earliest possible finishing time. All staff must be present from the beginning of and throughout the core time.

Flexible Time fixes the earliest possible starting time and the latest possible finishing time for the purpose of the scheme. The hours within which staff may, subject always to the needs of the department/section, choose their hours of work to suit personal preferences.

CORE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING BANDWIDTHS

There are two bandwidths systems available in the flexible working hours scheme. Each Department may operate only one of these options. The bandwidths cannot be mixed, nor can the two options operate simultaneously in a department.

OPTION ONE

07.30am – 09.30am 2 hours flexible starting band

09.30am – 12.00noon 2.5 hours core time

12.00pm – 02.00pm 2 hours flexible working band (30 minutes minimum working break)

02.00pm – 3.30pm 1.5 hours core time

03.30pm – 06.30pm 3 hours flexible finishing band

The minimum lunch break to be recorded and which must be taken between 12.00pm and 2.00pm is 30 minutes. The maximum lunch break is 2 hours.

OPTION TWO

07.30am – 09.30am 2 hours flexible starting band

09.30am – 12.00noon 2.5 hours core time

12.00pm – 02.30pm 2.5 hours flexible working band (30 minutes minimum working break)

02.30pm – 04.00pm 1.5 hours core time

04.00pm – 06.30pm 2.5 hours flexible finishing band

The minimum lunch break to be recorded and which must be taken between 12.00pm and 2.30pm is 30 minutes. The maximum lunch break is 2 hours and 30 minutes.

3. COVERING DURING OFFICE HOURS

Managers must ensure that cover is provided for 'normal hours' i.e. 8.45am – 5.00/5.15pm. Subject to the agreement of the Manager and the demands of the team and section working, staff can start work and finish any time during the flexible bands.

The morning and afternoon each include a period of fixed hours (core time) when staff must be in work.

4. TIME RECORDING

Departments operating the flexible working hours scheme will be required to use the computerised Time Recording System adopted by the University to provide a record of hours worked. The time cards will serve as in/out indicators. The time system itself should only be used when starting or finishing a work period (including a lunch break). Normally four entries per day will appear on the card i.e. at the start of the day, at the beginning and the end of the lunch break, and on finishing work. Staff must commence work after clocking in.

Staff must also clock their own cards and must use the appropriate clocking area for all their recordings. All other entries on the card must be authorised and entered into the time recording system by the manager. Staff will not be allowed to make manual alterations to their own, or other person's card. Any time recording problems must be resolved before the end of the week.

Any member of staff who omits to clock in on arrival or departure will be credited with a start time of 9.30am and a finish time of 3.30pm/4.00pm. Staff who omit to make the necessary clock entries at lunch time will automatically be debited with a 2 hour, or 2 hour 30 minute lunch break. Deliberate falsification of clocking entries with the intent to deceive will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

The total number of hours worked including debits or credits will be checked by the manager on a weekly basis and also at the end of the 4 week accounting period.

5. ACCOUNTING PERIOD

The flexible working hours scheme will work in four weekly periods.

6. CARRY OVER

Staff will be able to carry forward from one four weekly period to the next, a credit balance of no more than 11 hours and a debit of up to five hours. Any credit over 11

hours at the end of an accounting period will be lost and debits in excess of 5 hours at the end of an accounting period will not be permitted. Staff are expected to ensure that over each accounting period (4 weeks) their week averages 36.5 or 37 hours, according to their terms and conditions, or 146 or 148 hours per four weeks. Staff will not be allowed to take half or full days off using the flexi-time system if they are already in excess of 5 hours debit. If any individual is in debit in excess of 5 hours for 2 – 3 consecutive periods, disciplinary action may follow which may lead to the debited hours being taken from their annual leave entitlement. Any member of staff who leaves employment with a flexi – time debit will lose pay appropriate to the number of hours not worked. This will be deduced from the final salary.

7. WORK OUTSIDE THE FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

In general overtime working will be authorised only where the hours fall outside the band widths of the flexible working hours scheme. Overtime working will be allowed only with the manager's prior permission. Before commencing over time staff must 'clock off' flexible working hours. Overtime will be noted manually on the time card. This arrangement will not apply to academic related staff.

8. FLEX HOLIDAYS

Provision has been made in the scheme for up to 1.5 days (11 hours) 'flex holiday' to be taken in the accounting period. In the case of half days the individual must complete the morning or the afternoon for that day. Flex holidays must be taken with the prior approval of the manager.

9. WORKS VISITS, CONFERENCES, MEETINGS etc

Any University business occurring at or away from the premises and which prevents the individual from clocking 'in/out' will be recorded and authorised by the manager. Full credits will be given for the time involved. (7hours 18 minutes or 7 hours 24 minutes for a full day, depending on terms and conditions, pro rata for a lesser period of time).

10. VISITS TO DOCTORS, DENTISTS, HOSPITAL etc

Whenever possible these should be arranged during the flexible working times. If this is not possible, an appointment during core time may be made with the prior approval of the manager. Staff must make up time in either circumstance. Staff should clock in or out as appropriate. Any visits made in core time must be authorised by the manager.

In exceptional circumstances, and at the Manager's discretion following consultation with Human Resources, the time lost may be credited. Such circumstances will include ante-natal appointments; those staff suffering from a long term or chronic illness who need to attend hospital regularly over a long period of time, or staff who are required to attend hospital for a specific course of treatment.

11. AUTHORISED ABSENCE AND ANNUAL HOLIDAYS

Any authorised absence i.e. sickness, holidays, day release etc will receive full credits. The time credited should not exceed the standard day. If any employee goes home due to sickness after completing only a portion of the working day they will be credited with

the standard hours for that day regardless of the time of arrival or departure due to sickness.

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