

Job Share Guidelines

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1. Policy Statement

The University recognises the benefits from supporting the family friendly initiatives and assisting employees to achieve a balance in their work commitments and their life out of work.

The University is committed to becoming an equal opportunities employer. Part of that commitment, outlined in the Equal Opportunities Policy, is the statement that 'considerations will be given to arrangements for working part-time, the introduction of flexible working hours and/or job sharing schemes where appropriate, in an endeavour to improve efficiency, enlarge the potential labour market or improve job opportunities for those with domestic or caring responsibilities'.

The University will support job sharing where it is reasonable and practicable to do so and where the operational requirements of the University, School/Support Service Department will not be adversely affected.

With the proviso of the above statement the Job Sharing Policy is inclusive and is open to all members of staff.

Guidance on job share arrangements can be obtained from Human Resources.

2. Definition of Job Share

A Job Share is a formal arrangement where two people voluntarily share the responsibilities of one full time post, with the salary and leave entitlement on a pro-rata basis.

The contract of employment is held jointly and is conditional upon the offer of appointment being accepted by both job share partners.

A job share post remains a full-time post undertaken by two people, which can revert to a full-time post occupied by one person if required.

3. Eligibility

Job Sharing can be introduced for posts in all occupational groups unless there is a justifiable and objective reason which would make a job share unsuitable. The Head of School/Department will make decisions concerning requests for job share in consultation with their designated Human Resources Business Partner and will take into account the operational needs of the School or Department. There is not an automatic right to job share, however, an unjustifiable refusal to allow a job share may be viewed as discriminatory under the Sex Discrimination Act.

4. Job Share Arrangements

When considering requests for job share the following factors will be considered:

The distribution of hours.

The hours of the job share post should be agreed prior to the commencement of the job share and are at the discretion of the Head of School/Department in order to ensure that the operational needs of the area are met.

The hours of work of the post will normally be divided equally between the two sharers and, within this general principle, the hours worked by the sharers may be allocated in several ways depending on the needs of the School/Department.

Work Patterns can include:

Split days – Mornings or afternoons

Split weeks – 2.5 consecutive days each week.

Alternating split weeks – 2/3 days on alternate weeks

Alternate weeks

Ideally, the hours should be split equally however it may be appropriate for the job sharers to split the hours on an unequal basis, i.e. one sharer working 2 days per week and the other 3 days per week.

The actual hours worked by the job sharers should reflect the flexibility required by the corresponding full-time post, i.e. if weekend or evening work is required, the job sharers will be expected to work flexibly in order to provide cover.

The distribution of duties

The job share partners will have one common job description and each partner must be prepared to undertake the full range of duties.

The Line Manager in consultation with the job share partners will determine the actual distribution of the duties and this may be done on the basis of allocation of duties or completely shared duties, or a combination of both these approaches.

Jobs can be split in a number of different ways i.e. according to tasks, projects, student related activity, client/service base. Alternately, the job share partners can deal with duties as they occur when they are working.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

The contract of employment is held jointly and is conditional upon the offer of employment being accepted by both the job share partners.

Pay will be pro-rata to the hours worked.

Job sharers will be on the same grade in line with the University's grading structure, however, individual placement within the grade scale may differ, depending on qualifications and experience.

Consideration for performance related pay will be on an individual basis in line with the University's Performance Related Pay scheme.

Annual leave will be pro rata'd to the number of hours worked.

Public, statutory and University holidays are divided between the job share partners on a pro-rata basis regardless of which days they normally work.

Job sharers will be entitled to normal provisions of the University's sick pay schemes.

Job sharers will be entitled to the benefits as detailed in the University's Maternity Leave Agreements, Parental Leave Agreement, Paternity Leave Agreement, Compassionate Leave/Emergency Care of Dependents leave Agreement.

Information regarding job share and pensions can be obtained from the Pensions and Employee Benefits Manager.

An example of a job share contract of employment is attached as Appendix 1.

Training and Development

The University will provide the same access to training and development opportunities as full-time staff. Job sharers should contact the Staff Development Unit for advice and guidance.

Communication

Good communication between job sharers is essential to ensure continuity of work.

The job share partners have primary responsibility for ensuring effective communication and continuity.

An overlap/hand-over period is recommended although not compulsory.

Communication may also be maintained through the use of detailed notes/records, continuity books, use of IT, i.e. electronic diary, e-mail etc.

The most appropriate methods of communication including the possible need for an overlap period should be discussed and agreed before the job share commences.

Attendance at School/Departmental Meetings

Consideration should be given to the requirement for each job sharer to attend School/Departmental meetings.

It may be possible for one job sharer to attend and pass on details of the meeting. However, on occasions, it may be necessary for both job sharers to be present and the working pattern will have to be varied to accommodate this.

Absence Cover

Where one job share partner is absent the other partner may be asked to work on a full-time basis for a temporary period.

When one job share partner leaves

In the event of one job sharer leaving, the remaining partner will be offered the post on a full-time basis. If this is unacceptable, efforts will be made to recruit a new partner following the normal recruitment procedure.

If after advertising the post a new partner cannot be found and a review of the operational needs of the School/Department show that full-time cover for the post continues to be needed, recruitment for a full-timer will be initiated.

The University will endeavour to find the remaining job sharer suitable alternative employment.

If it is not possible to find a replacement job share partner or to find the remaining partner a suitable alternative post, it may be necessary to terminate the contract of employment.

The remaining job share partner will be fully consulted throughout this process and termination of the contract of employment will be a last resort option.

Review

The University reserves the right to review the job sharing arrangement if, for example, there is a change in the operational requirements of the School/Department or the job share arrangement is not meeting the needs of the area. Any review will be carried out in consultation with the job share partners and with the designated Human Resources Business Partner.

5. Application Procedure

Job share applications can be received from two main sources:

applications to a vacant post

applications from existing employees to job share their existing post.

a) Applications to a vacant post:

Where possible consideration should be given, prior to advertisement, as to whether the vacant post can be filled as a job share position. The post should be advertised in line with the normal recruitment procedure but recruitment literature should indicate that the post is suitable for Job Sharing.

It is not necessary for those applying for a job share post to apply with a job share partner. The application should be assessed in the same way as applications from other candidates. For a post to be shared, however, there should be at least two prospective sharers amongst the shortlisted candidates. If only one sharer is shortlisted the post cannot be shared. Under these circumstances Human Resources should approach the candidate to ascertain whether they wish their application to be considered on a full time basis.

Where a joint share application is submitted, it should be assessed in the same way as applications from other candidates. The recruitment process should be followed as normal assessing each job share candidate separately. Any offer of employment made to job share partners is dependent on both partners accepting the offer.

Selection for posts should be undertaken based on the merits of the applicants.

b) Applications from existing employees to job share their existing post.

There may be current full-time employees who wish to reduce their hours of work by sharing their job. These may include, employees returning from maternity leave or adoption leave, employees approaching retirement, employees wishing to undertake part-time study, employees caring for dependants, employees who may, due to a disability, now wish to work on a part-time basis. The legal rights of women returning from maternity leave should be recognised.

Applications from an existing employee to job share should be made in writing to the Head of School/Department who should consult with their designated Human Resources Business Partner.

Prospective job sharers will be required to give at least 3 months notice to the University so that sufficient time is allowed to assess the suitability of a post for job sharing and where appropriate to recruit a partner.

Applications from employees whilst on maternity leave should be forwarded to the Head of School/Department as soon as reasonably practicable and normally no later than 3 months before the expected date of return to work to ensure that the Head of School/Department has sufficient time to consider the request and make appropriate arrangements

The Head of School/Department will determine whether a post is suitable for job share and should reply in writing to the job share applicant within 4 weeks of the date of the application being received. If the Head of School/Department believes that the post is not suitable for job share, he/she will be required to provide a written report to Human Resources stating the reasons. The job share applicant will be kept informed of the progress of their application to the job share and be involved in the consultation process.

If the job share is approved the University will advertise for a partner following the normal recruitment procedures.

If a suitable partner is not found then the Head of School/Department will reassess the position and discuss options with the applicant. If alternatives cannot be agreed it may be necessary for the Head of School/Department to turn down the application at this point.

Any member of staff aggrieved by the refusal of the University to allow them to job share can pursue the matter via University's grievance procedure.

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