



## **FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY**

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The Society is committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment and to developing work practices and policies that support work-life balance, whilst managing the operational needs of the business.

This Flexible Working Policy gives eligible employees an opportunity to formally request a change to their working pattern in accordance with the statutory procedure for such requests. This policy applies to all employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants or self-employed contractors.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

## **Eligibility**

To be eligible to make a request under the formal procedure you must:

- be an employee;
- have worked for us continuously for 26 weeks at the date your request is made;
- not have made a formal request to work flexibly during the last 12 months.

## **Types of Flexible Working**

You will be able to request a number of possible changes to working arrangements:

- A change to the hours you work (Total number)
- A change to the times you are required to work (shift pattern)
- To work from home (whether for all or part of the week)
- Other flexible arrangements such as a job share, compressed hours, working flexi-time,

## **Flexible Working Procedure**

Any employee interested in flexible working is advised to speak informally with their line manager to discuss their eligibility, the different options and the effect of their proposed work pattern on colleagues and service delivery, before submitting a formal or informal request.

**Please Note:** If your application is accepted it will mean a permanent change to your terms and conditions of employment, unless it is agreed otherwise in writing between you and your Manager. There is no automatic right to return to your original work arrangements.

You must make your request in writing using the flexible working request form if you would like your flexible working request to be considered under the formal procedure. It is recommended that an employee has an outcome to their flexible working request within 3 months. This 3 month period is effective from the date the formal request is made and can be extended by mutual agreement between both parties.

### **Flexible Working Procedure – Meeting**

Your manager will arrange to meet with you to discuss the application. You have the right to be accompanied at any meeting. Your Manager will discuss your situation and review alternatives which may be available if there are problems in accommodating the original request.

Your line manager may suggest starting new working arrangements under an initial trial period to ensure that they meet your needs and those of your team.

### **Grounds upon which a request can be rejected:**

An application for a change in terms and conditions may be refused if one or more of the grounds are considered to apply:

- The burden of additional cost
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand
- Inability to re-organise work among existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental impact on performance
- Insufficient work during the periods you propose to work
- Planned structural changes

In deciding whether the above grounds are met, a wide range of criteria will be taken into account, including (by way of example only) the following:

- The Society's business needs
- The suitability of the job for the flexible arrangements proposed, e.g. the nature of the work, the hours needed and the need for continuity and consistency
- The current balance of full-time and part-time and other flexibly working employees within the team or department
- The feasibility of covering the remaining hours

## **Flexible Working Procedure – Written Confirmation**

Your Manager will send a copy of the flexible working application form to the People and Performance department which will be placed on your personnel file.

You will receive either written confirmation agreeing to the new working pattern or a clear business justification as to why it cannot be accommodated.

If your request is accepted you will receive a letter from the People and Performance department detailing your new working arrangements, details of any trial period, an explanation of changes to your contract of employment and the agreed date on which they will commence. You will be asked to sign and return a copy of the letter to the People and Performance department. This will be placed on your personnel file to confirm the variation to your terms of employment. There may also be some additional practical matters, such as arrangements for handing over work that your line manager will discuss with you.

## **Right to Appeal**

You have a right to appeal against the decision to your Regional Business Manager or Department Head, within 7 days of receiving the notification in writing. You must state your grounds for appeal on which you are appealing in writing.

If you or your Manager would like guidance on the flexible working procedure please contact your People and Performance Consultant on 0131 335 4400.

An employee who makes a request for flexible working will not be subjected to any detriment or lose any career development opportunities as a result.

## **Withdrawal of a formal request**

If you withdraw a formal request for flexible working, you will not be eligible to make another formal request for 12 months from the date of your original request. In certain circumstances, a request made under the formal procedure will be treated as withdrawn if either/both of the following occur:

- you fail to attend two meetings under the formal procedure without reasonable cause; or
- you unreasonably refuse to provide information we require to consider your request.

In such circumstances, the People and Performance department will write to you confirming that the request has been treated as withdrawn.

## FLEXIBLE WORKING APPLICATION FORM

If you would like to make a request to work flexibly you should check your eligibility using the criteria below and complete all sections of this form. Flexible working requests may include a variation to your existing hours e.g. job share, a variation to the times you work or work pattern, or a request to work from home.

You should ensure that you submit your application to your Manager or the appropriate person well in advance of the date you wish the request to take effect. Your Manager will respond to your request and arrange a meeting; a written outcome will be given following this meeting. You should note that if the request is successful an agreed start date for any changes to your working pattern will be agreed with your line manager

### Personal details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Payroll number: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_ ( Manager)

I would like to apply to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern. I confirm I meet the eligibility criteria as follows;

- I have worked continuously as an employee of the Society for the last 26 weeks.
- I have not made a request to work flexibly under this right in the past 12 months.

If you are not sure whether you meet the criteria, a Member of the People and Performance department will be able to advise. If you are unable to tick all of the boxes then you do not qualify for the statutory right to make a request for flexible working. This does not mean your request will not be considered. Your Line Manager may still consider your request outside the formal Flexible Working procedure.

**Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/times worked)**

**Describe the working pattern you would like to work in the future (days/hours/times worked)**

I would like this working pattern to commence from, date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Impact of the new working arrangements**

*Please indicate how the change to your working arrangements will impact upon your colleagues and the Store/Department ?*

**Accommodating the new working Arrangements**

*Please indicate how the effect on your colleagues and on the Store/Department can be dealt with?*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

You should now pass this form to your Line Manager. You may wish to keep a copy for your own records.

**Note for Line Manager**

Please notify a member of the People and Performance department of any flexible working requests and ensure you are familiar with the Flexible working Procedure.

Following the outcome of the Flexible Working meeting, please update and sign the form below. A copy of the Application form and Outcome letter should be sent to the People and Performance department.

**Approved/Not Approved by Line Manager**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_