

# Flexible Working Policy and Procedure

October 2018

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<b>Benchmarking</b>	University of Glasgow , University of St Andrews

## **FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY**

### **1 Purpose and Scope**

- 1.1 The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is committed to enabling employees to balance work with other non work-related responsibilities and this policy sets out the provisions for employees of GSA to request to work flexibly. The policy does not provide an automatic right to work flexibly but provides employees with a mechanism by which requests can be made.
- 1.2 The policy is designed to facilitate discussion between an employee and their line manager in considering flexible working patterns and to find a solution that ensures the needs of both the employee and the School are met. As such, employees have a responsibility to carefully consider their desired working pattern when making an application and line managers are required to ensure that all requests are considered reasonably, equitably and within specific timescales (refer to section 4).

### **2 Eligibility**

- 2.1 In line with the Employment Rights Act 1996, an employee has the right to make an application to work flexibly if they:
- Have been employed by the School continuously for a period of 26 weeks at the date of application;
  - Have not made any other application under this policy in the preceding twelve months. Only one application per employee per year will be considered.
- 2.2 The School recognises that there may be circumstances not covered by the legislation, as outlined above, where an employee may wish to make a request to work flexibly and, as such, is agreeable to considering such requests on an individual basis. Such requests will also be considered following the procedure set out in this policy.

### **3 Flexible working**

- 3.1 Under this policy, employees have the right to make a request to:
- Change the hours they work
  - Change the times when they are required to work
  - Work from another location or from home
- 3.2 In line with this, flexible working can be arranged in a variety of formats, such as;
- Flexible hours
  - Part-time working

- Compressed hours
- Annualised hours
- Job sharing
- Home working

Please see Appendix 1 for more details.

- 3.3 Where a change to working hours is required for a short period of time, informal arrangements may be more appropriate. Guidance in this regard can be sought from a member of the HR department.
- 3.4 Applications to alter working patterns need not necessarily involve a significant change to the current pattern. For example, an employee may wish to commence work thirty minutes later and undertake this time at a later point in the working day.
- 3.5 Employees are encouraged to seek advice from either a member of the HR department and/or a Trade Union representative at any stage of the procedure and may be accompanied at any meetings by either a GSA work colleague or a Trade Union representative should they wish.

## 4 Procedure

- 4.1 The procedure for making an application for flexible working is as follows:

### Step 1

The employee must make a considered application in writing to their immediate line manager (see Appendix 2 – *Application for Flexible Working Form*), at least eight weeks before the desired new work pattern would be due to commence. The application should outline what the employee's desired pattern of work would be as well as what the potential impact upon the department/colleagues may be. The employee should also try to provide an indication of how such impact can be accommodated.

**Note:** When preparing an application, employees should give careful consideration to the financial implications in relation to any requests involving working fewer hours such as salary, pension and holiday entitlement which will be reduced on a pro-rata basis as a result.

### Step 2

Within twenty-eight days of receipt of the employee's application, the line manager will invite the employee to a meeting to discuss the request. The discussion will allow both parties to explore the desired work pattern in depth and to determine how the request might be accommodated. The meeting will also provide the opportunity to consider any alternative working patterns should there be difficulties in accommodating the initial request.

Line managers have a responsibility to consider applications for Flexible Working fairly and objectively, and are encouraged to seek guidance from a member of the HR department.

### **Step 3**

Within fourteen days of the meeting taking place, the line manager will write to the employee to confirm whether the requested work pattern has been agreed and, if so, the effective date. Any changes made will be deemed to be permanent, unless either a temporary period has been requested and agreed or a trial period is mutually agreed with the line manager.

Any request not approved must be for one of the following business reasons as set out in the legislation:

- the burden of additional costs
- an inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff
- an inability to recruit additional staff
- a detrimental impact on quality
- a detrimental impact on performance
- detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand
- insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work
- a planned structural change to the department / business

Should the request not be approved, clear business grounds from one of the reasons above will be provided.

### **Step 4 – Trial Period**

A trial period may be agreed to allow either the employee or the line manager to assess how the requested changes work in practice. If at the end of the trial period it is considered that the changes are not suitable to either the employee or the department, a meeting between the employee and line manager should be arranged to discuss this.

### **Step 5 - Appeal**

Should an employee be dissatisfied with the outcome of their request to work flexibly they have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals should be made in writing to the Human Resources department within fourteen days of the written decision having been received and should outline clearly the grounds for appeal.

The Human Resources department will assign the appropriate member of senior staff to consider the appeal and the employee will be invited to attend a meeting within twenty-eight days of receipt of the written submission.

Within fourteen days of the appeal meeting the employee will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal.

## **5 Questions or Complaints**

- 5.1 Clarification on the terms or operation of this Policy may be obtained from a member of the HR Department. Any complaints in relation to the Policy or its operation should be directed to a senior member of the HR Department.

## **6 Monitoring**

- 6.1 The number and profile of staff invoking the right to apply for flexible working will be monitored by the HR Department. The outcomes of the monitoring process will be presented along with other Performance Indicators to relevant committees within the School including the HR Committee (which has representation from each recognised TU) .

## **Appendix 1**

### **Flexible Working Arrangements**

#### **Flexible hours**

An employee varies their normal starting, finish and break times but still fulfils the total number of weekly working hours. Guidance on appropriate rest breaks can be sought from a member of the HR Department.

#### **Part-time working**

An employee works fewer days or hours per week than a full time equivalent employee. Full-time hours are considered to be 35 hours per week.

#### **Compressed hours**

An employee works their total number of weekly working hours over fewer days, e.g. working 35 hours over 4 days rather than 5 days.

#### **Annualised hours**

The total number of working hours are calculated over a year rather than a week, allowing the employee to identify “peaks and troughs” in their workload and to devise an annual working pattern in accordance with this.

#### **Job sharing**

Two employees share the duties of one full-time post. Job sharers divide pay, holidays and any other relevant terms and conditions.

#### **Home working**

An employee is able to undertake their duties from a remote location, such as from home. Where a regular pattern of home working is sought, employees must familiarise themselves with their responsibilities under GDPR 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018. In particular, employees should ensure that all GSA and personal data is processed safely and securely. All GSA sensitive and personal data must be encrypted with a password. Line managers must be satisfied that there are secure measures in place for the storage of GSA data.

## Appendix 2

### Application for Flexible Working

Name of applicant	
Position/Job Title	
Department/School	

Current hours per week	
Current working pattern	
Proposed start date	
Reason for application	

Having read the accompanying Flexible Working Policy & Procedure, please explain what your desired change in working pattern is:

Proposed new hours	
Proposed working pattern (e.g. days/hours/times/place of work)	
How will you be able to continue to undertake all current duties with the proposed working pattern?	
If you will not be able to undertake all current duties, which would be affected?	
How do you envisage these duties being fulfilled/re-allocated?	

Applicant's signature		Date	
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#### To be completed by Line Manager/ Head of School/Department

I confirm that I do/do not\* endorse the above-named employee's application for flexible working as outlined above.

Has a trial period been agreed? Yes/No\* \* delete as appropriate  
 If Yes, please specify agreed time period:

Considered by (name):		Position	
Signature:		Date:	

**A copy of this form should be forwarded to the HR Department upon completion.**