

FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

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CITY HOSPITALS SUNDERLAND NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

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Title:			
Date:			
NB: It is the sponsor's responsibility to submit the policy through the CHS approval route.			
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Flexible Working Policy is part of the Trust's commitment to being a model employer. It is intended to help staff balance work requirements with domestic, personal and family commitments and has been written to provide different opportunities to vary contractual working hours and arrangements to enable this to happen. The Trust believes that flexible working can increase staff motivation, promote work-life balance, reduce employee stress and improve performance and productivity.
- 1.2 The Trust's vision is to have working arrangements that balance the needs of the service with the needs of staff and that are appropriate for the particular service being provided.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 2.1 From 30 June 2014, amendments to the Children and Families Act 2014 came into force, which extended the right to request flexible working to all employees with at least 26 weeks' continuous employment. Before June 2014, this right applied only to the parents of children under 17 or 18 in the case of parents of disabled children, or to those caring for an adult.
- 2.2 Employees can only make one request in any 12 month period.
- 2.3 Employees who have less than 26 weeks' continuous employment do not have a statutory right to request flexible working. However, the Trust will allow requests from these employees to be considered, as it acknowledges that flexible working can bring benefits to the Trust, patients as well as to employees.
- 2.4 In accordance with the Equality Act (2010) this policy supports the principles of equality and diversity and no individual will be treated less favourably than others because of any of the following protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Disability
 - Religion / Belief
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Pregnancy / Maternity
 - Marriage / Civil Partnership
 - Gender Re-assignment status
- 2.5 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all requests for a flexible working arrangement are dealt with fairly and consistently.
- 2.6 In order to maintain service continuity the Trust is unable to provide flexible working as an automatic right for employees. The Trust will consider all requests for flexible working on their own merits and assess each request based on the needs of both the service and the employee.

- 2.7 Flexible working is open to consideration provided the manager and employee(s) can demonstrate that there are advantages or at least no detriment to the Trust's services. The implementation of any of the options outlined in this policy remains at the discretion of the department manager and the needs of the service always taking precedence.
- 2.5 Agreeing to one employee's flexible working request (within the same department or in another area / department of the Trust), will not set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted the same or similar change to his/her working pattern.
- 2.6 Abuse of this policy will lead to disciplinary action being considered, which may include terminating the flexible working arrangement of the employee(s) concerned.
- 2.7 Deliberate falsification or attempted falsification of timesheets and/or attendance records will be regarded as potential gross misconduct, which could lead to dismissal. Such conduct may also lead to criminal action (including prosecution) under the relevant legislation. In some cases disciplinary and civil action to recover any monies may be pursued concurrently

3 DUTIES

3.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for monitoring and approving a framework for flexible working that is compliant with all relevant legislation, guidelines and NHS best practice standards.

3.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that a framework is in place to facilitate flexible working, in line with all relevant legislation, guidelines and NHS best practice standards.

3.3 Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources is the Executive lead for the development, implementation and review of this policy.

3.4 Human Resources Department

The Human Resources Department is responsible for providing advice, support and guidance to managers and employees in relation to this policy and its operation;

3.5 Managers

Managers are responsible for the following:

- Discussing informal / initial enquiries about flexible working with their employee(s) as soon as possible;
- Making sure that the employee has completed the Flexible Working Request Form (**Appendix 1**) if they wish to submit a formal request.
- Considering the impact of requests for flexible working on other team members, the department, the wider Trust and service users who may be affected and consulting with their own manager and/or seeking advice from their Divisional HR Manager as necessary.

- Considering how best to accommodate the request without it having an impact on service delivery.
- Deciding on each request on its merits, prevailing circumstances and taking into account the guiding principles in this policy.
- Ensuring that agreed changes are documented in writing to the employee and recorded any change in contractual hours in ESR,
- Keeping a copy of all records on the individual's personal file.

3.6 Employees

Employees are responsible for the following:

- Considering the practical implications of their request and how their colleagues, department and service users would be affected by / cope with these.
- Arranging an informal meeting to discuss their request with their Manager.
- Seeking information / advice from HR as necessary.
- Making a formal request in writing using the Flexible Working Request Form (see **Appendices 1 and 2**)
- Being flexible / open to compromise as their Manager may be able to meet their request in part but not in full and remaining flexible, as there may be alternative ways to meet their needs.

IMPORTANT: Before making an application for flexible working, all staff with a visa must contact the Employee Services Manager in the HR Department. This is because if an employee wishes to reduce their working hours, which would result in their salary decreasing, this may have implications for those with visa restrictions.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Annualised Hours

Annualised Hours is a term used to describe a contract, which states the agreed number of guaranteed hours the employee is contracted to work through a 12-month period. This is different from a standard weekly contract e.g. 37.5 / 40 hour week – each week, every week. An 'Annualised Contract' allows an organisation to increase or reduce, in advance, the required numbers of hours to be worked at a given time to match the needs of the business. See **Appendix 3** for more information.

4.3 Flexitime

Flexitime is a variable work scheme that permits flexibility of working hours at the start and end of a day or shift. Employees must work core periods of the day as determined by their manager and complete an agreed number of hours over a 4 week period. See **Appendix 4** for more information.

4.4 Compressed Working Hours

An arrangement in which, an employee works his/her full time hours over less than the normal number of days. Usually a 37.5 hour week is compressed into 4 days or a 75 hour fortnight into 9 days. See **Appendix 5** for more information.

4.5 Part Time Working

A part-time worker is someone who works fewer hours than a full-time worker. Full-time for non-medical staff is usually 37.5 hours a week and 40 hours (10 PAs) for medical staff.

Part-time workers may be contracted to work either different or the same days each week, depending on their contract. In order to compensate for any uneven benefit, particularly where staff are required to work particular days each week, entitlement to Bank / Public Holidays will be pro-rated based on their relative full-time equivalent, regardless of which days of the week they work.

Types of part-time working include:

- Job-share - where a full time job is divided into two part time jobs – see **Appendix 6**;
- Term-time work - where a worker can take time off or work reduced hours during school holidays – see **Appendix 7**;
- Evening or weekend work;
- Casual or bank work.

4.6 Home Working

Home working is where an employee undertakes their work in the home environment or another remote location away from the Trust's office locations. Home working employees usually work with the assistance of information technology and telecommunication links to the office, colleagues and clients.

5. CONSIDERING REQUESTS AND SERVICE NEEDS

5.1 Although the Trust is committed to providing the widest possible range of working patterns for its workforce, managers and employees need to be realistic and recognise that the full range of flexible working options will not be appropriate for all jobs across all areas of the Trust.

5.2 Service needs will take priority over a flexible working arrangement and where there is evidence that services are being detrimentally affected, the arrangement will be terminated (with notice wherever possible) or amended and appropriate working hours' arrangements put in place, either for an individual or a group of employees. In situations where immediate / short notice changes to a flexible working arrangement are needed, e.g. to maintain patient safety, managers must explain the reasons for the change with staff, identify/discuss any effect of the change with them, seeking advice from HR as necessary to find appropriate solutions, .

5.3 In considering a flexible working request, managers must take into account a number of service needs including (but not limited to) the following:

- The cost of the proposed arrangement;
- The impact of the proposed arrangement on patient care / safety and /or service delivery;
- The effect of the proposed arrangement on other staff;
- The level of supervision that the post-holder requires;
- The structure of the department and staff resources;
- Other issues specific to the individual's department;
- An analysis of the tasks specific to the role, including their frequency and duration;
- An analysis of the workload of the role.

5.4 In advance of meeting with the employee, the Manager should:-

- Think carefully about the request, any potential benefits and the impact of the proposed working arrangement;
- Make any necessary initial enquiries as to how the request might be accommodated i.e. assess other team members' working patterns, future staffing plans, forthcoming projects / workload etc.;
- Think creatively to try to accommodate requests;
- Seek advice from their Manager and/or from their Divisional HR Manager if necessary;
- Not make any assumptions about the request without first speaking to the employee.

5.5 In relation to staff with significant caring responsibilities, their needs are likely to be very different from those of staff with 'mainstream' childcare responsibilities and the circumstances and milestones of caring are also likely to be different. It is therefore important that managers consider what flexible adjustments could be made to support these staff to combine work with care.

5.6 Before submitting a formal request, employees should discuss their flexible working proposal and the practical implications of it with their Manager. At this stage, an alternative to a permanent change / flexible working arrangement may be more appropriate (see 5.9 below).

5.7 Employees who are members of the NHS Pension Scheme should make sure they find out how any agreed changes may affect their pension benefits. Further details can be obtained from the Employee Services Team in the HR Department or from the NHS Business Services Authority at <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Pensions/4189.aspx>

5.8 Should a flexible working request be approved, the change will be on a **permanent basis** unless all parties have agreed at the outset that the arrangement is temporary or a trial period has been agreed. There is no automatic right to revert to the previous working pattern.

5.9 Alternative options to a permanent flexible working arrangement that may be considered include but are not limited to:-

- A trial period / temporary flexible working pattern, to help establish whether a proposed working pattern is suitable for both parties in the long term.
- Time off in Lieu (TOIL), i.e. claiming time owing where staff work additional hours. TOIL is suitable for providing flexibility on an ad hoc or short-term basis.

6. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH REQUESTS FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING

6.1 All requests for flexible working must be made in writing by completing a Flexible Working Request Form (**Appendix 1**) and must include the following information;

- The date of the request;
- The change to working conditions the employee is seeking;
- when they would like the change to come into effect;

- What effect, if any, they think the requested change would have on the organisation and how, in their opinion, any such effect might be dealt with;
- A statement that it is a statutory request;
- Whether the employee has made a previous application for flexible working;

6.2 If the request does not contain the required information, the Manager should advise the employee what additional information is required and ask them to resubmit the request.

Note: All requests must be considered and decided on within a period of 3 months from the date of first receipt, to notification of the decision on appeal.

6.3 Meeting to discuss a flexible working request

6.3.1 Once the completed request form has been received, it should be dealt with by the Manager as soon as possible, but no later than the timescales set out below.

6.3.2 A meeting must be held **within 28 days** of receiving the request, the purpose of which is to discuss the flexible working request, find out more about the proposed working arrangement and how it could be of benefit to the employee and the service / Trust.

6.3.3 The employee will have the option to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague at the meeting,

6.3.4 The Manager will be supported at the meeting by a HR representative.

6.3.5 If the employee fails to attend the meeting and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, their application will be deemed to have been withdrawn, (see Section 7 below).

6.4 Outcome of a flexible working request

6.4.1 After the meeting, the proposed flexible working arrangement will be carefully considered by the Manager, with potential benefits to the employee and to the service / Trust weighed up against any adverse impact of implementing the change.

6.4.2 Each request will be considered on a case by case basis and if the Manager needs any advice from their Divisional HR Manager in considering the request, then he/she should contact them as early as possible.

6.4.3 The Manger must notify the employee of the decision in writing **within 14 days** of the meeting. The request may be granted in full or in part e.g. the Manager may propose a modified version of the request, the request may be granted on a temporary basis, or the employee may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.

6.4.4 The letter confirming the decision should either;

- a) Approve the request, detail the exact nature of the change, establish a start date and confirm a review or end date if applicable, or:
- b) Confirm a compromise reached at the meeting, establish a start date and confirm a review or end date if applicable, or:
- c) Reject the request, giving a clear explanation of the reasons why and informing the employee of their right to appeal.

6.5 Reasons for rejecting / turning down a flexible working request

6.5.1 If the request is turned down, it must be for one or more of the following business reasons as set out in the legislation;

- The burden of additional costs; An inability to reorganise work among existing staff; An inability to recruit additional staff;
- A detrimental impact on performance;
- A detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- Insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work;
- A planned structural change to the business.

7. APPEALS PROCEDURE

7.1 Employees can appeal the outcome of the original decision by writing to their 'next in line' manager.

7.2 The 'next in line' manager with support from HR will arrange a meeting with the employee. The meeting needs to take place **within 14 days** of receipt of the appeal. The employee should be sent a letter confirming the date and purpose of the meeting and giving them the option to bring a trade union representative or a work colleague with them.

7.3 For the meeting, the 'next in line manager' hearing the appeal should have reviewed both the request and the manager's response and be sure that they have everything they need to make an informed decision.

7.4 Once the appeal has taken place, the decision should be confirmed in writing **within 14 days** of the meeting. It will either;

- Uphold the appeal, specify the exact nature of the agreed change, establish a start date and a review or end date if applicable, or;
- Reject the appeal, stating the grounds for the decision.

8. WITHDRAWAL OF AN APPLICATION

8.1 The Trust will consider that a flexible working request has been withdrawn where an employee has:-

- Notified the Manager verbally or in writing that they wish to withdraw their request;
- Without reasonable cause, failed more than once to attend a meeting or appeal meeting;

- Without reasonable cause, refused to provide the Manager with information required in order to assess whether the request can be accommodated.

8.2 The Manager should confirm the withdrawal of the request to the employee in writing and remind them that are not entitled to make a further request within the next 12 months.

9. MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

Area for monitoring	Method	Frequency	Responsibility	Monitoring Assurance Group	Lead for developing action plan	Group responsible for monitoring action plan
Number, type and outcome of flexible working requests	Workforce Report	Annual	Deputy Director of HR	Executive Committee	Director of HR	Board of Directors
Number, type and outcome of appeals	Workforce Report	Annual	Deputy Director of HR	Executive Committee	Director of HR	Board of Directors

10. DISSEMINATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAINING

- Induction
- E-mails to all staff
- Team Brief
- Intranet
- HR briefings to Directorates
- Joint Consultative Group
- ILM Level 3 training for managers

11. CONSULTATION, APPROVAL, RATIFICATION AND REVIEW

- **Consultation**
 - Human Resources Strategy Group
 - Joint Consultative Group
 - Senior Manager Forum
 - Corporate Management Team
 - Matrons
 - HR staff
- **Approval**
 - Executive Committee
- **Ratification**
 - Policy Committee
- **Review**
 - Every 3 years

12. EXTERNAL REFERENCES

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000

13. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- Attendance Management Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Parental Policy
- Career Break Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Special Leave Policy
- Annual Leave Policy

FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST FORM (CHANGE TO WORKING ARRANGEMENTS)	
Please read the Trust's Flexible Working Policy before completing this form	
Name	
Job title	
Band/grade	
Department / ward	
Name of manager	

PART 1: To be completed by the employee

Qualifying Criteria

I would like to apply to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern under my right provided under section 80F of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

I confirm I meet each of the eligibility criteria as follows (please tick box to confirm):

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

Date(s) of any previous request(s) to work flexibly under this right:

If you are not sure whether you meet any of the criteria, information can be found on Gov.UK at www.gov.uk

If you are unable to tick all of the relevant boxes then you do not qualify to make a request to work flexibly under the statutory procedure. However this does not mean that your request will not be considered, but you will have to explore this separately with your manager.

Please state below the reason(s) for your request:

Please provide details of your current working pattern:

Days/Hours/Times Worked

Please state below the proposed new hours and working pattern / arrangement you are requesting

I would like this working arrangement to start on:

Date

(If applicable) I would like this working arrangement to cease on:

Date

(Please leave blank if you are requesting a permanent change)

Anticipated Service Impact

It is important to consider the possible service implications associated with adopting flexible working arrangements. Please provide details below of the following considerations, to help your manager discuss and consider your request in more detail

How will you be able to continue to perform all your current duties within the proposed working pattern?

--

If you will not be able to perform all your duties, which ones will be affected?

--

What suggestions do you have on how such duties can be reallocated?

--

To help your manager consider your request and alternative ways of providing a service, please outline how your request will affect the following:

- Direct patient care (where applicable).
- Customers / clients / service users.
- Colleagues who may have to cover at times when you would previously have been at work/on duty.
- Contact with your line manager/supervisor.

If your role involves managing staff, how will your proposed new working pattern affect your delivery of:

- Supervision/management
- Performance review/appraisal

- Training
- Staff support

Personal Declaration

- I confirm I have read and understood the Trust’s Flexible Working Policy.
- I am eligible to make a request.

(If applicable)

- **I confirm that the conditions of my visa do not prevent me from making a permanent change to my employment (please speak to/contact the Employee Services Manager in HR for further guidance if necessary).**

Formal Arrangements Only

- I confirm I have considered the impact of any adjustments, which will be made to my salary to reflect this change in working pattern and I am aware that this change will be permanent (unless a temporary arrangement has been agreed).

Employee Signature

Date

Please send the completed form to your Manager for consideration. A meeting will be arranged within 28 days to discuss your request and the contents of this form.

You will be advised of the decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting

OUTCOME OF MEETING WITH MANAGER

Date:

Present:

Outcome of discussion:

Proposal: agreed / declined

If declines – reason/s for decision:

Trial period (if applicable):

Monitor/review period (if applicable):

Contractual hours / ESR change / contract variation needed?: Yes / No

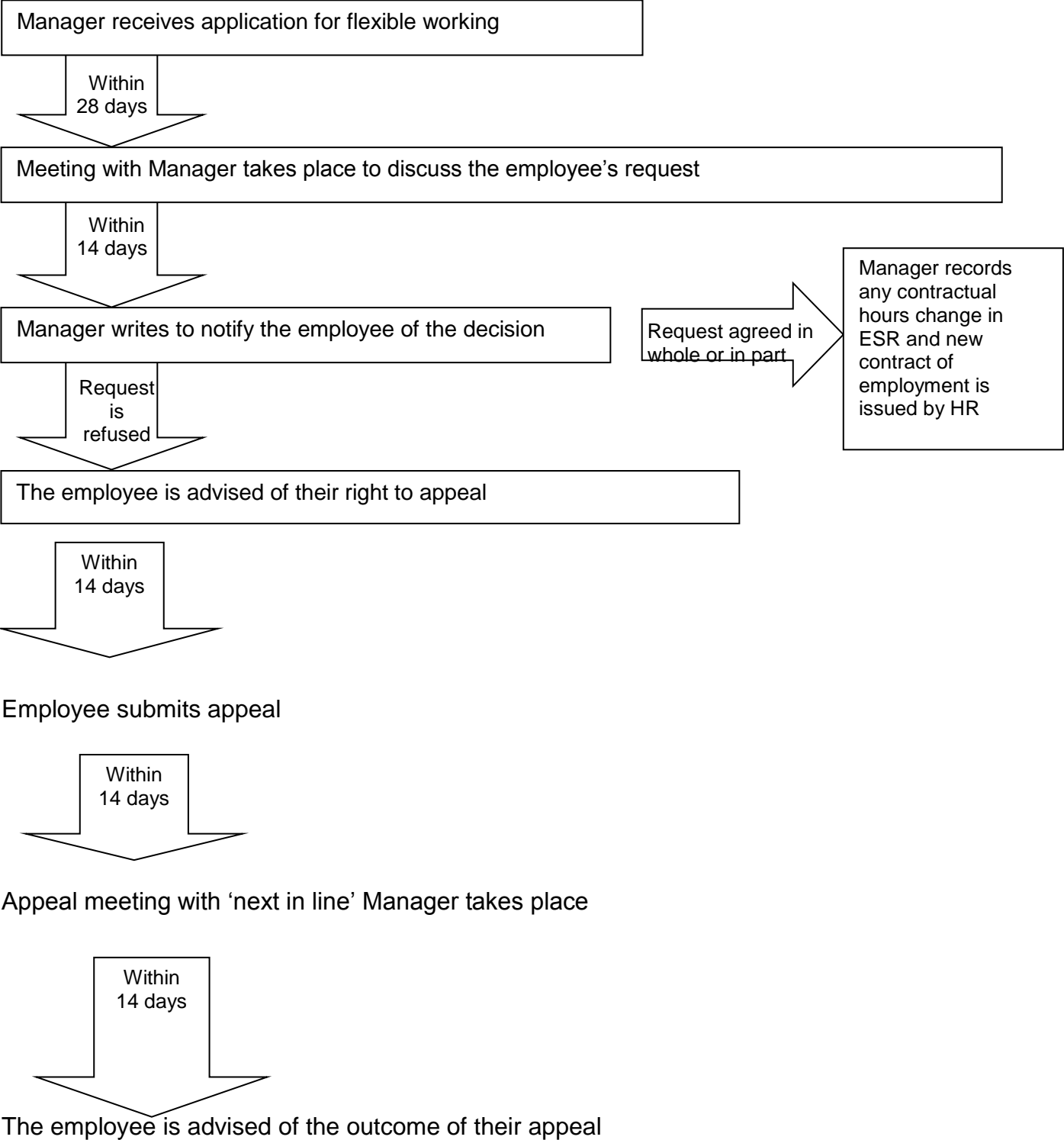
Manager's signature

Date

Employee's signature

Date

FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST PROCEDURE



ANNUALISED HOURS WORKING

What is it?

Annualised hours working involves an employee working a set number of hours over a year rather than per week. This means they work longer hours during certain periods of the year and less at others, rather than a set number of hour (e.g. 37.5 or 40) each week, every week.

An annualised contract allows the organisation to increase or reduce, in advance, the required numbers of hours to be worked at a given time to match service needs.

Before implementing annualised hours, or discussing details with staff, Managers should contact their Divisional HR Manager in order to discuss the practicalities of running such a scheme and how this should be implemented.

Why use annualised hours working?

There are several reasons why an annualised hours working might be appropriate for the Trust and for employees, including but not limited to the following:-

- 'Seasonality' in demand. Increased working hours in peak season and reduced hours in low season, but overall working within the annual hours agreed
- Flexibility. Ability to react to fluctuations in demand and / or unpredicted peaks and troughs, but working within the framework of having an agreed amount of contractual hours.
- Promotes long term planning because the organisation is tasked with forecasting demand up to a year in advance, focus is placed on the value of planning and the processes / resources that will provide the most efficient and effective service.
- Provides flexibility by allowing employees' to tailor their working hours to meet service needs within a flexible framework that also supports personal activities and non-work commitments.
- Reduction in overtime dependency. By balancing planned working hours and work patterns with 'true' service needs, the amount of unplanned spikes in labour demands / overtime can be reduced.

Application

Employees can apply to work an annualised hours' pattern by completing the Flexible Working Request Form (**Appendix 1**). The Department Manager must then, with advice from their Divisional HR Manager, determine whether an annualised hours working pattern is suitable / appropriate for the duties of the post and the type of service provided.

It is important that the Manager makes sure this is an appropriate form of working and that careful consideration and advice from HR is taken in determining the hours that need to be worked. It is also important that regular monitoring is undertaken of the arrangement in order to minimise the likelihood of a surplus or deficit of hours arising towards the end of the year.

If regular additional hours are being authorised then a review must be undertaken to consider the suitability of the annualised hours' contract.

Calculating Hours

The Manager and employee must discuss how hours are to be worked e.g. to meet seasonal or service/ patient demands and/or the opportunity to modify working patterns to suit the personal circumstances of the employee (subject to service requirements).

If the Manager agrees to the adoption of annualised hours for an employee it will be necessary to determine the total number of hours to be worked over the year including holiday entitlement, which is held in the employee's record in ESR.

The annualised hour's period must always run from April to March. If the employee commences this working arrangement part way through a year then the hours and annual leave will be pro-rated accordingly up to 31 March in ESR.

Recording Arrangements

Employees will complete a weekly time sheet (a copy of which is available on the Intranet) recording their actual hours worked and their running total. This time sheet should be signed by both the Manager and employee and kept by the Manager.

Should hours worked by an employee on annualised hours attract unsocial hours pay, this should be recorded on the usual e-timesheet and submitted to Employee Services in HR each month.

Sickness Absence / Special Leave

If an employee is sick for the whole of the normal working week, they should be credited with their normal contracted hours.

Where an employee is sent home sick on a working day, they should be credited with the rostered hours they have worked for that day.

Where an employee works part of a normal working week and then goes off sick for the rest of that week, they should be credited for the actual hours worked before they went on sick leave.

Requests for special leave / study leave should be dealt with as per normal Trust policy and/or national terms and conditions.

Monitoring

Managers should monitor targets as they receive the weekly timesheet.

There should be a formal 3-monthly review between employee and Manager, following which appropriate action should be taken in line with the following:

- No individual should be more than 2 weeks' contracted hours in credit or debit.
- At the end of the financial year, hours worked must balance with target hours.
- No carry forward of hours from one leave year to the next is allowed unless there are extenuating circumstances, in line with the Trust's Annual Leave Policy.
- Employees will not normally be entitled to receive payment for hours worked over the annualised target.
- Any employee leaving the Trust or moving from one post to another within it must have balanced their contractual hours before leaving their former post and taking up the new one.

FLEXITIME SCHEME

Introduction

The main purpose of flexitime is to provide a more flexible system of attendance within certain defined limits. It is a significant benefit for staff, as it can allow accrual of up to 13 days' flexileave in a calendar year.

Principles

- The Trust is committed to the promotion of a healthy work-life balance for all staff and welcomes the contribution that the use of flexitime working arrangements can make in this regard. Flexitime can also allow participants to work in more effective ways that will be of benefit to the Trust as well as themselves.
- Flexitime arrangements will be made available, as far as practicable, to all non-medical staff - full-time and part-time.
- Staff who work part-time hours should have the same opportunity to participate as full-time staff however it is acknowledged that some part-time roles and working patterns have been specifically designed around the timing of operational requirements (e.g. fixed opening and closing times), which may limit the ability of some part-time roles to participate in flexitime. Where it is not possible for staff – full or part time – to participate in flexitime, managers will explain this to the affected individuals.
- Some staff may choose to retain their current working arrangement, rather than enter the flexitime scheme, e.g. where for personal reasons, specific start and finish times have been agreed, e.g. related to childcare / other carer responsibilities.
- Some staff may have to be excluded, owing to the nature of their duties or because they receive payments to reflect different working arrangements, e.g. unsocial hours. The decision on this matter lies with the Head of Department.
- Staff who are dissatisfied with a decision to withhold flexitime arrangements, can invoke the Trust's standard grievance procedure in order to have this decision reviewed.
- Services provided by the department / Trust must not be compromised to accommodate the flexitime scheme. Departments participating in a flexitime scheme shall be responsible for adapting it to fit their operational needs. Adaptations should accord with these principles and the published guidelines.
- Departments reserve the right to suspend flexitime for a set period to meet operational requirements. Advance notice will be given when this is to occur. Such suspensions could be set annually or may be ad hoc in nature.
- It is expected that staff will work and operate the flexitime scheme within their department in a fair and harmonious manner.

Scheme Overview

Scheme time bands (start and finish)	07:00 to 19:00 hours
Core time bands	<p>To be determined by the Department / Directorate Manger.</p> <p>Below are some examples of core time bands. These can be varied by departments to take into account operational requirements.</p> <p>Examples:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08:30 – 12:00, 13:00 – 16:00 • 09:30 – 12:00, 14:00 – 16:30 • 10:00 – 12:00, 14:00 – 16:00
Weekends	<p>The flexitime working week can include Saturdays and Sundays.</p> <p>For those staff working flexi-time, any work done at weekends will be subject to the same rate of pay as Monday to Friday.</p>
Lunch breaks	<p>A break - 30 minutes minimum - will be incorporated into the working day. This will normally fall between 12:00 to 14:00.</p> <p>Managers must check flexitime records to ensure all staff have taken / recorded a minimum 30-minute break each working day.</p> <p>The timing of all breaks will be agreed by the manager in consultation with colleagues to make sure that the necessary number of staff are present to maintain service delivery.</p>
Overtime	<p>Flexitime working is wholly independent of any arrangements for working overtime.</p> <p>Excess hours worked as flexitime are not overtime. If any additional hours are to be worked as overtime this must be agreed in advance with the formal authorisation of the relevant senior manager</p> <p>Overtime is not recorded for flexitime purposes.</p>
Settlement Period	Every 4 weeks
Working Hours Definition	<p>Working hours are those that contractually apply to the individual member of staff.</p> <p>For full-time staff the working week is 37.5 hours, giving a notional working day of 7 hours 30 minutes and a notional half day of 3 hours 45minutes.</p> <p>Part-time staff working hours are calculated on a pro-rata basis.</p> <p>Managers should discuss working hours with each new member of</p>

	<p>staff, including whether flexitime operates within that particular Department and if so what the arrangements are for that specific post.</p>
Working Hours Credits and Debits	<p>The scheme allows a credit or debit of up to 15 hours, which can be carried forward to the next settlement period.</p> <p>Any credit over the stated amount (up to 15 hours) will be lost at the end of the accounting period.</p> <p>Staff with an excess of flexitime hours on termination of employment will be paid their excess hours at single time rate, if it is not possible to take these hours as flexileave prior to termination of employment.</p> <p>Any debit above the 15 hour limit must be investigated by the manager and action taken to address the reasons for this.</p> <p>Staff with a debit of flexitime hours on termination of employment will have the deficit hours charged against outstanding annual leave or, if there is no leave outstanding, will have their final pay adjusted to cover the debit.</p> <p>In accordance with the Working Time Regulations 1998, no staff should work over 48 hours average during a 17 week period and should ensure that their working hours allow for a period of at least 11 hours between working days.</p>
Flexitime leave	<p>In addition to the freedom provided in starting and finishing work, flexitime may allow for 1 additional flexileave day to be taken in a 4-week settlement period.</p> <p>The leave may be taken as full days or half days.</p> <p>Credit will be in accordance with the notional working hours defined above. Detailed arrangements for taking flexitime leave will be in accordance with established departmental procedures for requesting / taking annual leave and must be recorded in ESR. A guide on how to do this is available on the Intranet.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the manager, flexileave may be taken in periods of less than a half day.</p>
Recording	<p>It is expected that staff working flexitime hours will record their working hours using the Trust's Flexitime Record Form (spreadsheet), a copy of which is available on the Intranet.</p> <p>It should be noted that deliberately falsifying a time record is misconduct, which will be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary procedure.</p>
Adjustments	

<p>Annual leave, bank holidays, sickness</p>	<p>Annual leave, bank holidays, sickness or any other authorised absence (e.g. special paid leave) will be credited at the standard full day or a half day rate.</p>
<p>Off-site meetings or training events</p>	<p>Attendance at off-site meetings or training events should be recorded as actual time within the limits of the time bands, i.e. 07:00–19:00 hours, unless otherwise agreed in advance by the department manager.</p>
<p>Medical / dental appointments</p>	<p>Staff benefiting from flexitime are required, so far as is reasonably practicable, to arrange such appointments outside of core hours, e.g. routine visits to the dentist, doctor, optician, bank, school or a professional adviser.</p> <p>In an emergency or when an appointment cannot be made outside the core time bands (e.g. a hospital appointment to see a consultant) a member of staff will normally be credited with the core band time even though absent.</p> <p>Where a medical appointment is in relation to incapacity covered by the Equality Act, a credit adjustment may be made for the actual time taken.</p>

Misuse of the Scheme

The Trust's flexitime scheme operates on the basis of trust and staff are expected to operate the scheme with common sense and responsibility.

It will be regarded as a disciplinary offence to abuse the scheme either through dishonesty or deliberate non-co-operation. Anyone who does abuse the scheme will have the benefit of the scheme withdrawn and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure up to and including the possibility of dismissal.

Any employee who makes a fraudulent entry on their flexitime record sheet or who deliberately misuses the scheme in any way will also be dealt with under the Counter Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy and the matter referred to the Local Counter Fraud Specialist.

COMPRESSED WORKING HOURS GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

This guide sets out the principals for working compressed hours. This is one of a range of flexible working arrangements aimed at helping employees balance their home and working lives.

Compressed hours are a flexible working arrangement where employees work their full or part time contracted weekly hours over a reduced period of days, e.g. 4 rather than 5 days a week or 9 rather than 10 days per fortnight, subject to service requirements.

HOW DO COMPRESSED HOURS WORK?

Instead of the employee working their hours over 5 days, they can be compressed over a fewer number. This could be a 4-day week or a 9-day fortnight, therefore for employees Contracted to work 37.5 hours over 5 days, a standard working day is 7.50 hours, however if the hours were compressed over 4 days, then 9.37 hours would be worked.

Examples of compressed hours working patterns include:

- Specific day off each week or each fortnight,
- Rolling pattern (e.g. week 1 off Monday, week 2 off Tuesday etc.),
- 2 half-days off per week.

The non-working day needs to be determined in advance; however in exceptional circumstances requests to vary the non-working day (by the manager or the employee) may be mutually agreed, subject to the needs of the service.

Where an employee is requested to work additional hours during the compressed hours period, alternative arrangements must be made with their manager to either take time off or receive payment.

WHO QUALIFIES?

This guidance applies to all employees where service delivery supports the arrangements. There must be no detrimental impact on the efficient and effective working of the service; therefore some posts may be unsuitable for compressed hours.

Part time employees have contractual entitlements based on a pro rata comparison with full time employees. All requests for compressed working hours should be considered on the same basis as full time employees.

Compressed hours may initially be agreed for a temporary or trial period. This will enable the manager and employee to evaluate the suitability of the arrangements and to ensure that there is no detriment to service provision. Managers should contact Human Resources for advice if they have any queries in relation to compressed working hours to discuss further.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMPRESSED HOURS?

For the employee, compressed hours can provide improved opportunities for working flexibly to meet personal choices by providing more half days/full days away from work without reducing full time pay. It may also enable more effective working through providing quiet times at the beginning and end of the working day.

For the Trust, the availability of employees to work longer days may enable the hours of service delivery to be extended, subject to demand.

ARE THERE ANY DISADVANTAGES?

Longer days could prove more stressful for some employees and affect their health and productivity.

The department manager needs to determine how the introduction of compressed hours will affect working patterns, overtime and staffing levels and be clear that compressed hours do not introduce cover issues for the service or other members of the team.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contract of Employment

If you work compressed hours, a standard day will be established for each employee based on their individual work pattern. This standard day will be applied for periods of absence. It will be necessary to agree in writing when the compressed hours are to be worked. Employees must take a break of not less than 20 minutes for every 6 hours worked each day.

Any employee who changes to compressed hours working will be deemed to have requested a permanent change to their contract of employment, unless it is agreed for a temporary or trial period.

Salary

Salary will be paid in 12 monthly instalments, regardless of hours worked in any particular week / month.

Sick Absence

Sickness absence will be recorded by the manager in ESR in the usual way.

Annual leave and bank holidays

Employees who work compressed hours will have their annual leave and bank holiday entitlement calculated in hours, rather than days. Where the compressed hours arrangement is based on contracted hours of less full time (37.5 hours per week) entitlements will be calculated on a pro rata basis, regardless of the days of the week worked.

Flexi time Scheme

Staff working compressed hours cannot also participate in the flexitime scheme although there may be flexibility in their start and finish times.

HOW TO APPLY?

An employee should submit a written request to their Manager, by completing the Flexible Working Request Form.

JOB SHARING

Principles

- Two or more people doing one job are often more productive than one person. This is due to several factors including:
 - The difficulties of one person maintaining full concentration for a whole day, particularly where jobs are complex or repetitive.
 - The broader range of skills and knowledge offered by two job sharers complementing each other rather than one full-time person.
 - Less working time lost due to medical or dental appointments etc., which job sharers find easier to arrange outside working time.
 - The whole job does not stop if one job sharer is absent, unlike a full-time worker.
- Job sharing makes it possible to employ talented people who are not available for full-time work and is useful in easing skill shortages. In addition, time spent by job sharers on activities outside work, whether directly or indirectly related to the job, may bring new approaches and knowledge to the job.
- Turnover may be reduced, partly because employees with domestic or other responsibilities can remain in employment and more easily tolerate demanding or repetitive work on a job share basis.
- The benefits of job sharing for employees can be as follows:
 - Job sharing allows people to take up posts in areas where it has not traditionally been possible to work part-time, e.g. in professional occupations and skilled jobs.
 - Job sharing can allow people who want to work part-time to continue working in a job that reflects their level of skill or qualification.
 - Job sharing makes it easier for women to return to work from maternity leave and can provide work opportunities for some people who would otherwise not be able to work at all.
- Many posts can be shared and as part of the review of any vacancy, managers must carefully examine whether a post is suitable for job sharing. In relation to the division of posts, the total hours of the job sharing partnership will be equal to those of the established post.
- Job sharing arrangements will not necessarily be on an equal basis and one partner may work more hours than the other. Jobs may be shared in a number of ways, e.g. each person working mornings or afternoons only, one partner working Monday to Wednesday and the other working Thursdays and Fridays, or by each working successively Wednesday through to the following Tuesday.
- An established working pattern should be agreed between the sharers and their manager at the outset.
- Managers may agree working arrangements with job sharers where both job sharers work at busy times and neither work at quieter periods.
- Where it is essential to have a “hand over” period between job sharers, this will be achieved within the normal established hours where necessary reducing the overall time span of attendance between the job sharers.

Advertised Vacancies

- Any job sharers, including those making joint applications, will be interviewed separately although potential job sharers will be given an opportunity to meet informally if they are shortlisted for interview.

- If only one job sharer applies for the post, their application will be allowed to proceed and if they are successful in obtaining the post, an advertisement for a job-sharing partner will be placed.
- If a suitable job-sharing partner cannot be found see the following pages for the procedure for when one job sharer leaves.

Employee wishing to job share their post

- Any employee wishing to jobshare their existing full-time post should notify their line manager of their request in writing.
- The line manager will meet with the employee and discuss the request and confirm in writing whether or not the job-share application is approved. Where it is not agreed, reasons will be included in the letter.
- If the application is approved the remaining part of the post will be advertised and the employee will continue to work full-time until a suitable job-sharing partner is appointed. In such cases it would be reasonable to advertise a post not more than 3 times in a period of 12 months.
- Existing post holders will be given the opportunity to meet short-listed applicants informally, either prior to or following selection interviews.
- Any existing employee who feels that his/her job share application is unreasonably refused will have a right to appeal using the Trust's Grievance Procedure. Initially staff should approach their line manager to discuss in more details the reason(s) for refusal.

Two employees wishing to job share one of their posts

- Where two existing employees wish to job share one of their posts, they must apply in writing to the appropriate manager. Their application will be dealt with as in the section above.
- If the post is approved for job sharing, the manager will discuss the proposed working arrangements with the existing post holder and will interview the other potential job sharer to see whether s/he is suitable for the job.
- If the application is successful the resultant full-time vacant post will be advertised, subject to the approval of the Request to Recruit. In the meantime the job-sharing applicants will continue to work full-time until an appointment is made or until a decision is made on the future of the vacated post.

Women returning from maternity leave

- A woman can ask to return from maternity leave to her existing post on a job share basis, provided that:
 - At least 56 days prior to her return to work date she gives notice in writing to her manager of her wish to job share.
 - Her post is agreed to be suitable for job sharing.
 - A suitable job sharer can be found.

Procedure when one job sharer leaves

- If one job sharer leaves, the manager will review the requirements of the post and consider whether or not the vacant hours need to be filled. This will include discussion with the job sharers.
- If the post is to be filled it will be offered to the remaining job sharer on a full-time basis. If the remaining job sharer does not wish to work full-time, a job share partner will be sought, with the post being advertised no more than twice in a 6-month period.

- If a suitable job sharer is not found, and s/he returns to work part-time, further attempts will be made to recruit a job sharer. If a suitable job sharer cannot be recruited, this may lead to the Trust having to make a decision regarding the continuation of the job share role.

Terms and conditions of employment

- Each job sharer will be given an individual statement of employment terms and conditions, which will be the standard contract issued to other employees as amended where necessary.
- Pay will be pro-rata to the rate for the full-time post, according to the number of hours worked.
- Annual leave will be pro-rata according to the number of hours worked.
- Bank holidays will be pro-rata according to the number of hours worked, regardless of the days of the week worked.
- Sick pay will be paid on a pro-rata basis.
- Staff who are NHS Pension Scheme members should consider the effects that job sharing could have on their pension benefits - see the Members' Hub at <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Pensions/4189.aspx> for more information.
- Where job sharers work beyond their normal hours, time off in lieu should normally be taken. If this is not possible they will be paid their normal rate of pay. Job sharers will only be paid overtime rates where they individually work beyond full-time hours.

Training

- Job Sharers will have the same access to training opportunities as other employees.
- If they are asked to attend a training course, which falls on a non-work day, they may take time off in lieu.

Promotion/Transfer to full-time work

- Job sharers may apply for promotion on equal terms with full-time employees, either jointly or individually, except where a post is deemed unsuitable for job sharing.
- A job sharer may also apply for any vacant full-time post on a full-time basis.
- Where a job sharer wishes to transfer to full-time work and applies for a vacant full-time post identical to the post, which they currently share, they will be guaranteed an interview.

Cover Arrangements

- Where one job share partner is absent for any reason and the work needs to be covered, the manager will consider what arrangements need to be made. This may include asking the other job share partner to work additional hours but no employee will be forced to cover the duties of the job share partner.

Changes to job share arrangements

- As with any other employees, changes in working arrangements or terms of employment may be necessary for either or both job share partners to meet the changing requirements of the service. Where this occurs, the manager will consult with both job-share partners before implementing the change.

TERM-TIME ONLY WORKING

Principles

- Term-time only working is where an employee is issued with an employment contract, which gives the opportunity to take unpaid leave of absence during school holidays.
- Term-time only working allows an employee to combine employment with the need to respond to childcare responsibilities during school holidays.

Eligibility

- Any employee can apply to use the policy although those with a direct caring responsibility for a child or children of school age will be given priority. The suitability of a job for term-time only working will have to be considered in the light of the business considerations identified earlier in this policy.
- The offer of term-time only working will be subject to service levels being maintained and may be refused if cover cannot be arranged for school holiday periods.
- Any employee who feels that they have been unreasonably refused the opportunity to work term time only may raise the issue through the Trust's Grievance Procedure.

Suitability of jobs for Term-time only working

- The main areas where term-time only working will be utilised are:
 - Where there are recognised peaks and troughs in the workload.
 - Where the work is project based and the post holder can plan his/her working pattern to meet deadlines without the need to work all year.
 - Where cover can easily be obtained for school holiday periods.

Contract

- An employee who works term-time only will have a contract, which continues during the non-term-time periods. This provides continuity of employment for employees who would otherwise lose any employment rights gained through the accumulation of service.

Term-Time Only Arrangements

- Different options of working term-time only are available and it is essential that the particular arrangement be specified in advance in each case. It should be agreed between the manager and employee and reflected in the employee's contract.
- An employee may work every day during term-time and take their annual leave entitlement and be paid for it in the school holiday period.
- An employee may work during term-time, but take the annual leave accrued within the term-time and therefore will not receive pay for any days during school holidays.
- An employee may take the majority of his/her leave entitlement during school holidays but retain one week's leave to be used in the event of emergencies or domestic difficulties during term-time. In some cases service needs may be met more effectively if the employee takes leave only during the major school holidays at Christmas, Easter and Summer, but continues to work during other school holidays such as half-term.
- In all the above cases the employee's salary will be based on the number of days worked, plus annual leave and Bank Holiday entitlement, averaged out over a 52.143 week period and an equal amount will be paid monthly.

Time Limited Arrangements

- In recognition of the potential demand by employees in some wards/departments for term-time only arrangements, managers may agree to an employee working term-time only, for a fixed period, which will allow him/her time to make childcare arrangements before reverting to year round working.

Cover Arrangements

- A key factor in agreeing to an employee starting a term-time only work arrangement is the ability to cover the work so that service requirements are unaffected.
- Any employee working term-time only should ensure that his/her manager is informed of the school holiday periods as far in advance as possible to allow cover arrangements to be planned.
- Where possible the dates of terms for the following 12 months should be provided to managers.

Sick Pay

- An employee will receive sick pay in line with any other Trust employee, subject to the provisions of the Trust's sick pay scheme. This is on the assumption that their pay is averaged over a 12-month period.

Annual Leave/Bank Holidays

- Annual leave plus an allowance for Bank Holidays is paid to term-time only employees on a pro-rata basis.
- The employee's whole-time equivalent is calculated by considering the actual working hours available per year, divided by the actual working hours of a full-time employee (exclusive of holidays in both cases).

Maternity Leave

- A term-time only employee will be eligible for maternity leave with pay, which includes pay for those weeks when she would not normally have worked. Her maternity pay will be calculated in accordance with her average earnings over the year, rather than the amount that would be received per week when she is actually working.

Review of Individual Agreements

- Where a term-time only arrangement is affecting service provision this will be discussed with the employee.

HOME WORKING

Principles

- The growth of information technology in recent years has increased the range of tasks, or part tasks that might be carried out by employees working from home rather than in Trust premises.
- It is not intended that home working should be a full time arrangement except in very rare cases and/or special circumstances. It is intended to allow employees to have the flexibility to work part of the working week or working day at home to reduce commuting time and to work more flexibly around the needs of their families.

Categories of home working

- **Occasional home workers.**
 - Available to individuals with duties that normally would require them to be present in one of the Trust's bases for the majority of their time in any working year. This would include employees requiring regular contact with peers, managers or clients, managers who need to be accessible to their team members and staff providing direct support to other workgroups.
 - For senior and middle managers the option to complete reports and similar pieces of work, or deal with backlogs of e-mails free from other distractions, at a time that suits the individual and organisation would be a key benefit.
 - For other staff, working from home from time to time might be appropriate to allow particular pieces of work to be completed or to allow the individual, for a short period of time, to continue to be productive while dealing with domestic arrangements.
- **Regular home workers**
 - Available to individuals with duties that could be carried out from their home for a significant proportion of their working time in any year. The individual would typically be carrying out project based pieces of work that include periods of document review, data analysis and report writing that could be carried out remotely from the nearest office base, interspersed with fieldwork at client sites and collaborative work needing face to face contact. The individual would usually need minimal support and direct supervision, outside the regular one to one meetings with their line manager.

Guidance on Home Working

- Employees who work from home are covered by the same standards as all other employees. Arrangements for home workers therefore need to be organised so that employees can attend regular team and supervision meetings, meet with those they manage, participate in developmental activities and so on.
- Workloads need to be appropriately organised and quality and performance management maintained, whether an employee is an occasional or regular home worker or is office based.
- There will be differences in the way people interact when employees work from home and some aspects of management, taken for granted in the conventional office environment, need to be more explicit.

- Employees who normally use a flexitime scheme to record their working hours should enter a standard working day on their flexitime record when working at home.

Benefits of home working

The benefits of home working include:-

- For the Individual – greater flexibility for combining work and domestic arrangements, greater job satisfaction and personal responsibility, dedicated uninterrupted time allocated for specific project work away from the work environment.
- For the Trust – potential for increased quality and quantity of work, retention of trained employees who might otherwise leave for domestic reasons, better use of office space and equipment, support for equal opportunities and flexible working policies.

Suitability for home working

- There is no automatic entitlement to work from home.
- Line managers will determine whether home working is appropriate and in each case the business benefits as well as the reasons for the request will always be considered.
- Assessing the business case means considering how the service is currently delivered and being clear about the results expected from home working, such as reduced accommodation costs or the service being available over a longer period for clients. The manager needs to consider how the results will be measured and discuss this with the employee.
- Home working may also be considered where it would be appropriate as a reasonable adjustment for someone covered by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), where provision cannot be made at a Trust workplace and the request is made by the employee.
- Further advice is available from the HR Department.

Considering Applications for Home Working

- An employee wishing to home work is considered to be applying for flexible working and as such should apply using the Flexible Working Application Form at Appendix 3 of this policy.
- This should be forwarded to their manager in accordance with the process as detailed at Appendix 2 of this policy.
- Below is a checklist to help employees assess their suitability for home working and consider the issues before discussing them with their manager. The discussion may involve other team members and may involve a group of workers for those that work with others to achieve their service objectives.
- In considering home working arrangements, like any other working practice, consideration will need to be given to the overall service needs.
- The manager must follow the process for consideration of a flexible working request as detailed in Section 7/Appendix 2 of this policy and all actions/decisions must be recorded in writing.
- Employees who have current warnings/cautions under the Disciplinary and/or Capability procedures are not eligible to apply until their warnings have expired.

Review

- Each home working arrangement will be reviewed to monitor its effectiveness for both the employee and the Trust. Review periods will be determined by the

approving manager. The first review will usually be after a 3 or 6 month period. Subsequent reviews will occur annually, or as determined by the approving manager.

Health and Safety

- Health and safety legislation applies to the “workplace”.
- The workplace could be a desk in an office or an area set aside at home.
- A risk assessment of the work area will therefore be necessary, carried out by the employee. The self-assessment forms should be completed by all home workers. The forms should be returned to the Health and Safety Manager, as well as to the individual’s line manager.
- If the Health and Safety Manager considers it is appropriate they may carry out a home worker assessment. This is likely if concerns are highlighted on the self-assessment form.
- Where an employee has declared themselves to be disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and home working is considered a reasonable adjustment, an initial assessment by the Health and Safety Manager and the DWP’s Access to Work form is required. Further advice is available from the HR Department.
- Employees working from home should report any sickness or accidents whilst working from home, in line with usual procedures, including those of RIDDOR.

Confidentiality and Security of Data

- Employees are expected to keep any work data used at home confidential and secure. All work data remains the property of the Trust and may be required at any time. All data will be managed in line with the Trust’s Information Security Policy and Data Protection Policy.
- Employees are not permitted to keep any person identifiable information at home.
- Employees are not permitted to keep either electronic or paper files at home on a permanent basis. The Trust has statutory obligations to fulfil requests for information under several acts of parliament such as Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts and it has to be able to gain access to that information at short notice. Files that are part of work in progress may be stored at home until the final report is published. However, they must be returned to the employee's Trust base, to be stored in accordance with our records management policy, before the final report is released.

Employee Checklist

1. *Are there any benefits that your team/department/the Trust would gain from your proposed home working arrangement?*
2. *Do you envisage requiring any additional technology/resources?*
3. *Do you envisage any additional costs?*
4. *Have you thought how your working practices might need to change?*
5. *Can you demonstrate your flexibility if customer/service/patient needs appeared to conflict with your proposed home working arrangement?*
6. *Do your colleagues require any additional briefing/technology to support your proposed arrangement?*
7. *In your opinion would working from home impact on any of the following?*
 - a. *External customers/patients*
 - b. *Internal customers/patients*

- c. *Your colleagues*
 - d. *Your manager*
 - e. *The people you manage*
8. *How will you communicate effectively when you are away from the office?*
9. *Do you have an area at home with suitable space to homework?*

Guidelines for Employees Working from Home

- *Consider your wider work approach:*
- *Communicate your working hours to colleagues, those you manage, your manager.*
- *Agree and confirm working hours with your manager. Do not without agreement work beyond these hours.*
- *Take regular breaks and ensure compliance with the Working Time Directive.*
- *Keep office area separate to area used by family, if possible and avoid mutual interference.*
- *Keep work and equipment, safe, secure and organised.*
- *Keep in regular contact with those you manage, colleagues, manager and clients who drop into workbase on a regular basis*
- *Keep your manager advised on work progress and alert any appropriate colleagues, including your manager, if there are any problems.*
- *Review relevance and convenience of home working on a regular basis*
- *Ensure health and safety risk assessment is carried out and recommendations are actioned. This process should be repeated at regular intervals.*
- *Maintain professional conduct and image.*
- *Actively engage in personal development plans.*
- *Obtain timely and constructive feedback.*
- *Ensure you access regular information e.g. newsletters, vacancy list etc.*
- *Develop trust with your manager.*
- *Develop trust with and motivate any staff you manage.*
- *Be disciplined and self-motivating.*
- *Adhere to archiving procedures; do not keep excessive files/documentation at home.*
- *Regularly review your home working practice to assess that is still appropriate.*

MINIMUM HEALTH & SAFETY STANDARDS FOR HOMEWORKERS

Glare or Reflection on the Monitor/Screen

- ◆ Care should be taken with the positioning of the workstation screen to ensure that there is no direct light/glare on the screen and the amount of reflections are minimised. This should be checked when the monitor is switched off (black background).
- ◆ Glare and a large number of reflections may lead to eyestrain and cause the user to change their sitting position, which in turn may cause muscular skeletal problems. If it is not possible to remove glare from the screen blinds should be fitted or overhead lights switched off and a low dispersant desk lamp used.

Encrypted Laptops

- ◆ Laptops were originally designed for mobile workers to input information on site for a short period of time and then move to another site and so on.
- ◆ Encrypted laptops need to be used in conjunction with a riser, remote keyboard and mouse to reduce the risk of developing problems associated with poor posture, static muscle work and repetitive movements with hands, arms, wrists etc. under strain.
- ◆ If you do not have these accessories please contact the Health and Safety Manager.

Workstation

- ◆ This setup also applies to table tops and rectangular desks.
- ◆ For left handed users change side of phone, mouse, document holder.
- ◆ The monitor keyboard, user and chair should always be in a straight line.
- ◆ Adjust seat height so that your forearms are parallel with desk.
- ◆ If your feet do not reach the floor use a footrest.
- ◆ Adjust the height of the back rest so that your lower back is supported.
- ◆ Adjust the height of the screen so that when you look straight ahead your eyes are level with the top of the screen.
- ◆ Ensure that the position of the keyboard and mouse are close enough so that you are not reaching forward to use them.
- ◆ Ensure all items you regularly use are close so you don't over reach.
- ◆ Don't sit at your workstation for too long, get up from your workstation for a few minutes every 30-60 minutes, this gives your eyes and muscles that have been in use a chance to rest and recover.

Workplace

- ◆ There should be sufficient space; the guidance in the Workplace Regulations states 11 cubic metres (maximum height three metres).
- ◆ The surface of the desk / table top you are using should be large enough, it should also be high enough (for most people this will be 70-74cm, if you are tall this may need to be increased).
- ◆ The area should be free of trip and slip hazards and obstructions; this also includes drawers and cupboard doors.

Electrical Safety

- ◆ Is your electrical supply safe?
- ◆ Permanent sockets should be available for each piece of electrical work equipment, if you need to use an extension cable this must not be overloaded and must be powered via a mains socket not via another extension lead.
- ◆ Items plugged into the extension lead should not exceed the fuse rating 13 amps.
- ◆ Ideally the extension block should be fixed to the desk.
- ◆ The Trust policy is that all electrical equipment with a plug on the end is tested annually, this includes extension blocks and IEC leads, check to ensure that equipment you have has been tested within the last 12 months.
- ◆ Electric and communications cables may be vulnerable to damage if they are untidy, cables should be managed carefully to reduce the risk of damage and remove any potential trip hazards.
- ◆ Over 90% of electrical faults may be picked up by visually checking equipment before it is plugged in. Check the plug to ensure that it is not loose, cracked, chipped or scorched, the cable should be restrained by the cable grip, there should be no exposed insulation showing from the core cables.
- ◆ Check the cable for cuts, crush damage and kinks it is very difficult to identify internal damage and if in any doubt the cable should be checked by a competent person.
- ◆ The point at which the power cable enters the equipment should be checked for damage, scorching etc.
- ◆ You will be required to take all portable equipment to the designated base for travelling purposes for testing on an annual basis.

Fire Safety

- ◆ There should be a mechanism to warn of fire, a smoke detector(s) should be in place and tested weekly. It is good practice to replace the batteries on an annual basis.
- ◆ The exit route from your workplace should be unobstructed and care should be taken to minimise the build-up of combustible materials particularly beneath open staircases.

First Aid

- ◆ A small basic first aid kit should be available.

Others in the Home

- ◆ Consideration must be made to others at home e.g. children who may be exposed to harm because of electrical supply arrangements, equipment and the possibility of hazardous substances you may be using for work. Controls must be introduced to protect others from these hazards as appropriate.

Contacts

- ◆ If you need any additional information or advice please contact the Health and Safety Manager.

HOME WORKER HEALTH & SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Employee Name _____

Job Title _____

Category of home worker: REGULAR OR OCCASIONAL (circle category)

Line Manager Name _____

Directorate _____

Date self-assessment completed _____

Once completed, return form to Health and Safety Manager and your line manager

Workstation	Y/N N/A	Comment/Problem
Is your workstation positioned so that there is minimum reflection or glare on the screen?		
Do you use a laptop, laptop with a docking station and remote monitor or desk top?		
If you use a laptop do you use a riser, remote keyboard and remote mouse?		
Do you have a chair on a 5 wheeled base whose seat adjusts for height and whose backrest adjust for height and angle?		
Is your chair adjusted so to that your arms are parallel with the desk surface?		
Does this adjustment mean that your feet no longer reach the floor and you need a footrest?		
Is the chair adjusted so that it comfortably supports your back?		
When seated are your eyes level with the top of the monitor or laptop screen when you look straight ahead?		
Workplace		
Is the work surface (desk or table) large enough?		
Do you have sufficient storage?		
Do you have sufficient space?		
Within the work area are all floor surfaces free from slip and trip hazards?		
Is the electrical supply safe?		

By signing this form I declare that the information I have provided is true and accurate. I agree to abide by all aspects of the Flexible Working Policy and in particular the home working guidance contained therein, which may be reviewed and changed from time to time.

Signed _____

Date _____