

FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST POLICY

1. Flexible Working Request Policy

1.1 The term 'flexible working' covers a number of possible changes to working arrangements, such as:

- 1.1.1 reduction or variation of working hours;
- 1.1.2 reduction or variation of the days worked; and/or
- 1.1.3 working remotely;
- 1.1.4 working a set number of hours or days per week or per year, rather than at fixed times;
- 1.1.5 working from home for all or part of the week;
- 1.1.6 job sharing arrangements;
- 1.1.7 term-time only working;
- 1.1.8 working compressed hours; and or
- 1.1.9 working flexi-time.

2. Eligibility

2.1 To be eligible to make a flexible working request under the formal procedure set out below, you must:

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

3. Making a flexible working request

3.1 If you are interested in making a flexible working application, you should first speak informally with your line manager to discuss your eligibility, the different options available and the effect of your proposed work pattern on colleagues and the business.

3.2 If you wish to make a flexible working request under the formal procedure, you will need to submit an application to the Company which must:

- 3.2.1 be in writing;
- 3.2.2 state that it is an application for flexible working;
- 3.2.3 explain the reasons for your request (i.e. why you would like to work flexibly);

- 3.2.4 specify the change applied for, providing as much information as you can about your current and proposed working pattern, such as working days, hours, start and finish times etc;
 - 3.2.5 specify the date on which it is proposed the change would become effective (please note that the flexible working application procedure can take up to 3 months from the date of your request);
 - 3.2.6 explain what effect, if any, you think the change may have on the Company and how, in your opinion, any such effect may be dealt with. If you have suggestions about how to deal with any potentially negative effects, you should include these;
 - 3.2.7 provide information to confirm you meet the eligibility criteria (see above), including whether you have made a previous application to the Company and if so, when; and
 - 3.2.8 be signed and dated by you.
- 3.3 Your written application should be submitted to a manager.

4. Procedure for considering flexible working requests

- 4.1 The Company aims to consider and provide a decision on all formal flexible working requests within 3 months of receipt of the written application, although there may be exceptional circumstances when it is not possible to completely consider your request within this timescale.
- 4.2 In most cases the Company will arrange a meeting with you before making a decision. On some occasions, the Company may be able to approve your request without a formal meeting, however you will usually be expected to at least meet informally with a manager to discuss and agree your new working arrangements.

5. Flexible working request meeting

- 5.1 Where necessary, we will arrange a meeting with you to discuss your application. You may bring a colleague to the meeting as a companion if you wish.
- 5.2 The meeting will be used to discuss the working arrangements you have requested. You will need to be able to explain how the arrangements will accommodate your needs. You will also need to discuss what impact your proposed working arrangements will have on your work and that of your colleagues. If the arrangements you have requested cannot be accommodated, options for possible alternative working arrangements may be explored at the meeting.

6. Communication of a decision

- 6.1 We will notify you of our decision in writing.
- 6.2 If your request is accepted, or where alternative arrangements are proposed/agreed, the Company will write to you to confirm details of the new working arrangements, including:
 - 6.2.1 details of any trial period;
 - 6.2.2 an explanation of changes to your terms and conditions of employment; and
 - 6.2.3 the date on which the changes will commence.

- 6.3 You will be asked to sign and return a copy of the letter. This will be placed on your personnel file to confirm the arrangements and, if applicable, the variation to your employment contract.
- 6.4 There will be circumstances where, due to business and operational requirements, the Company is unable to agree to a flexible working request. In these circumstances, the Company will write to you outlining the business reason(s) for turning down your application. The eight business reasons for which the Company may reject your request are:
- 6.4.1 the burden of additional costs;
 - 6.4.2 detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
 - 6.4.3 inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
 - 6.4.4 inability to recruit additional staff;
 - 6.4.5 detrimental impact on quality;
 - 6.4.6 detrimental impact on performance;
 - 6.4.7 insufficiency of work during the periods that you propose to work; and
 - 6.4.8 planned changes.

7. **Appeals**

- 7.1 If your formal flexible working request is rejected, you have the right to appeal. Your appeal must:
- 7.1.1 be in writing and dated;
 - 7.1.2 set out the grounds on which you are appealing; and
 - 7.1.3 be sent to a manager with a copy sent to the General Manager within 14 days of the date on which you received the written rejection of your request.
- 7.2 We will arrange for a meeting to take place following receipt of your appeal. You may bring a colleague to the meeting as a companion if you wish.
- 7.3 Where possible, the appeal meeting will be conducted by a more senior manager who has not been previously involved in considering your request.
- 7.4 After the appeal meeting, the Company will notify you of its decision in writing. If your appeal is upheld, the Company will write to you to confirm details of the new working arrangements.
- 7.5 If your appeal is rejected, the written decision will give the business reason(s) for the decision and explain why the reason(s) apply in your case. There is no further right of appeal. You will not be able to make another formal request until 12 months after the date of your original application.

8. **Extension of time**

Where it is not possible to completely consider your application within the usual 3 month period, the Company will seek to agree an extension of time with you. We will write to you confirming the extension of time and the date on which it will end.

9. **Trial periods**

9.1 The Company may suggest starting new working arrangements under an initial trial period to ensure that they meet your needs and those of your team, department or the business in general.

9.2 Any changes to your working arrangements during an initial trial period will not represent a permanent variation to your terms and conditions of employment.

10. **Variation to terms and conditions of employment**

Unless otherwise agreed (and subject to any agreed trial period) changes to your terms and conditions of employment following any formal flexible working request will be permanent. You will not be able to make another formal request until 12 months after the date of your most recent request.

11. **Withdrawing a flexible working request**

11.1 If you withdraw a formal flexible working request, you will not be eligible to make another formal request for 12 months from the date of your original request.

11.2 In certain circumstances, a formal request will be treated as withdrawn. This will occur if you fail to attend a meeting and one re-arranged meeting, or an appeal meeting and one re-arranged appeal meeting, without good cause. In such circumstances, the Company will write to you confirming that the request has been treated as withdrawn.