



**London  
South Bank**  
University

# Flexible Working Policy

A guide to requesting flexible working patterns

January 2017

Become what you want to be

## Purpose and Principles

London South Bank University (LSBU) recognises that flexible working arrangements can enable employees to balance their working life with other priorities including parental and other caring responsibilities, study, charity work, leisure activities and interests.

The Flexible Working Policy provides a framework for dealing fairly and consistently with employees who would like to change their working arrangements. Requests for alternative working arrangements that work better for both staff and LSBU are likely to be positively received.

This policy does not form part of the contract of employment.

## Who does this policy apply to?

LSBU will consider flexible working requests from all staff, regardless of the reason or how long you have worked here. You can make one request in any 12 month rolling period.

## What flexibility can I request?

Flexible working is not limited to any specific ways of working, however, you should give careful consideration to how business needs can be balanced with your request. Here are some examples of typical working arrangements which are already in place:

- Change in hours of work;
- Change in times of work;
- Working from home (whether for all or part of the week);
- Job sharing;
- Compressed hours;
- Taking unpaid leave;
- Flexible retirement arrangements (from age 55 dependent upon relevant pension scheme rules).

## Making a Request

Before making a formal request you should first talk to your line manager to explain your plans and discuss:

- The main reason for the request
- How your role could be adapted to accommodate the request
- What skills and attributes you have to help you work flexibly

- How technology can help you
- How to minimise the impact on students and colleagues you work with
- What alternatives you would consider
- When you want to start the new arrangement
- Do you want this to be a temporary or permanent change to your working arrangements

You can make a formal request for flexible working by using the Flexible Working Application Form.

If you are on maternity leave make sure your application is submitted in good time before you are due back at work. You can use 'keeping in touch days' to attend meetings.

Any agreed request that results in working fewer hours will proportionally reduce pay, holiday and other entitlements.

## **Considering the request**

On receipt of your application, the Line Manager invite you to a meeting discuss your request. This meeting will be held as soon as possible and normally within 28 days of receiving the application.

You can bring a colleague from LSBU or a trade union representative to the meeting. Your companion can help you to prepare for the meeting and can speak at the meeting, but cannot answer questions on your behalf. It is your responsibility to ensure your companion is available but if they cannot attend, then the meeting will be rearranged, normally within 7 days, provided this does not cause unreasonable delay.

## **How will my request be considered?**

Wherever possible LSBU aims to agree to flexible working requests. However, request may be decline if:

- Inability to reorganise work among existing staff;
- Inability to recruit additional staff;
- Detrimental impact on quality;
- Detrimental impact on performance;
- Detrimental effect of ability to meet customer demand;
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; and
- Planned structural changes to the business.

In reaching a decision Line Managers may need to consult with others on the wider impact on the team, the financial implications, whether extra hours can be offered to fractional or part time staff and to take advice from Human Resources. There are useful tips and examples about applying these business grounds in the guide: 'the right to request flexible working'.

The Line Manager will communicate a decision to the employee in writing normally within 14 days of the meeting and will advise Human Resources of the outcome of any request for flexible working (whether agreed or not). Human Resources will ensure any changes to contract and terms and conditions are implemented

## **Trial Period**

If the Line Manager believes the business may be able to accommodate a request, they may agree to make the changes for a trial period. The trial period will allow all parties to evaluate how the arrangement is working in practice, identify any practical problems and help work through solutions to ensure that it works. At the end of the trial period, the Line Manager will confirm if the new arrangements are adopted, and will inform Human Resources so that any changes to contract or terms and conditions can be confirmed.

## **Appeal**

If an application is declined, either after the meeting or at the end of the trial period, the employee can appeal against the decision if there is new information that was not available to the Line Manager at the time the original decision was made or if the employee thinks the application was not handled reasonably in line with this procedure. The appeal should be submitted within 14 days to the appropriate Dean of School or Director/Head of Professional Service Department (Appeal Manager) who will invite the employee to a meeting as soon as is reasonably practical and normally within 14 days of receiving the appeal. The appeal must be in writing clearly setting out the grounds of appeal and why it is believed the request has not been properly considered. The appeal should be copied to Human Resources.

The employee may be accompanied at the appeal by a companion (on the same basis as at the meeting to discuss the initial request). The purpose of the appeal is to provide an opportunity to explain the reason for disagreeing with the original decision and for the Appeal Manager to review any new information and ask questions to ensure full understanding of the grounds of the appeal. The Appeal Manager may ask the Line Manager who declined the original request to attend the appeal meeting or to submit a written response the grounds of appeal.

After the Appeal Manager has completed a full review, the outcome of the appeal will be notified to the appellant normally within 14 days. If the appeal is upheld, the new working pattern should be detailed and the start date confirmed. If the appeal is not upheld, the reason for the decision will be given. The outcome will be copied to Human Resources. This decision is final and there is no further right of appeal.

## **Monitoring and review**

As part of the University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, all requests for flexible working will be monitored by Human Resources and regularly reviewed to ensure the policy is equitably applied. This policy will be updated in line with statutory and other changes on an annual basis and will be reviewed on a three yearly basis.

## Further information and guidance

For further advice please contact the HR Service Desk: [hrsd@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:hrsd@lsbu.ac.uk) or phone Extn 6200



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