

The aim of this policy is to set out our position in relation to flexible working and explain how we will deal with statutory flexible working requests in a reasonable manner.

This policy will apply to statutory requests for flexible working received on or after 6 April 2024 and replaces all previous policies on flexible working.

Eligibility

All employees are entitled to make an application to work flexibly under this policy. However, you can only make two applications under this policy in any 12-month period.

What sort of flexible working arrangements can you apply for?

You can apply for a change to your hours of work, your place of work and/or the times when you work, on a temporary or permanent basis.

What factors do we take into account?

When deciding on your request, we will consider the impact on the business, taking into account some or all of the following:

- your ability to carry out all of your duties.
- the volume of work available for you to do.
- your ability to work at expected levels of performance.
- your ability and the ability of your team to meet deadlines and respond to changes in demand.
- your ability to be flexible.
- the output of the team
- the team's ability to cover your work.
- the working patterns/arrangements of your colleagues
- the work of other teams and departments
- our ability to cover planned and unexpected absences.
- how you will be supervised
- our ability to monitor your performance.
- the impact on our relationship with external contacts, including customers (when considering your application, we may seek input from them on how a change to your working arrangements would affect them)
- your management responsibilities
- cost
- planned organisational changes.
- health and safety issues/considerations

Our priority will always be the efficient running of the business.

When considering requests for flexible working, we will always take into account our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

We may also have to take account of other outstanding flexible working requests when considering yours.

How to apply for flexible working

To make an application, you will need to complete a Flexible Working application form which is available from your supervisor/manager or the HR Department. Please complete the form and return it to HR.

It can take time for us to properly assess your request. We recommend that you apply for flexible working as far in advance as possible before you would like the new arrangement to start.

How we deal with flexible working requests

On receipt of your application, we will do an assessment of the potential impact of your request on the business. This may involve discussions with you and your team as well as with relevant managers and the HR department.

We will arrange a meeting to discuss your application with you. You can be accompanied at this meeting by a work colleague or a trade union representative.

The meeting is an opportunity to discuss the proposed new arrangements in depth so that we can understand how they would work in practice and their potential impact on the business. It is also an opportunity to find solutions to any difficulties that might result from the arrangements. Therefore, we may explore alternatives with you, such as other possible working arrangements, agreeing the change on a temporary instead of a permanent basis and/or having a trial period.

We will confirm our decision on your request to you in writing.

Trial periods

We will commonly seek to trial an arrangement before deciding on a flexible working request. A trial period is an opportunity for us both to test the arrangement to see if it is workable in the longer term. It also gives us the opportunity to try different solutions for managing any difficulties posed by the new arrangement and to discuss possible adjustments. (Trial periods will normally last between two and six months).

During the trial period, we will monitor how the arrangement is working out and will, where appropriate, hold meetings with you to discuss this. We will generally make a final decision towards the end of the trial period. However, if the new working arrangement is clearly not working out, it may be necessary to end the trial period early. If towards the end of the trial period it is still unclear whether the arrangement is working, it may be necessary to extend the trial period.

During the trial period, your terms and conditions of employment will change on a temporary basis. If we reject your request after a trial period, you will revert to your original working arrangements and terms and conditions. We will try to give you reasonable notice if this is the case.

If we accept your request

If we accept your request or agree an alternative arrangement with you, there will be a change to your terms and conditions of employment, which will be confirmed in writing. When writing to confirm your flexible working arrangement, we may suggest a meeting to clarify any further information that might be helpful in implementing it, such as dates for us to check in with you to see how it is working in practice.

The change to your terms and conditions will be permanent, unless we have agreed otherwise. Note, though, that operational requirements and staffing needs change over time. We would therefore ask you to be as cooperative and flexible as possible if we should need to revisit working arrangements in the future.

If we reject your request

If we decide to reject your request, whether this is before or after a trial period, we will provide you with our reasons for doing so in writing, and you will have the right to appeal. You should send your written appeal to the HR Manager within 5 days of receiving our decision, stating the grounds on which you are appealing. We will hold a meeting to consider your appeal. You may be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative at any appeal meeting.

Timings

Unless we have agreed an extension of time with you, for example if we are operating a trial period, we will make a decision on your request, including dealing with any appeal, within two months of receipt. If we agree an extension of time with you, we will confirm this in writing.

Data protection

Dealing with requests for changes to working arrangements under this policy involves us processing the personal data of the employees concerned. For information about our processing of personal data under this policy, including details of our legal grounds for doing so, how long we retain such personal data, who your personal data is shared with, your rights under data protection law and who you should contact if you have any concerns, please see our employee privacy notice, which can be obtained from the HR department.

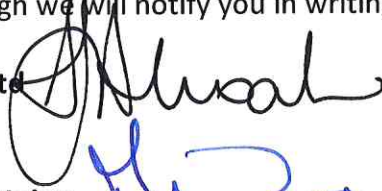
Special category dataⁱ may occasionally need to be processed under this policy – for example where you provide a reason for your request that relates to a disability or religious belief. Our additional legal grounds for processing such special category data is that this is necessary to exercise legal rights/comply with legal obligations in relation to employment.

If you request a change to your working arrangements under this policy in order to accommodate caring responsibilities (e.g. for a dependent), dealing with your request may involve us processing your dependent's personal data, where you provide this to us. We will only process their personal data for the purpose of considering your request under this policy and only so far as it is necessary for us to do so.

Status of policy

This policy does not give contractual rights to individual employees. We reserve the right to alter any of its terms at any time, although we will notify you in writing of any changes.

Signed on behalf of Wm. Lee Ltd



DATE: 8 March 2024

Signed on behalf of Unite the Union



DATE: 11-3-24

ⁱ (i.e. personal data that reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health conditions, sex life or sexual orientation, or biometric or genetic data that is used to identify an individual)