

Document Title: Flexible Working (including Flexible Retirement) Policy

Document Type: Policy (and supporting procedures)

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Policy Owner: Human Resources

## **1.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 The University recognises the importance of work-life balance and that the ability to work flexibly can provide an effective way for employees to manage

Flexible retirement allows the employee to draw a proportion of their pension benefits, and to continue working, albeit this must be at reduced hours and salary. Employees must meet the requirements of their relevant pension scheme before they can apply for flexible retirement.

For more information on USS flexible retirement visit:

[www.uss.co.uk/for-members/thinking-about-your-future/understanding-your-options/your-options-at-different-ages-and-stages](http://www.uss.co.uk/for-members/thinking-about-your-future/understanding-your-options/your-options-at-different-ages-and-stages)

For LGPS members visit:

<https://www.lgpsmember.org/tol/thinking-leaving-when.php>

For NHS members visit:

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/pay-and-reward/pensions/pension-scheme-flexibilities/what-are-retirement-flexibilities>

#### **4.0 PRINCIPLES**

- All applications for flexible working will be fairly considered by the manager/Head of Department, and where appropriate with advice from HR and the authorisation of the Dean (or equivalent)
- All reasonable requests will be seriously considered on the basis of need and accommodated wherever possible
- Informal ad hoc arrangements will not be covered by this policy
- The ability to provide an effective service to students and staff will be paramount when considering applications for flexible working
- The principles of the Equalities Act 2010 will be observed including disability where there is legal requirement to consider reasonable adjustments
- Only one application can be made for flexible working in any 12 month period
- The agreement to one employee's formal request (either within the same area or in a different area of the University) will not set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted the same or a similar change to their working pattern.
- Not all flexible working arrangements will be appropriate, this will be dependent upon the job role/requirement and needs of the department
- A successful request for flexible working will result in a permanent change to terms and conditions of employment. A temporary variation may be considered up to a maximum of 2 years
- Employees do not have an automatic right to return to their original contract if the variation is permanent, although they can request it
- An employee may be accompanied by a work colleague or a recognised trade union representative at all meetings to discuss their flexible working request.

#### **5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1 To ensure appropriate application of the policy, the following responsibilities have been identified.

5.1.1 Head of Department/Senior Manager

- Establish and maintain

to allow for the whole process to be completed, including any appeal.

- 6.2 Where the application is incomplete the manager/Head of Department should request further information from the employee and ask them to re-submit their application. Where this occurs the date of re-submission will constitute the formal date of application.
- 6.3 The manager/Head of Department (or nominee) must arrange to meet with the employee within 20 working days of receipt of the written request. If the request is straightforward and the manager/Head of Department intends to approve the request, a meeting may not be required. The purpose of the meeting is to explore and discuss the request, clarify how it will work in practice, consider and mitigate any impact and clarify understanding between the employee and manager/Head of Department. If appropriate, a HR representative may be present at the meeting.
- 6.4 If the request requires a replacement post (or appointment) before it can be agreed, or if the request has other resource implications or a potential impact on the academic strategy of a department, it must first be discussed with and approved by the Dean (or equivalent). A request for a replacement post (or appointment) will require a business case to be produced.
- 6.5 Within 10 working days of the meeting, the manager/Head of Department (or nominee) must inform the employee of a decision. The decision will be to: agree to the original flexible working request; agree to the request but with modifications; or reject it. Section C of Form FW1 must be completed and a

## 7.0 WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATIONS

7.1 The University will treat an application as withdrawn if the employee has:

- notified their manager/Head of Department that their application is being withdrawn;
- failed, without reasonable cause, to attend a meeting or appeal meeting convened under this policy on more than one occasion; or
- refused, without reasonable cause, to provide information, which the University considers necessary to assess whether the employee's request to work fA3 >>BDC u-x 4.56 65g