



Flexible Working Policy & Procedure

ELT manager		Principal & Chief Executive	
Responsible officer		Head of HR & Organisational Development	
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Date review approved by BoM			
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Equality impact assessment			
Further information (where relevant)			
Reviewer	Date	Review Action/Impact	BoM

1 Purpose

Whilst there are legislative requirements which support flexible working arrangements, the College is committed to promoting the equality of opportunity for all staff.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Outline an employee's statutory rights and explain the process for making a flexible working application.
- Where operationally and financially viable, to help employees achieve a greater balance between their work and non-working lives by supporting applications to work on a flexible basis.

The College will give consideration to the practicalities of requests for flexible working arrangements from any member of staff, not just those who are eligible under the legislation. No member of staff should assume that by making an application, it will be automatically accepted

2 Scope

The principles of this policy apply to all College staff.

3 Definitions

A request for flexible working could include any of the following work patterns: flexitime, home working, job-sharing, staggered hours, condensed hours or shift working.

In addition, a member of staff may apply to reduce their working hours, for example, if they wish to pursue a weekly course of study or undertake other non work-related commitments on a weekly basis. Applications for such a reduction in hours, for either a short-term or permanent basis, will be considered

4 Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fully implemented throughout the College.

The College Management Group, all Managers and Team Leaders have a duty to ensure that the College's policies including this policy are implemented within their sphere of activities and responsibility.

The HR Manager is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy.

All Staff are responsible for adhering to this policy.

5 Related Policies/References

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Policy
- West Highland College UHI Strategic Plan
- Employment Act 2002
- Employment Relations Act 2004
- Work and Families Act 2006
- Flexible Working (Procedural Requirements) Regulations 2002
- Acas (Flexible Working) Arbitration Scheme (Great Britain) Order 2004
- Flexible Working Regulations 2014
- Maternity and Parenting Leave Policy.

6 Review

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years or when circumstances change any part of it

Flexible Working Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 West Highland College UHI wishes to ensure that all staff have choices which will help them to achieve work life balance and is therefore committed to the development of flexible working policies and practices. The following procedures have been introduced in support of this aim, also taking account of recent legislative changes.
- 1.2 Flexible working describes a type of working arrangement which gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when employees work and this procedure is applicable to all College staff, depending on eligibility, as detailed below.
- 1.3 West Highland College UHI will deal with all flexible working requests in a reasonable manner and within a reasonable time.
- 1.4 This procedure does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

2. Flexible Working

- 2.1 Any eligible employee can make a written request to have a more flexible work pattern.
- 2.2 To be eligible to make a request to work more flexibly, you must meet the following criteria;
 - Have worked continuously as a member of staff of the College for the last 26 weeks
 - Have not made a request to work flexibly under this right during the past 12 months
- 2.3 Under this procedure eligible employees can apply for a variety of different working patterns, for example to:
 - change the times when they are required to work
 - change the number of hours they work each week
 - change the number of weeks they work each year
 - change their place of work

- apply for a period of unpaid leave

2.4 Any request that is made and is accepted will constitute a permanent change to contractual terms and conditions, unless agreed otherwise e.g. a trial period, and will be confirmed in writing. There is no automatic right for an employee to revert to their previous working pattern.

There is no automatic right to work flexibly as there may be occasions when the College is unable to accommodate a written request but all written requests will be seriously considered.

2.5 All flexible working requests will be considered taking full account of equality and diversity issues.

2.6 You will need to submit a written request if you would like your flexible working request to be considered under the procedure. Your written request should be submitted to your line manager in good time and ideally at least two months before you would like the changes to take effect. Your written request should:

- State that it is a flexible working request;
- Explain the reasons for your request;
- Provide as much information as you can about your current and desired working; pattern, including working days, hours and start and finish times, and give the date from which you want the changes to take effect;
- Identify the effect the changes to your working pattern will have on the work that you do, that of your colleagues and on service delivery. If you have any suggestions about dealing with any potentially negative effects, please include these in your written request; and
- Provide information to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria set out in this procedure, including the dates of any previous requests for flexible working.

2.7 Your line manager will need to give your request serious consideration. In some cases it may be possible to approve a request without a formal meeting. In all other cases, your line manager will meet with you to discuss your written request. You may bring a work colleague or Trade Union representative to the meeting to support you.

2.8 Consideration will be given to alternative or temporary arrangements and these may be proposed to you as part of the discussion.

If the decision is to decline your request for a recognised business reason this will be explained to you in writing following the meeting. Any refusal would be based on one of the following business reasons:

- The burden of additional cost is unacceptable to the College
- An inability to reorganise work among existing staff

- The change would have a detrimental impact on quality
- The change would have a detrimental effect on the College's ability to meet student/customer needs
- There would be detrimental impact on performance
- The proposed change does not fit with planned structural changes

3. Withdrawing a Written request

- 3.1 You should inform your line manager in writing as soon as possible if you wish to withdraw your written request. The written request will be considered as withdrawn if you miss two meetings without good reason. If the written request is withdrawn you cannot make another request within 12 months.

4. Number of Written requests

- 4.1 You may only make one flexible working written request per year.

5. Appeal

- 5.1 If your request is refused then you may appeal against the decision within 15 working days of receipt of the written refusal. You should appeal to the HR Manager setting out the grounds of your appeal e.g. you believe the written request was not handled reasonably or there is new information to be taken into consideration. The HR Manager will arrange to meet with you to consider your appeal and will write to you following the meeting with an outcome.

6. Time Scales

- 6.1 The timing of the whole process from written request to appeal will not take more than 3 months