

## **University of Greater Manchester**

### **Flexible Working Policy**

#### **1. Introduction**

The University of Greater Manchester is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment that promotes work-life balance and enhances employee well-being.

#### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of The University of Greater Manchester including academic, administrative, and support staff, regardless of length of service.

#### **3. Definition of Flexible Working**

Flexible working encompasses various arrangements regarding the time, location, and manner in which work is performed. This includes, but is not limited to:

- **Part-time working:** Working less than the standard full-time hours.
- **Flexitime:** Choosing when to start and end work within agreed limits.
- **Compressed hours:** Working full-time hours over fewer days.
- **Remote working:** Performing duties from a location other than the primary workplace.
- **Job sharing:** Two employees sharing the responsibilities of one full-time position.
- **Annualised hours:** Working a set number of hours over the year with flexibility in scheduling.
- **Term-time working:** Working during school terms with time off during school holidays.

#### **4. Right to Request Flexible Working**

Effective 6 April 2024, all employees have the statutory right to request flexible working from their first day of employment.

#### **5. Informal arrangements**

For small changes to an employee working pattern, such as starting and finishing earlier, or where an employee just wants the change for a short period, we may be able to agree something informally, in which case the employee won't need to make a formal flexible working request under this policy.

#### **6. Submitting a Flexible Working Request**

Employees may submit up to two flexible working requests within a 12-month period. Each request should be in writing and include:

- The specific change(s) requested.
- The reasons for the change (s)
- The proposed start date for the change(s).

The flexible working request should be submitted to the employee's Line Manager and HR in writing by email through completing the Flexible Working Application Form, which is available from the HR A-Z section on the University of Greater Manchester Website. Once the form is completed, please send to your Line Manager/Head of Department and a copy (for information) to Human Resources.

## **7. Consideration of Requests**

Upon receiving a flexible working request, the University will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the request.
- Arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss the request.
- Consider the request fairly and in accordance with business needs.

The University will provide a decision within two months of receiving the request. If the request is denied, the University will provide a written explanation based on one or more of the following reasons:

- Additional costs that burden the University.
- Detrimental effect on the University's ability to meet student or operational demands.
- Inability to reorganise the work among other staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff.
- Detrimental impact on performance.
- Insufficient work available during the proposed working times.
- Planned structural changes affecting the role.
- A detrimental impact on quality

Prior to any refusal, the University will consult with the employee to explore potential alternatives. A formal meeting will be arranged in order to do this, at which the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a work colleague.

Before providing an outcome on a flexible working request, managers should discuss the request with the Head of School/Service. This ensures consistency in decision-making, takes into university requirements, and allows for a broader understanding of any potential impacts on the team or service delivery. The consultation should take place before communicating the final decision to the employee.

If the request is granted, the employee and the Line Manager will discuss how and when the changes will take effect. Any changes to terms and conditions will be put in writing and sent to the employee as an amendment to their contract of employment/written statement of terms and conditions of employment. Although successful requests may result in a permanent change to the employees' terms and conditions, it is also possible to make any changes which may be subject to review or may only be agreed on a temporary basis.

Where arrangements are agreed with a review date, it is possible that, upon review, the agreement may no longer be viable and will not be continued. In such cases, line managers are expected to provide reasonable notice to employees if the arrangement will not be extended.

## **8. Appeals**

Employees will have the right to appeal a refusal. Appeals should be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receiving the decision, stating the grounds for appeal. An appeal meeting will be arranged, and a final decision will be communicated in writing as soon as possible following the appeal meeting.

The HR Business Partner will ensure that the appeal is considered by an independent manager (usually the next level of authority). This person will be referred to as the 'Appeal Officer'.

The purpose of an appeal is not to re-hear the original request, and the employee must explain clearly the basis on which they think the outcome is wrong or unfair. This may be where new information has come to light, or was not available when the original request was heard; or where the procedure has not been followed, which impacted on the outcome.

## **9. Review and Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed as required to ensure compliance with current legislation and alignment with the University's operational needs.

## **10. Additional Support**

For further guidance on submitting a flexible working request or to discuss potential flexible working options, employees are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Department.

### **Document Control**

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