

9 DAY FORTNIGHT GUIDANCE NOTES FOR MANAGERS

INTRODUCTION

Nine day fortnight is a form of compressed working which allows staff to work their total contracted hours over a shorter number of days. Employees are invited to work the equivalent of their 2 weeks contracted hours over 9 days, enabling them to take a day off. Following consultation with staff and unions, it has been decided to include this scheme among the suite of flexible working options currently available to staff.

Line managers are advised to read these guidance notes together with the FAQ document before implementing the scheme. As with any employee flexible working arrangement this scheme will be subject to regular review to ensure that it remains in the best interests of individual employees and the University and has no detrimental impact on others.

This guidance note applies to Professional Services Staff across the University.

APPLYING FOR THE 9 DAY FORTNIGHT SCHEME

All Professional Services staff (academic-related and support) working a 5 day week and not working limited hours to provide a specific service are eligible and may apply for the scheme as for any other flexible working option (See Procedure for Requesting for Flexible Working Arrangements). Staff who are on a performance improvement plan or undergoing a capability procedure cannot participate in the scheme. Line managers reserve the right to refuse a flexible working request but will not do so without fully considering the proposal and providing written reasons why the scheme is not feasible. If operational and business reasons currently preclude participation the line manager will notify staff when participation may be feasible.

Once the scheme has been approved by the line manager, both the staff member and the line manager retain the option to suspend the scheme for a period due to personal reasons or business requirements. The staff member or manager need to provide 1 weeks' notice of the intention to suspend the scheme stating the reasons for suspension and the duration. This flexibility is built in to ensure that staff and managers can effectively coordinate personal challenges and manage operational requirements. Line managers and staff should agree, where possible, a specific day off in order to ensure proper cover is maintained and service levels are not affected.

Please note that this scheme supersedes and replaces any other arrangements currently in place such as TOIL and the ability to bank hour's outwith the scheme. If you have any concerns please contact your HR Partner or Dr Anthony Anagboso, Head of HR Specialist Services (ext. 3414) for clarification.

* the scheme does not apply to staff who work part time over 4 or less days per week/8 or less days per fortnight. Additionally staff who work defined hours to cover operational or service requirements are excluded from the scheme.

GUIDELINES FOR THE 9 DAY FORTNIGHT

Line managers are encouraged to consider the parameters for the 9 day fortnight below. They should communicate these to their staff to ensure they are sufficiently well informed when making a decision on whether the scheme is suitable for them.

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- Staff well-being is important hence employees should ensure they take adequate breaks and hours worked per day should not be detrimental to employees' well-being. Staff should not be encouraged to work in excess of 9 hours per day and should take adequate breaks
- Cover arrangements for time away must not increase workload for other staff.
- The usual day off should be discussed and agreed between the manager and employee and must be agreed on the basis of ensuring adequate cover and efficient use of resources throughout the week. This means that the agreed day off may not necessarily be a Monday or a Friday but could fall mid-week.
- Staff working the 9-day fortnight scheme should ensure they retain enough flexibility to attend important meetings/events/ or training on their non-working day with appropriate notice.
- Staff working the 9-day fortnight scheme cannot participate in any other flexitime scheme although there may be flexibility in their start and finish times.
- Staff on a performance plan or capability process cannot participate in this scheme.

WORKING PATTERNS

The 9-day fortnight scheme recognises the two contractual weekly working hours for full time staff within the University of Aberdeen. For Grades 1-4 (36.5hrs) and Grades for 5 and above (37.5 week) all excluding breaks. Hence, staff within Grades 1-4 need to work 2 x 36.5hrs (73hrs) in 9 days to be eligible for the 10th day off while staff on Grade 5 and above need to work 2 x 37.5 (75hrs) over 9 days in order to have one day off every 2 weeks. Line managers need to determine what days can be taken as days off and this needs to take into account service or operational requirements and cover within the team. Hence, any day of the week can be a day off. However, to make this work in practice, the working pattern has to be structured to ensure the required hours are worked before the day off can be taken.

Examples of how this may be achieved are set out below as scenarios. Please note that this is not prescriptive as employees may work anytime between the hours of 7am and 7pm depending on personal circumstances and bearing in mind operational requirements as agreed with the line manager.

Scenario A (Support staff)

Staff working 7hrs 18min/day (36.5 hours/week or 1606 hrs/year)

Such staff need to work 73hrs over 9 days to qualify for the additional day off.

Mondays

Start time: 8:30am Lunch break: 30 mins Finish time: 17:30

Hours Worked: 8:30(x2) Accrued time/2 days: 2 hrs 24mins

Other days(*7)

Start time: 8:30am Lunch break: 30 mins Finish time: 17:00

Hours Worked: 8:00 (x7) Accrued time/7 days: 4 hrs 54mins

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Accrued time/9 days: **7hrs 18mins**

Scenario B (Full-time Academic related staff)

Staff working **7hrs 30min/day (37.5hrs/week or 1650hrs/annum contract)**

Such staff need to work 75hrs over 9 days to qualify for the additional day off.

	WEEKDAY	DAY	START TIME	BREAK DURATION	FINISH TIME	HOURS WORKED	CUMMULATIVE
Week 1	SUNDAY						
	MONDAY						
	TUESDAY						
	WEDNESDAY	1	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	08:20:00
	THURSDAY	2	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	16:40:00
	FRIDAY	3	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	25:00:00
	SATURDAY						
Week 2	SUNDAY						
	MONDAY	4	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	33:20:00
	TUESDAY	5	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	41:40:00
	WEDNESDAY	6	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	50:00:00
	THURSDAY	7	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	58:20:00
	FRIDAY	8	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	66:40:00
	SATURDAY						
Week 3	SUNDAY						
	MONDAY	9	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	75:00:00
	TUESDAY						
	Day Off						
	WEDNESDAY	1	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	08:20:00
	THURSDAY	2	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	16:40:00
	FRIDAY	3	08:00	01:00	17:20	08:20:00	25:00:00
SATURDAY							

Scenario C (Part time Academic related staff FTE 0.9)

Part time staff working **6 hrs 45 mins/day (33.75hrs/week or 1485hrs/annum contract)**

Such staff need to work 67.5hrs over 9 days to qualify for the additional day off.

Start time: 8:30am Lunch break: 30 mins Finish time: 16:30

Hours Worked: 7hrs 30 min Accrued time each day: 45mins

Accrued time after 9 days: **6 hrs 45mins**

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To successfully implement the scheme line managers need to discuss and agree working patterns and hours with their staff to ensure that the scheme can be carried out in line with service requirements. These agreements should be captured in writing on the template provided. Any changes to the agreed working patterns need to be discussed and agreed with the line manager. The examples above reflect a 'typical' working week. However, managers and staff may need to meet operational and business requirements by getting staff to work an 'untypical' day/ hours. The working pattern template allows staff to capture the time commitments and gain line management sign off. The hours accrued count towards the scheme or can be taken in lieu at the line managers' discretion. The line manager can authorise a change in the day off if it best suits the needs of the team and individual.

Please note that the compressed working arrangement may be terminated at any time by mutual consent, usually after a 1 week notice period. This may be applicable in cases where maintaining appropriate service standards is not possible or the member of staff feels that the scheme is no longer appropriate for their personal circumstances. If for any reason the 9-day fortnight arrangement is terminated, the employee will revert to their substantive contractual working arrangements.

There will be no effect to the employees' other terms and conditions of employment.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Full-time employees working compressed hours are entitled to the same amount of combined annual leave, Bank Holidays and closure days as other full-time employees of the same grade who are not on the scheme. Similarly, part-time employees remain entitled to receive their relevant pro-rated amount of leave.

Employees' annual leave entitlement will need to be calculated in hours and will be based on 7.5 working hours per day (Grades 5 and above) and 7.3 working hours per day (Grades 1-4) for full-time employees. For a part-time Grade 6 staff with a 0.8 FTE (30hrs/week) this will equate to 6 working hours per day.

All leave should be recorded as normal on the employees' annual leave record and deducted at the rate that would normally be worked on that day, in accordance with the agreed work pattern for the 9 day fortnight scheme. Hence, using the example above, if a full-time academic related staff member were to take annual leave on a Monday and Tuesday, 16hrs 40min will need to be deducted from their annual leave entitlement as this is what would have been their expected working pattern for those days.

BANK HOLIDAY

Bank holiday entitlement is currently added onto employees' annual leave entitlement. This will be calculated in working day hours on the same premises as for the annual leave as follows; 7.5 working hours per day (Grades 5 and above) and 7.3 working hours per day (Grades 1-4) for full-time employees (pro-rata for part-time employees).

When a bank holiday falls on a day which would normally be a 'working day', and the staff member wished to take it as a holiday, the day must be booked off as leave and the hours deducted from the leave card should be the number of hours usually worked on that day.

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However, when a bank holiday falls on a 'non-working' day, no deductions need to be taken from the employees' leave hours as they have already accrued hours to have that day off by working their required hours over a two-week period.

SICKNESS ABSENCE

Sickness absence will be recorded in hours according to the number of hours absent per day.

Normal sickness absence reporting procedures should continue to be followed by all employees. At the time of reporting employees will be required to state how many hours they would normally be working on that day. If the 2 week working cycle is broken by a single day of absence then the cycle will not be broken. The employee will have the hours allocated according to their working pattern for that day (and have an equivalent amount of sick pay deducted from their annual entitlement). However, their pay will not be affected. If they are sick for more than one day in any single week then the cycle will reset and they will need to start a new cycle from the following week. If a member of staff needs to arrange medical or dental appointments there should be an attempt to do so out of working hours. However, when this is not possible such appointments can be arranged during the working day and no hours need be deducted. It is the line manager's responsibility to monitor and address any abuse within their teams.

Note: If employees are sick on their 'non-working' day, this will not be recorded as sickness absence as they would not normally be working on that day.

TRAINING/OUT OF HOURS COVER/ BUSINESS TRAVEL

When staff attend training this will need to be recorded in hours according to the number of hour's attendance. Similarly, if staff need to come in to provide cover at short notice, and this is not covered by the on call policy, then the manager needs to make a note of the hours and provide time off in lieu within the framework of the 9-day fortnight scheme. Note that this does not supersede current contractual agreements for Grades 1-4 staff.

If employees are required to attend training on their 'non-working' day, time off in lieu or a change in their 'non-working' day may be an option. This decision should be at the Line Manager's discretion.

If staff undertake business travel on a working day, they are entitled to claim up to the hours scheduled for work on that day. This will count towards the hours accrued for the day off under the 9 day fortnight scheme.