

# UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

## STATEMENT OF FLEXIBLE WORKING PROCEDURES

### 1 Background

As outlined in the Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, the University of Aberdeen is committed to a comprehensive policy of Equal Opportunities in employment for all categories of employees in all areas of the institution. In this connection, the University of Aberdeen is committed to engaging in constructive dialogue with members of staff wishing to explore the possibility of flexible working practices to arrive at a mutually beneficial agreement wherever possible.

### 2 Examples of Flexible Working Arrangements

There are many forms of flexible working arrangements which you feel might be of benefit to the University and your own personal circumstances. The following list is for illustrative purposes only, and is not intended to be exhaustive:

- **Part time working** where you work less than the normal full time number of hours per week. A significant percentage of staff in the University choose to work on this basis. Sometimes, staff returning from maternity leave or long term sick leave choose to return to work on a temporary part time basis.
- **Part year working** where you work only for part of the year, but your salary is calculated on a pro-rata basis and paid for the whole year. This option is chosen by some members of staff who have school-age children and who wish to work during term-time only.
- **Job sharing** where 2 or more people share the same responsibilities of a full time post. You should note that you would not normally be permitted to take annual leave at the same time as your job share partner. Job share partners may be asked to cover each other's leave and, following discussion with a view to securing a mutual agreement, this arrangement might result in you working full time hours from time to time.
- **Flexible working hours** where you choose, within limits, the times you start and finish work. This option is chosen by those with carers' commitments or those who are travelling longer distances to come to work. It should be noted that requests for a compressed working week cannot normally be considered by the University.
- **Career breaks** where you undertake an extended period of unpaid leave from work. If you decide to take a career break, your date of continuous service with the University will not be affected.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which you may wish to request other forms of flexible working arrangements. If you would like information about any other forms of flexible working arrangements, please contact your Human Resources Adviser.

### 3 Health-Related Adjustments

The University is committed to providing support to members of staff who are or who become disabled and/or are diagnosed with a chronic underlying health condition<sup>3</sup> during their employment. In such circumstances, advice and guidance on appropriate reasonable adjustments will be sought from the Occupational Health Service to accommodate the individual's needs. The guidance and recommendations for support which are received will be considered by the individual's Line Manager or Head of School/Section (as appropriate), in consultation with an HR Adviser and the member of staff, with a view to identifying how best to implement them.

Such adjustments may include (but are not restricted to) :

- Reductions in working hours on a short-term or permanent basis
- Amendments to start/finish times
- Amendments to duties
- A period of homeworking

In addition, members of staff who are disabled or have been diagnosed with a chronic underlying health condition will be entitled to reasonable time off to attend appointments in relation to treatment regimes e.g. counselling, physiotherapy. Such time off will be discussed and agreed with your Line Manager in advance.

Reasonable adjustments which are made to provide ongoing support to disabled staff will be kept under regular review to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of both the individual and the University and will take account of advice and recommendations received from the Occupational Health Service.

<sup>3</sup> For example, HIV, MS, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma

#### **4 Procedure for Requesting Flexible Working Arrangements**

If you are interested in working on a flexible basis, either on a permanent or temporary basis, you should advise your Line Manager in writing in the first instance.

If your Line Manager immediately agrees to your request, this will be confirmed to you in writing. If your Line Manager wishes to meet with you to discuss your request further, a meeting will be arranged at which it will be considered in more detail. This meeting will normally take place within two weeks of your request being received. Your Line Manager will not refuse a request without first providing you with the opportunity to discuss your proposal with her/him. You will have the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a work colleague and will normally be notified of the outcome within two weeks of it taking place.

You will have a right to appeal against a decision to decline your request. The intention to appeal should be lodged, in writing, with the Director of Human Resources within two weeks of receiving the decision.

The appeal will be heard by your Head of School/Section, normally within four weeks of the written appeal being received by her/him.

The appeal will be heard in line with the Procedure for Hearing an Appeal in the University.

**You should note that requests for flexible working arrangements cannot be agreed if they conflict with the operational needs of your School/Section or the best management interests of the University.** If your request for flexible working is refused, you will have the opportunity to receive appropriate advice in seeking alternative opportunities through advertised vacancies within the University if you wish.

Each request will be considered on its own merits. All arrangements agreed will normally be for an initial period of 6 months, and will be subject to regular reviews thereafter.

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