

Staff Flexible Working Policy

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EIA

Yes

Lead Officer

Vice Principal: Curriculum, Operations & External Relations

Review Officer

Head of HR

Version Control History

Reviewer	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions made
HR Manager	2016	Reviewed by BoM - approved
HR Manager	June 2023	Review approved
HRBP	13.03.2026	Policy Statement – reference to ACAS Code.
HRBP	13.03.2026	Scope – amended to reflect new statutory framework.
HRBP	13.03.2026	Responsibilities – amended to reflect inclusion of Leadership Forum Member in decision-making process.

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1. Policy Statement

Whilst there is legislation outlining the statutory rights of employees who wish to make a flexible working application, UHI Inverness is committed to promoting the equality of opportunity for all employees through its approach to requests for flexible working.

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to:

- Outline an employee's statutory rights and explain the process for making a Flexible Working Application.
- Facilitate discussions between managers and employees when considering flexible working arrangements so that they meet both the needs of the employee and UHI Inverness.
- Where operationally and financially viable, help employees to achieve a healthier work-life balance by, where possible, supporting individuals to work on a flexible basis.

UHI Inverness will give thorough consideration as to the practicalities of requests for flexible working arrangements from any employee, however, staff should not assume that any application made will be automatically accepted.

This policy and associated procedure have been written in conjunction with the ACAS Code of Practice on Flexible Working Requests to ensure best practice is adhered to when considering applications for flexible working.

2. Legislative framework/ related policies

Publicly available UHI Inverness policies and procedures can be accessed via our website: [About us – Publications](#). Staff and Board Members can access the full range of internal policies and procedures through the Quality SharePoint site.

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Employment Relations Act 2004
- Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023
- Work and Families Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

- Flexible Working (Procedural Requirements) Regulations 2000
- Flexible Working (Eligibility, Complaints and Remedies) Regulations 2002
- ACAS (Flexible Working) Arbitration Scheme (Great Britain) Order 2004
- ACAS Code of Practice on Requests for Flexible Working
- Flexible Working Regulations 2014
- UHI Inverness Maternity and Parenting Leave Policy and Procedure
- UHI Inverness Use of College Equipment and Network Access Outwith the UK
- UHI Inverness Talent Management Strategy
- UHI Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy

3. Scope

All employees have the statutory right to request flexible working from day one of employment.

Employees may make up to two statutory requests within any 12-month period.

An employee may have only one live request for flexible working with UHI Inverness at any one time. Once a request has been made, it remains live until any of the following occur:

- a decision about the request is made by the employer.
- the request is withdrawn.
- an outcome is mutually agreed.
- the statutory two-month period for deciding requests ends.

A request for flexible working could include, but not be limited to:

- part-time working
- term-time working
- job sharing
- compressed hours
- annualised hours
- homeworking

This policy does not apply to hybrid working (splitting working time between a campus and alternative location, usually the employee's home address) which is an informal voluntary arrangement rather than a contractual one. Further information can be found in the Hybrid Working Guidance found on the Quality SharePoint site.

This policy does not apply to applicants not currently employed directly by UHI Inverness. Similarly, existing staff applying for alternative roles within UHI Inverness should do so on the basis of the working arrangements advertised rather than assuming that any existing flexible working arrangements will be maintained.

4. Definitions

The term “flexible working” describes any working arrangement whereby the working hours, and/or time, and/or location that work is undertaken, are different from that which is defined in the employee’s contract of employment.

Standard working hours for staff at UHI Inverness are operated in accordance with the nationally agreed terms and conditions. The full time equivalent working hours are, 35hours per week, worked Monday to Friday between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00, exclusive of a lunchbreak and inclusive of a paid morning and afternoon break.

Paid breaks should be agreed with the relevant manager. These breaktimes cannot be accumulated, rolled over to be taken at another time or used to enable earlier/later start or finish times on any work pattern.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. Human Resources (HR)

- Provide advice, guidance and support to managers and staff on the application of this policy and procedure.
- Write to staff, informing them of the final outcome of their Flexible Working Application, within 2 months of being received, inclusive of any appeal.
- Monitor trial periods for approved flexible working arrangements.
- Inform staff in writing of any permanent changes to their contract of employment.

5.2. Leadership Forum Member

- Consult with employees on Flexible Working Applications received, in conjunction with the employee’s line manager.

- Decide whether to accept a request for flexible working, either in full or a modified version of the original request; or to reject a request based on one or more of the 8 business reasons as set out in the Employment Rights Act 1996.
- Submit Flexible Working Applications to HR in a timely manner along with the decision and notes from any consultation meetings.
- Monitor the suitability of any new flexible working arrangement during the trial period, discussing with the line manager and employee as appropriate.

5.3. Line Managers

- Submit applications received for flexible working to the appropriate member of the Leadership Forum.
- Participate in consultation meetings with employees on Flexible Working Applications received, in conjunction with the appropriate member of the Leadership Forum.

Complete the Employee Change Notification form for approved Flexible Working Applications and submit to HR in a timely manner.

- Monitor the suitability of any new flexible working arrangements during the trial period (if applicable), discussing with the employee and appropriate member of the Leadership Forum, and reporting back to HR.

5.4. Employees

- Submit applications for flexible working to the line manager on the appropriate application form.
- Participate in consultation with management in relation to requests for flexible working.
- Participate in discussions with management during any trial period applied, around the suitability of the new flexible working arrangement.

6. Monitoring

Each college policy will be reviewed regularly, and its implementation and effectiveness monitored. Appropriate procedures for reviewing and monitoring are

the responsibility of the policy lead officer. These procedures will be subject to audit by the Quality department.

The number of Flexible Working Applications received, and the nature of Flexible Working Applications received (e.g., reduction in working hours, change to work pattern, etc.) will be reported to the Executive Management Committee and on a quarterly basis:

Further breakdown of these performance indicators will be used to identify any emerging patterns on Flexible Working Applications and wider organisational performance.

7. Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed on at least a 3 yearly basis, to continue to meet college requirements and any legislative changes to ensure currency of content.

This policy must be complied with as outlined above and will be audited regularly with reports going to the appropriate committee.