

## **FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **Policy Statement**

St Catharine's College is committed to providing equality of opportunity and supporting colleagues to have a work and home life balance. We recognise the benefits of flexible working arrangements and are committed to considering such requests, provided that the needs and objectives of both the organisation and the employee can be met.

It is the college's policy to encourage open discussion with employees. An employee that thinks they may benefit from flexible working is encouraged to contact their immediate line manager to arrange an informal discussion to talk through options.

The purpose of this policy is to advise and guide all non-academic employees on their rights regarding formal flexible working requests and to outline the application process.

The aim is for formal flexible working requests to be considered within 3 months of the line manager or HR first receiving the request.

This policy is non-contractual and may be amended at any time.

### **Eligibility**

Any employee with at least 26 weeks of employment service, has a statutory right to request flexible working in accordance with this policy, provided they have not made a formal request to work flexibly during the last 12 months (each 12-month period runs from the date when the most recent application was made).

### **Types of Flexible Working**

Flexible working can incorporate a number of changes to working arrangements, for example:

- reduction or variation of working hours/working pattern;
- reduction of the number of days worked each week; and/or
- working from a different location (for example, from home).

### **Informal Flexible Working Requests**

Employees who wish to make an informal request for flexible working should follow the below guidance and submit the request to their line manager who will consider it alongside business and operational requirements.

### **Informal Application Process**

- Employees should complete Parts A & B of the application form and forward it to their line manager.
- The employee will be invited to attend a meeting with their line manager to discuss the request.
- The employee will receive a written response to their request within 1 month of it being received, unless a different timeframe is agreed.

### **Informal Flexible Working Arrangements - Duration**

Informal arrangements will be for a maximum of 12 months in the first instance at which time, they must be reviewed. At that point, the line manager may decide one of the following:

- Arrangements cannot be sustained long term and the arrangement will cease with 1 months' notice and the previous terms and conditions of employment will apply. The individual retains the right to submit a formal request.
- Arrangements cannot be sustained long term but may be extended by up to 6 months with no further extension possible under the informal stage. After which time the previous terms and conditions of employment will apply. The individual retains the right to submit a formal request.
- Arrangements can be sustained and both parties agree it will become permanent.

### **Formal Flexible Working Requests**

An employee may wish to discuss their flexible working request informally with their line manager, prior to submitting a request under the formal procedure.

Employees whose requests for flexible working are accepted under the formal procedure will normally have permanent changes made to their contracts of employment to reflect their new working arrangements.

If temporary changes are sought, an employee should request this informally with their line manager in the first instance.

### **Formal Application Process**

- Employees should complete Parts A & B of the application form and forward it to their line manager.
- The employee will be invited to attend a meeting with their line manager to discuss the request. They may be accompanied by a companion<sup>1</sup>.
- The employee will receive a written response to their request within 3 months of it being received, unless a different timeframe is agreed.

If you withdraw a formal request for flexible working, you will not be eligible to make another formal request for 12 months from the date of your original request.

In certain circumstances, a request made under the formal procedure will be treated as withdrawn. This will occur if:

- a) you fail to attend meetings under the formal procedure, without reasonable cause; or
- b) you unreasonably refuse to provide information we require, to consider your request.

In such circumstances, you will be notified in writing that your request has been treated as withdrawn.

### **Appeal against a formal application outcome**

If your formal request is rejected, you have the right to appeal the decision.

Your appeal must:

- a) be in writing and dated;
- b) set out the grounds on which you are appealing; and

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<sup>1</sup> A companion is either a representative from a professional association (e.g. union) or a work place colleague.

c) be sent to the HR Manager within 5 working days of the date on which you received the written rejection of your request.

The HR Manager will arrange for a meeting to take place within 10 working days of receipt of your Appeal, where possible. The HR Manager will arrange for an SCO, previously unconnected with the proceedings, to hear the appeal and you will be given 10 days' notice of the appeal meeting although it may be held sooner, by agreement with the relevant parties.

The meeting will be held at a convenient time for all those attending and you may be accompanied by a companion.

You will be informed in writing of the appeal outcome, within 14 days of the date of the appeal meeting.

If your appeal is upheld, you will be advised of your new working arrangements, details of any trial period, an explanation of changes to your contract of employment and the date on which they will commence. You will be asked to sign and return a copy of the letter. This will be placed on your personnel file to confirm the variation to your terms of employment. There may also be some additional practical matters, such as arrangements for handing over work, that your line manager will discuss with you.

You should be aware that changes to your terms of employment will be permanent and you will not be able to make another formal request until at least 12 months after the date of your original application.

### **Considerations**

Before completing the form, employees are advised to give careful consideration to the following:

- How the proposed working pattern will help them balance commitments outside work with contractual duties and responsibilities.
- Financial implications: reduced hours are likely to result in a decrease in salary and pension contributions (where applicable).
- How the department and colleagues might be affected by this and possible ways to reduce the impact.

### **Implementation, Monitoring and Review of this Policy and Procedure**

The HR Manager has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy.

This policy takes effect from 1 April 2021 and will be reviewed every 3 years unless changes in legislation require that to take place sooner.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the HR Manager.

## Confidential Flexible Working Application Form

### Part A

**Type of request** (Please tick as appropriate)

I am applying to work flexibly under the Flexible Working Regulations on a permanent basis

I am applying to work flexibly under the Flexible Working Regulations on a temporary basis

### Personal Details

Name:

Job Title:

Date you started working at the College:

Current hours worked per week, working pattern and place of work:

Have you submitted a previous request for flexible working within the last 12 months? **Yes/No**

If yes, please indicate when and whether it was informal or formal?

Please outline your reason(s) for submitting this request:	
Details of changes to current working pattern:	
Proposed start date:	
Proposed new hours:	
Proposed working pattern (e.g. days/hours/times/place of work):	
Any proposed reduction in hours to be worked? <i>(please note this may result in a reduction in salary and pension contributions)</i>	<b>Yes / No</b>
If you will not be able to perform all your duties <sup>2</sup> , what duties will be affected?	

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<sup>2</sup> Please refer to your current job description/role profile

How do you envisage such duties would be reallocated?	
Details of alternatives, if preferred request cannot be accommodated:	
How will you be able to continue to perform all current duties within the proposed working pattern?	

**Part B**

For us to consider your application and alternative ways of providing a service, please outline how your request will affect your department and colleagues and how you think these effects can be dealt with, including the following considerations:

Service delivery?	
Colleagues who may have to cover at times when you would previously have been working?	
Contact with the person who supervises your duties?	
If your role includes acting as a mentor or appraiser for other members of staff, how do you propose to fulfil these responsibilities?	
If your role involves supervision or direction of staff, how will this proposal affect your ability to carry out the duties of your role in relation to day to day management, communication, training, support etc?	

**Additional information to support your application**

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**Employee Declaration**

*Please sign below to confirm you agree to the statement relevant to your application*

**I understand that if my application for temporary flexible working is accepted, it will be reviewed after 12 months unless agreed otherwise and I may revert back to my previous working arrangements; OR**

**I understand that if my application for permanent flexible working is accepted it, I will not be entitled to revert back to my previous working arrangements unless agreed with my line manager.**

**The information included in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Signed:	
Name:	
Date:	