



Flexible Working Policy

1. Purpose and scope

This policy and procedure applies to all current employees, whether full or part-time, temporary or fixed-term.

This policy:

- describes employee entitlement to flexible working
- provides information about the types of flexible working
- describes what employees need to do to request flexible working.

2. Introduction

This policy aims to encourage staff to consider flexible working arrangements. HFTF recognises that a better work-life balance can improve employee motivation, performance and productivity, and reduce stress. We want to support our employees to achieve a better balance between work and their other priorities, such as caring responsibilities, leisure activities, further learning and other interests.

HFTF is committed to considering flexible working arrangements, provided that the needs and objectives of both the organisation and the employee can be met. We encourage open discussion with employees. If an employee thinks they may benefit from flexible working, they should:

1. contact your line manager in the first instance to arrange an informal discussion to talk about the options. They will inform HR who will advise the employee and the line manager of the process.
2. submit a flexible working request, by following the steps in this policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

a. Managers are responsible for:

- Having an open and constructive discussion with the employee following receipt of their application
- Considering all requests for flexible working in a timely and reasonable manner
- Ensuring that any decision is balanced against the needs of HFTF and the needs of the individual
- Confirming in writing the reasons for their decision to the employee
- Completing appropriate documentation to ensure that any changes in hours are effectively managed through payroll.

b. Employees are responsible for:

- Providing sufficient information on the application and in discussion to enable the manager to make an appropriate decision
- Constructively discussing alternatives or changes to their plans in order to balance their own wishes with the needs of HFTF

4. Eligibility

- HFTF follows UK employment law which states that from 6 April 2024 all employees have a statutory right to request flexible working from the first day of employment.
- Employees are entitled to make up to two statutory flexible working requests in any 12-month period, starting from their first day of employment, in accordance with current UK employment law. This means employees can formally request a change to their working arrangements twice within a year.
- This limit applies specifically to statutory requests; however, employees may still make informal requests without restriction. All requests—statutory or informal—will be handled in a reasonable manner, with consultation.
- Employers can accept, partially accept or reject a request if there's a genuine business reason.

Employees who have caring responsibilities (parents, carers, people returning from maternity, paternity or adoption leave) should also read the [Carer's Leave Policy](#) before making a request.

5. Types of Flexible working

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works.

The following flexible working options will be considered which are suitable to both HFTF and the employee:

- Compressed hours - for example the employee works 35 hours over 4 days (8.75 hours per day) or works 70 hours over a 9 day fortnight.
- Flexitime - the employee works 8am to 4pm or 10am to 6pm. An employee is required to work during a core time and must work the hours stated in their contract each week.
- Remote working, working from home, hybrid working - see the [Hybrid/Home](#)

[Working Policy.](#)

- Job-sharing - a full-time post is divided into two part-time roles. The two job holders then share the overall duties and responsibilities. Their skills and the hours each employee wishes to work must be compatible, and meet the needs of the organisation. Pay and benefits are shared in proportion to the hours each works. Job sharing can be considered where the creation of a single part-time post is difficult, or where two individuals wish to work part-time. The suitability of posts for job-sharing will be stated in any internal or external advertisements.
- Part-time working - an employee is contracted to work less than typical full time hours (eg less than 35 hours per week). The suitability of posts for part-time working will be stated in any internal or external advertisements.
- Term-time working - an employee reduces their hours or takes time off during any school holidays. Any weeks above their annual leave entitlement will be unpaid. Salary can be paid in 12 equal monthly installments (although arrangements may be permitted where an employee is only paid for the time worked and receive no pay during the holidays apart from their entitlement to annual leave).

TOIL is considered differently to flexible working and has its own policy [here](#).

6. The needs of the organisation

HFTF is committed to providing a range of appropriate working patterns.

However employees and management need to be realistic and to recognise that not all flexible working options will be appropriate for all roles.

Where a flexible working arrangement is proposed the HFTF will take into account a number of criteria including (but not limited to) the following:

- the costs associated with the proposed arrangement
- the effect of the proposed arrangement on other staff
- the need for, and effect on, supervision
- the existing structure of the organisation
- the availability of staff resources
- details of the tasks specific to the role
- the workload of the role
- whether it is a request for a reasonable adjustment related to a disability
- health and safety issues

7. Submitting a flexible working request

- a. All requests must be made by sending an application form to their line

manager using the template email ([link](#)) which must be completed in full.

- b. If an application does not contain all of the required information the employee's line manager will explain what additional or amended information they need to provide and ask the employee to resubmit the request.
- c. If the employee is making the request in relation to the Equality Act, e.g. as a reasonable adjustment relating to a disability, this should be made clear in the application.

Responding to a request for flexible working

- a. Where a request can, without further discussion, be approved as stated in the employee's written application, the employee will be informed of the organisation's agreement to the request by a confirmation letter within 28 days of the organisation receiving the request. (see section 10)
- b. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and line manager.
- c. A final decision, including any appeal, will be made within a maximum of 2 months of receipt of the request.

8. Meeting to discuss a flexible working request

- a. Upon receiving a written request for flexible working the line manager may wish to consult the employee before making a decision. They will arrange a meeting with the employee to:
 - discuss the request
 - find out more about the proposed working arrangements
 - discuss how it could be of benefit to both the employee and organisation
- b. If a meeting is arranged it will be held within 28 days of the organisation receiving the request. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and line manager.
- c. The employee will be given advance notice of the time, date and place of the meeting. If the initial date is problematic then one further date will be proposed. If a face to face meeting is difficult to arrange then, if agreed by the employee and line manager, the meeting may be held online.
- d. At the meeting the employee may, if they wish, be accompanied by a

workplace colleague or a trade union representative.

- e. The employee will be informed in writing of the organisation's decision as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than 14 calendar days after the meeting.
- f. If the employee fails to attend a meeting and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, their application will be deemed to have been withdrawn.

9. Approval process

- a. The line manager will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements, looking at the potential benefits and adverse effects to the employee and to the organisation in implementing the proposed changes.
- b. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working pattern.
- c. The request may be granted in full, in part or refused. The organisation may propose a modified version of the request, the request may be granted on a temporary basis, or the employee may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period.

10. Informing the employee of the outcome

Outcomes are as follows:

- 1. Approved
 - The employee will be sent a confirmation letter which will include details of the new arrangements including new working hours, the date the arrangement will start.
- 2. Approved with Trial Period
 - A trial period may be agreed to allow sufficient time for an employee and their manager to implement and become used to the new working practices before taking any decisions on the viability of a new arrangement.
 - The employee will be sent a confirmation letter which will include details of the new arrangements including new working hours, the date the arrangement will start, the length of the trial period and any review dates.
- 3. Approved with modifications

- Modifications to the new working practices may be proposed to better suit the needs of the organisation or the role.
- The employee will be sent a confirmation letter which will include details of the new arrangements including new working hours, the date the arrangement will start, and any trial period.

For all approved requests

- The request and outcome will be kept on the staff member's file and a contract variation letter will be issued.
- The employee should contact their line manager within 14 days if they wish to discuss the new arrangements further, or have any concerns.

4. Not approved

- The employee will be sent a confirmation letter which will give the reasons the request has not been approved.
- The request and outcome will be kept on the staff member's file.
- The employee should contact their line manager if they wish to discuss the reasons further, or wish to appeal the decision.

11. Appeals

- An employee who believes that their request has been unreasonably refused or only agreed in part has the right to appeal the decision.
- A written letter of appeal must be submitted to SLT within 7 calendar days of the letter confirming the refusal. In the case of a member of SLT the appeal should be made to the board of trustees.
- The letter should detail the reasons why the employee believes the original decision was not correct.
- The SLT will review the original decision and assess whether or not the decision reached was appropriate in all the circumstances. In making this decision SLT should meet with the employee and their line manager. The member of staff can be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union representative.
- The outcome of the review will be communicated in writing. The outcome of the SLT decision (or trustees in the case of an SLT request) is final.
- A final decision, including any appeal, will be made within a maximum of 2 months of receipt of the request.
- HFTF is strongly opposed to any form of discrimination or victimisation of individuals who request flexible working.
- If an employee feels that they have been treated unfairly or are dissatisfied with any stage of the process, they should refer to the Hope for the Future's

[Grievance Procedure](#)

Further information

Law relating to this document: Employment Rights Act 1996; Equality Act 2010; Flexible Working Regulations 2014.

Appendix

Linked/Other useful policies/procedures

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the:

- [Hybrid/Home Working Policy](#)
- [Carer's Leave Policy](#)
- [Annual Leave Policy](#)
- [Time off in Lieu TOIL Policy](#)
- [Shared Parental Leave Policy](#)
- [Paternity Leave Policy](#)
- [Maternity Leave and Pay Policy](#)
- [Grievance Procedure](#)

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or when any other significant change impacts upon the policy.