

Flexible Working

Policy and Procedure

King's recognises that flexible working can support you in managing your professional and personal lives.

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when you work. We recognise the mutual benefits that a better work-life balance can bring including improved motivation, performance, productivity, and in reducing stress. King's wants to support you to achieve a balance between work and other priorities, such as caring responsibilities and further learning.

Applications for flexible working are welcome from any King's employee regardless of length of service.

We are committed to agreeing to flexible working arrangements provided both the needs and objectives of the individual and university can be met.

This policy sets out the steps for making a flexible working request, the process of considering the application, how the outcome is communicated, and putting the changes into place.

Short-term Changes

If you would like to change your working pattern for a short period of time, up to a few months, talk to your manager in the first instance. The request may be accommodated without the need for a formal flexible working request.

Your manager should carefully consider the request and if it is not possible, make alternative suggestions. If agreed, your manager should confirm the changes via email, with the agreed start and end dates.

A short-term change should not require a change to your employment contract, however if the request is to change the number of working hours, this must be submitted through HR digital services, detailed instructions can be found on our [Managing Teams](#) intranet pages.

The university reserves the right to cease the flexible working arrangement and ask you to return to your previous working pattern, we will give adequate notice. This will be in exceptional circumstances and only when the arrangement is having an impact on the running of the university.

Permanent Changes

To make a permanent change to your working pattern you will need to submit a formal request. We suggest that you discuss potential flexible working arrangements with your manager, before submitting a formal

request. If your flexible working request is approved, there is no automatic right to revert to previous working arrangements.

Formal flexible working requests are welcome from all King's employees regardless of length of service. You will be able to make two flexible working requests in any 12-month period. You will be entitled to additional requests if they relate to a statutory entitlement, for example the right to request reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Formal requests should be submitted using the [flexible working application form](#).

Flexible Working Application and Procedure

Timeframe

Once submitted, your request will be dealt with within two months of receiving the formal request, or sooner. During that time:

- the request will be considered,
- consultation meetings arranged, if necessary,
- a response issued, and
- any appeal concluded, if applicable.

If for some reason the request cannot be dealt with within two months the time limit may be extended. We will always ask you to agree to any extension of the timeframe.

Decision-making

Your manager will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements carefully. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account,

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

Line managers requiring additional advice should contact the [HR Business Partnering Team](#).

Outcome

If your request is agreed in full, you will receive written confirmation of, the changes to your work pattern, any changes to pay and annual leave and confirmation of when these changes will take effect.

Managers will need to submit any requests to change the number of working hours, through HR digital services, detailed instructions can be found on our [Managing Teams](#) intranet pages.

If your manager is unable to accommodate your request, they will organise a meeting to discuss,

- the proposed working arrangements and the reason for the request,
- the reasons that it cannot be accommodated,
- if any amendments to the request can be agreed,
- if the request can be granted on a temporary basis, as a trial.

You will receive a written invite to this meeting and will be advised of your right to a companion (either a trade union representative, official or another King's employee).

Applications can be refused on one (or more) of the following grounds:

- the burden of additional costs,
- an inability to reorganise work among existing staff,
- an inability to recruit additional staff,
- a detrimental impact on quality,
- a detrimental impact on performance,
- a detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand,
- insufficient work for the periods the applicant proposes to work, or
- due to planned structural changes.

Following the meeting you will receive written confirmation of the decision and reasons for this. You will also be informed of your right to appeal.

Right to Appeal

If you wish to appeal against the outcome of your flexible working request, you must submit notice of the appeal in writing, including the grounds for the appeal, to the relevant [Director of People](#) within 10 working days of receipt of the written outcome.

Appeal Procedure

An appeal will be heard by a Panel appointed by the relevant [Director of People](#) or their designate.

The Appeal Panel will comprise up to three members who have not been previously involved in the particular case.

You will be given at least 10 working days' notice of the appeal meeting and will be advised of your right to a companion. The decision of the appeal panel will be final, with no further opportunity to appeal the decision.

If your companion is unavailable at the time scheduled, you should propose an alternative time. This should be within 5 working days of the day originally scheduled and should be chosen so that it is mutually convenient to those involved.

Things to Think About

Salary

If your request is to work part-time your income will change to a pro rata rate.

You will continue to receive the normal increment on your pay scale in accordance with your contract of employment.

Pension

If you are considering a reduction in hours, this will impact your pension contribution. Contact the [King's Pension Team](#) with any questions.

Holidays

If you are considering a reduction in hours, your annual leave and entitlement to bank and public holidays will be adjusted to reflect this.

Examples of Flexible Working

There is a wide range of flexible working arrangements in practice. Some common examples of flexible working are outlined below.

Part-time

This means working fewer than full-time hours. Part-time working could be achieved by:

- working fewer days in a week, or
- by working the usual number of days, but fewer hours on some (or all) of the days.

Hybrid/remote working

This means working some of the week on-campus and some of the week from home or another location, depending on the requirements of their role.

Most hybrid working arrangements can be accommodated informally through our [Hybrid and Remote Working Policy](#). If you would like a permanent, fixed change to your working pattern – for example because of childcare commitments at set times – then you should submit a formal flexible working request.

The following will need to be considered when a remote working request is made:

- Installation, maintenance, servicing, use and ownership of equipment,
- Security of university information and data protection,
- Recovering of university property on termination or during employment,
- Health and safety obligations, for example, relating to fire safety, first aid, working environment and workstation arrangements, including meeting the minimum standards for the work chair, desk space, computer screen and keyboard,
- Communication, meetings and supervision arrangements.

The university has a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees wherever they work. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the particular work-related risks are properly assessed and controlled.

Job sharing

Job sharing is a form of part-time working where two (or occasionally more) people share the responsibility for a job between them.

An example of this is working 2.5 days a week, whilst another person works the other 2.5 days. There is usually, a short overlap period to discuss the job and share work. For example, one person works Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning, the other person works Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday.

Flexible working hours

This enables staff to have flexibility with their start and finish time. Staff can apply to vary when to start and end work (within agreed limits) but must work certain 'core hours', for example from 10:00 to 16:00 every day.

Depending on role requirements this can be an informal arrangement managed locally.

Staggered hours

Working staggered hours allows staff to start and finish their days at different times to the norm. For example, staggered hours might be 10:00 to 18:00 or even 11:00 to 19:00.

Term-time working

Term-time working generally means working only during school terms. Term-time workers typically work 39 weeks a year, but the exact arrangement can vary.

A term-time employee's continuity of service remains unbroken during unpaid leave taken during school holidays by agreement with the university.

School holidays can be taken off using a combination of paid annual leave and unpaid leave. There would be no need to book the annual leave and payment will be adjusted to reflect this.

Annual leave is adjusted to reflect the term-time working and taken as normal during term-time.

The calculations for pro-rating pay and holiday for term-time workers can be complicated and proposed arrangements may need to be discussed with hr@kcl.ac.uk in addition to seeking line manager approval.

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