



Application for Flexible Working

Guidance for schools on considering requests for flexible working is included at the end of this application form

Name:			
Job title:			
Employment start date:			
Is this a statutory request?:			Yes/No
le, you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have 26 weeks' continuous service at the date of this application, and; • Are an employee, not a worker, and; • Have not made another application to work flexibly in the previous 12 months 			
Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/times worked) and any other arrangements relevant to your application (eg, home working):			
Describe the working pattern (days/hours/times worked) or other arrangements (eg, home working) you would like to work in the future:			
Describe any flexibility you may be able to offer around your request:			
<i>This may assist the school in accommodating a form of flexible working if your first preference cannot be accommodated. For example, "Whilst ideally I would like to reduce my hours to work 3 days per week, should this not be possible, I would be happy with a reduction in hours to anything between 2.5 and 4 days per week.</i>			

Ideally, what date would you like the changes to start from?:

Describe the impact you think the requested change would have on the school (for example, on pupils, learning and colleagues):

Describe how you think the above effects might be dealt with:

Please provide any other information that you feel may be relevant when considering your application for flexible working:

Please state if you are making your application in relation to the Equality Act 2010, for example as a reasonable adjustment for a disability, and provide further details:

I understand that if my request for flexible working is accepted by the school, it will represent a permanent change to my terms and conditions of employment, unless otherwise specifically agreed.

Signed:

Date of application:

Guidance for schools on considering requests for flexible working

What is flexible working?

Flexible working can take many forms. The most common requests are for:

- A reduction in hours, which might include a request to job-share
- A change in working pattern, ie, the days, hours or start and finish times normally worked
- Scope to work from home, occasionally or regularly.

Who can request flexible working?

From 30 June 2014, the statutory right to request flexible working applies to all employees that meet the following criteria:

- Have 26 weeks' continuous service at the date of application, and;
- Are an employee, not a worker, and;
- Have not made another application to work flexibly in the previous 12 months.

Although the criteria above sets out who has a statutory entitlement to request flexible working, schools are encouraged to give reasonable consideration to all requests regardless of whether they meet the criteria.

How should a request for flexible working be made and the decision communicated?

Any request for flexible working should be made in writing and include, as a minimum, the following:

- The date of the application, the change to working conditions sought and when the employee would like the change to come into effect
- What effect, if any, the employee thinks the requested change would have on the school and how, in their opinion, any such effect might be dealt with
- A statement that they are making a statutory request and if and why when they have made a previous application for flexible working.

To ensure employees provide the necessary information, schools may wish to ask employees to complete this Flexible Working Application Form.

How should a request for flexible working be considered?

Once a request for flexible working has been received in writing you should arrange to talk to the employee as soon as possible. If you intend to approve the request, there is no requirement to meet, although it may still be helpful to meet to discuss details around implementing the request and any expectations, for example, around the operation of job-share arrangements.

When you make arrangements to meet to discuss a flexible working request, you should advise the employee of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague. All requests for flexible working should be approached with an open mind, from both parties, with discussion focusing on ways of accommodating the request, if at all practicable. Through discussion with the employee it may be that a mutually agreeable arrangement is arrived at which varies from the original request. For example, where there is uncertainty over the possible impacts of a proposed change, it may be possible to agree a specific trial period.

You are not obliged to agree to a request for flexible working, but must consider it reasonably. ACAS has produced a Code of Practice on “Handling in a reasonable manner requests to work flexibly” and an ACAS guide, both of which are available on the ACAS website: <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1616> Your named HR Caseworker will also be happy to provide advice.

Whilst you may wish to discuss proposals with relevant members of the Governing Body (for example, members of the Personnel and Finance Committee where there is a need to review possible financial implications), as far as practicable, requests should be treated confidentially. You should be careful not to discuss the request with members of the Governing Body who may need to be part of any appeal hearing.

Once you have made your decision you must inform the employee of that decision as soon as possible. You should do this in writing to avoid any later confusion regarding what was decided. If you reject the request, in accordance with employment legislation, it must be for one of the following business reasons:

- The burden of additional costs
- An inability to re-organise work amongst existing staff
- An inability to recruit additional staff
- A detrimental impact on quality
- A detrimental impact on performance
- Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand
- Insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work
- A planned structural change to your business.

Your letter advising your decision should also explain any right of appeal and your named HR Caseworker will be happy to review draft correspondence.

Is there a right of appeal when a flexible working request is refused?

Where a request for flexible working has been refused ACAS advises employers to allow the employee to appeal the decision, as this may reveal new information or an omission in following a reasonable procedure when considering the applications. Any appeal would normally be heard by the school’s Appeals Committee and should be arranged without delay.

How quickly must a decision on a flexible working request be made?

All decisions should be made as soon as possible. The law requires that all requests, including any appeals, must be considered and decided on within a period of three months from first receipt, unless you agree to extend this period with the employee.

How do we consider multiple requests for flexible working?

Requests should be considered in the order they are received. For example, having considered and approved the first request, the school’s circumstances may have changed and this can be taken into account when considering the second request against the business reasons for which it may be acceptable to refuse a request for flexible working.