



## FLEXIBLE WORKING PROCEDURE

### DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

Date	Author	Version	Status	Reason for Change
May 2009	SEStran	1.0	FINAL	Policy Adopted
July 2016	SEStran	1.1	FINAL	Revised to include flexitime hours recording system
Oct 2017	SEStran	1.2	FINAL	Adoption of version control
Aug 2021	SEStran	1.3	FINAL	Reference to Home Working Policy added

## **INTRODUCTION**

SESTRAN recognises the importance of helping employees balance their work and home life by offering flexible working arrangements.

Legislation provides employees who meet the eligibility criteria set out below with the right to apply to work flexibly and for this application to be considered.

### **Scope**

This policy encompasses all SEStran employees.

### **Eligibility**

Under the terms of the legislation the employee has the right to apply to work flexibly if they meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 26 weeks continuous service with SEStran at the date the application is made.
- Not have made a request to work flexibly during the previous 12 months.

### **Flexible Working Options**

The following section covers the options available to employees in respect of Flexible Working arrangements.

#### Compressed Hours

Compressed hours are a working pattern that reallocates the normal hours of work and the work activity into fewer and longer blocks of time. A full-time employee on this arrangement will normally have their standard hours per week compressed into fewer than five full working patterns that suit service delivery needs. This can include term time working.

#### Part-time Working

Part-time working is where an employee works fewer hours per day, per week or per year, than those who work full time in the same job. Part-time working hours can be arranged into work patterns that suit service delivery needs. This can include term time working.

#### Job Share

This involves two employees carrying out the work of a full-time post that would normally be done by one employee. There is no set model for managing time, which may involve working a set number of hours each week or alternative weeks.

#### Annualised Hours

Annualised hours are where the contracted hours are worked over an entire year rather than per week. Hours of work may be varied, as agreed, in a way that reflects seasonal/operations variations in service delivery over the year.

## **Flexitime Scheme**

The operation of the Flexitime Scheme must observe the following basic principles:

- The level of service must not be reduced in any way through the operation of the flexible working hours.
- Continuous cover must be made during public opening hours and the Director or a Senior Manager will determine suitable staffing levels.
- Flexitime applies to the day to day operations of the service. Any other working arrangements, for example, overseas trips must be discussed with the relevant line manager.

It is recognised however that the options contained in the policy cannot be made available to all employees. The scope to undertake flexitime is subject to the requirements of services and exclusions. It is an over-riding principle that service provision must not suffer.

### Time Recording Arrangements

All employees are required to record their attendance by using the excel flexi sheet manual recording system.

Abuse of the flexitime scheme is regarded as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action.

Flexible Hours:                    7:00am – 7:00pm Monday – Friday

No core time hours

Employees must work a minimum of 4 hours per day. Employees who wish to work out with standard working hours require prior permission from their line manager.

### Lunch Period

There is a minimum lunch break of 30 minutes. Appropriate operation cover should be maintained during the lunch period.

### Accounting Period

The period over which employees must work their contracted hours, allowing for any carry forward, is 4 weeks.

Contracted Hours:                    148 hours per 4 week period

Contracted Weekly Hours:            37 hours

Employees working reduced or increased hours will be required to work four times their weekly contracted hours within each accounting period.

Credit Hours:                    maximum of 14.48 hours for full time employees can be carried over

Debit Hours:                    maximum of 7.4 hours for full time employees can be carried over

For employees working reduced or increased hours this will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

## Flexi Leave

Up to 2 days flexi leave may be authorised in any one accounting period. Flexi leave may only be used where the hours being carried forward into the next accounting period will not exceed the maximum debit limit. All flexi leave must have prior management approval. Employees should not work additional hours with the sole purpose of building up flexitime.

## Flexible Working - Employee's Responsibilities

While employees have the right to make an application to work flexibly, they also have the responsibility to:

- apply using the attached proforma well in advance of proposed date;
- ensure that they meet the eligibility criteria;
- indicate the work pattern they wish to adopt;
- highlight the impact on the employer;
- suggest how it can be accommodated;
- come to the meeting prepared to discuss their application in an open and constructive manner;
- be prepared to be flexible to reach an agreement with their manager.

## The Request Process

The process is bound by timescales which must be adhered to unless the manager agrees with the employee to different timescales. These are:

- within 28 days of receipt of the application, the manager should arrange a meeting with the employee to discuss their request. The employee has the right to be accompanied at this meeting. This can be a work colleague or TU representative;
- within 14 days of the meeting, the manager should provide a written response to the employee advising them of their decision;
- if the request is rejected, the employee has the right of appeal through the Grievance Procedure and their written grievance should be submitted to the Partnership Director within 14 days of receipt of the written response;
- a hearing is arranged within 10 days of receipt of the grievance;
- the employee is advised of the outcome of the appeal decision within 5 days of the hearing.

If the manager decides to agree to the request, they should discuss with the employee any arrangements that need to be made to facilitate the change and the expected timescales for this. Any change agreed will be a permanent change to the employee's terms and conditions unless agreed otherwise with them. Confirmation of the change should be given to the employee in the form of an amendment to their contract. Payroll also should be advised of the change.

## Reasons for Refusal

When considering any request on behalf of SESTRAN, the manager should be aware that should they decide to reject the request, the reason must fall under one or more of the following headings:

- burden of additional costs
- inability to meet customer demand
- inability to reorganise work with existing employees
- inability to recruit additional employees
- detrimental impact on quality
- detrimental impact on performance
- insufficiency of work when employee proposes to work
- planned structural changes.

Advice should be sought from SESTRAN's Human Resources Adviser where a manager is unsure if their reason falls within these headings.

### **Review of Procedures**

SESTRAN will undertake a review of this document annually. However, either the employer or trades unions may propose amendments at any time, by giving notice in writing to the Partnership Director.

This Policy has been equality impact assessed and no adverse impact has been identified.

### **Appendix 1 – Application for flexible working**

### **FURTHER GUIDANCE**

Further guidance can be found in the Home Working Policy

S:\HR\Staff\Policies\PDF docs

## Appendix 1

### APPLICATION FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING

#### Note to Employee

You can use this form to make an application for flexible working.

It will help your manager to consider your request if you provide as much information as possible. It is important that you complete all the questions as otherwise your application may not be valid. When completing sections 4 & 5, think about what effect your change in working arrangements will have on both the work you do and on your colleagues.

Your manager will have 28 days after the date of your application to initially respond to your request. If the request is granted, you will receive a separate letter outlining the specific arrangements that have been agreed.

#### 1. Personal details

Name:

Employee No:

Address:

Location:

Post Code:

#### 2a. Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/times worked):

**2b. Describe the working pattern you would like to work**

**2c. I would like this working pattern to commence from:**

**Date:**

**3. Reason for application**

**4. Impact of the new working pattern**

I think this change in my working pattern will affect my employer and colleagues as follows:

**5. Accommodating the new working pattern**

I think the effect on my employer and colleagues can be dealt with as follows:

## 6. Confirmation of eligibility

I would like to apply to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern under my right provided in law. I confirm I meet each of the eligibility criteria as noted below:

- I have responsibility for the upbringing of either a child under 16 years of age or disabled child under 18 years of age or I have long-term caring responsibilities;
- I am the mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent of the child, or am married to or am the partner of the child's mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent;
- I am making this request no later than two weeks before the child's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday or 18<sup>th</sup> birthday where disabled;

OR

- I have long-term caring responsibilities as outlined within the definition of a carer;
- I am making this request to help care for my child or dependant;
- I have 26 weeks continuous service with SESTRAN;
- I have not made a request to work flexibly in the past 12 months.

Signature:

Date:

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## Employer's Confirmation of Receipt:

Dear:

I confirm I have received your application to work flexibly on: Date

I shall be arranging a meeting with you to discuss your application within 28 days following this date.

From: