



WORKING ARRANGEMENTS and FLEXI TIME POLICY

1.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees employed by South Lakeland District Council (SLDC).

2.0 INTRODUCTION

We recognise the importance of helping our employees to balance their work and personal life/commitments by offering, where possible, non-prescribed working hours and flexible working arrangements. We understand that staffing levels must support the requirements of our customer and services.

The policy provides guidance on how non-prescribed working hours and flexible working arrangements enable service requirements to be met and details the process of accruing flexi time. The benefits of working within this policy include increased morale and motivation, reduction in absence and maintaining mutual trust and good relationships.

This policy follows best practice and aligns with our values. It is not intended to replace employees' statutory right to apply for flexible working (for example specific working days, compressed working hours or reduction in hours).

It is recognised that the full range of working options presented in this policy will not be appropriate for all roles across all of our service areas. Some service areas require prescribed working hours in order to meet customer and service needs.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership Team:

The Chief Executive, Directors, and Lead Specialist or Operational Leads (Leads) are committed to ensuring that all employees adhere to the policy and are responsible for:

- Ensuring effective and consistent application of this policy and supporting employees in its use
- Ensuring that services are staffed with an appropriate number of employees in line with customer and service needs

All Employees:

All employees are responsible for ensuring they follow this policy.

4.0 WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Trust and confidence underpins this policy along with a clear focus on the requirements of our customers and services.

Leads will work together with their teams to determine working arrangements that enables delivery of services. This provides the service and employees with the ability to manage the distribution of hours worked across their service area and meet, where possible, employee commitments.

Employees will be required to work their contractual hours each week with flexible start and finish times. However, there will be a need for prescribed times for some service areas.

With exception to those service areas with prescribed times, start and finish times are to be agreed with Leads and will be in line with customer and service requirements but with flexibility, and where possible, to accommodate employee commitments. Employees who have access to IT will be required to ensure that their start and finish times are recorded in the system.

Expectations of Corporate Management Team (CMT)

CMT are expected to balance service delivery requirements for each service area with the desires of Leads to work flexibly.

Expectations of Leads

Leads are expected to balance service delivery requirements with the desires of employees to work flexibly.

It is essential that adequate cover is maintained during specific times where there is a need for minimum staffing levels and/ or where service areas provide a front line service to members of the public, therefore, Leads may specify reasonable restrictions on working hours as appropriate in these service areas.

In some circumstances due to changes in operational demands, there may be occasions where agreed working arrangements may not be appropriate. Where this happens an agreed approach will be discussed and new working arrangements introduced for a specific time period.

Leads will be responsible for ensuring that contractual working hours are worked each week.

Expectations of Employees

Once working arrangements are agreed for the service area and/or per employee within that service area, employees have an obligation to adhere with these arrangements. Employees wishing to work outside or change these arrangements need to discuss this with their Lead. We are respectful that business need and employees circumstances do change.

Contractual hours must be met each week and employees must record their daily working hours on the system (start and finish times only). Employees are also to be mindful of the requirements of the current Working Time Directive.

5.0 MISUSE OF WORKING ARRANGEMENTS AND FLEXI TIME POLICY

In the event of a breach of trust and confidence Leads may impose prescribed working hours for employees and/or service areas or take some other form of action.

In the event of misuse of this policy, appropriate action may be taken in line with the Disciplinary Policy. This will be managed on a case by case basis.

Where an employee does not work their contractual hours each week (taking account of any flexi taken) it is the responsibility of the Lead or Director (in the cases of Leads), to discuss and agree the way forward.

6.0 SECURITY

Employees who work outside times when premises are not open to customers will be expected to be especially careful about the security of the premises. Any strangers should be challenged for their right to be in the building, and unusual occurrences should be reported to the employee's Lead as soon as possible.

7.0 SMOKE BREAKS

Employees leaving the building for smoking or other breaks must clock in and out during this time. Any misuse of smoke breaks will be managed appropriately.

8.0 BREAKS

Breaks are important for our wellbeing; it is the employee's responsibility to ensure they take a minimum 30 minute unpaid break each day. Employees must clock in and out during this time.

9.0 ABSENCE FOR PERSONAL APPOINTMENTS.

Employees may work flexibly to attend personal appointments which must be agreed in advance with the Lead responsible for that Service Area and by working collaboratively with your colleagues to ensure service requirements are met. If the Lead is unavailable or out of the business approval must be sought from the appropriate Director. Employees are reminded that their full contractual hours need to be worked each week therefore any time taken for appointments is to be made up or alternatively employees may wish to utilise their flexi.

10.0 TRAINING AND EXTERNAL MEETINGS

On days involving travel to and from training and external meetings, employees record their start and finish times as per normal. Working hours include travel to the venue and returning to home or work.

If your meeting involves an overnight stay, you must only record your working time hours. Time will not be accrued for time away from home.

11.0 COLLEGE/ STUDY

11.1 Full Day Study

Time involved in off-the-job study relevant to your role including examinations or study time, can be recorded up to a maximum of 7.24 hours per day including travel to the venue and returning to home or work.

11.2 Half Day Study

A morning or afternoon taken as off-the-job study relevant to your role including examinations or study time, can record up to a maximum of 3.42 hours including travel to the venue and returning to home or work.

13.0 WORKING FROM HOME

Employees working from home/those who hot desk and/or work at partner establishments will be required to follow the Home Working Policy. Working hours are to be agreed with the Lead or Director of that Service Area and worked in line with the Working Time Regulations. Start and finish times are to be recorded on the system as if you were working in one of SLDC's premises.

14.0 FORGOTTEN BOOKINGS

Employees who forget to record their start and finish times must discuss this with their Lead and input to the system following discussion and agreement of the number of hours worked.

15.0 FLEXI LEAVE

Employees who work under agreed flexible working arrangements will be able to accrue flexi.

Employees will be able to accrue up to a maximum of 13 working days flexi leave per annum. Only one full day's flexi leave or two half days flexi leave can be taken per 4 week period. All flexi is to be approved through the system.

In addition to the 13 days flexi leave employees will also be able to accumulate up to 5 full additional working days flexi leave to be taken during the year by banking them on the system. In these circumstances the hours must have been accrued in advance.

If a period of annual leave includes a flexi-day this must be identified in the system for approval.

These arrangements do not affect any employees who are entitled to overtime payments in accordance with National Joint Council, National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service should record this separately on the system or overtime forms available on the intranet.

Overtime is not a given right and is to be worked following the request of the organisation or following agreement, due to busy periods, with appropriate Leads or Directors for that service area.

16.0 END OF PERIOD RECONCILIATION – SETTLEMENT PERIOD

There are 13 four weekly periods throughout the course of the year (settlement period). At the end of the settlement period, employees will be able to carry forward a maximum positive time balance of + 20.00 hours and a maximum negative time balance of –10.00 hours.

Any employee with a balance of more than 20 hours accrued flexi will automatically default to the maximum permitted carry forward hours which is the 20 hours.

At the end of the year any accrued hours above the balance of 20 hours cannot be carried forward. This also includes any banked flexi unless in exceptional circumstances to be agreed with the Director. All banked flexi must be used by the end of the year.

Employees leaving the employment of the Council should have a zero balance of hours on the system. Any untaken accrued flexi hours will not be payable. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that on departure their flexi has been utilised.

Employees with a negative balance will have the appropriate monies deducted from their final salary.

17.0 EMPLOYEES EXCLUDED FROM THE SCHEME

The scheme will not apply to:

17.1 Employees employed on a seasonal basis.

17.2 Service areas whose customer needs are outside the parameters of the scheme. These service areas will be communicated to colleagues accordingly by their Lead.

18.0 REVIEW

Whilst this type of flexibility has significant benefits there are clear expectations surrounding the levels of productivity. Flexibility drives increased productivity, however, where it is abundantly clear that productivity levels are reduced a review will be undertaken and, depending on the outcome, addressed accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed automatically on a regular basis in the light of operating experience and/or changes in legislation.