

# Policy

## Flexi Time Scheme Policy

Revised June 2014

### 1.0 Introduction

These guidelines are for the electronic version of the Flexi time system used by all employees that work in South Lakeland House. The aim of the Flexi Time Scheme is to encourage a greater work life balance whilst maintaining adequate cover in departments. Mutual trust, confidence and respect between employee, manager and employer are held to be essential for the flexi time scheme to be of benefit to all.

Participation in the flexitime system is neither compulsory nor a right as employees may not wish to participate in the system and it may not be practical in certain work areas. This is to be determined by the Director or Manager but where employees are excluded from the scheme they are entitled to have the reasons explained in writing. However, all employees' that work in South Lakeland House whether on flexi or not will be required to carry an access card and clock in and out with **no** exceptions.

The Flexi Time Scheme gives employees the ability to manage the distribution of hours that are worked. Flexibility is allowed within the guidelines throughout the working day to allow employee's to determine arrival and departure times to accommodate other commitments as required. However work should be completed as necessary, therefore managers may specify reasonable restrictions as appropriate.

### Expectations of Managers

The aim of the flexi scheme is to provide Managers with the flexibility to manage their services and the working hours of their employees. Managers are expected to balance service delivery needs with the desires of employees to work flexibly and to be able to balance their work and home commitments.

Where there is a demonstrable need for minimum staffing levels and where departments provide a front line service to members of the public it is essential that adequate cover is maintained in these departments and that work is completed as required, therefore Managers may specify reasonable restrictions as appropriate.

Line managers must check periodically to ensure that the employees are using the system in line with the Flexi Time Scheme Policy.

### Expectations of Employees

Due to operational demands it may not be possible for all employee's to work within the Flexi Time Scheme and to understand that there may be times due to operational requirements, workloads and office cover when it may not be possible to take flexi time. Employees must therefore always seek approval from their line manager when wishing to leave work out with their regular working patterns and not clock in or out for other members of staff the flexi scheme is based on trust and employees are expected to record their hours honestly and accurately each day and must adhere to the Working Time Regulations.

## 2.0 Scope Of The Guidelines

These guidelines apply to all employees of South Lakeland District Council. Abuse of the Flexi Time Scheme including falsifying record sheets will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure and may also lead to the flexi time scheme being withdrawn from the employee.

## 3.0 Principles and Application of the Flexi Scheme

### 3.1 Principles

- **Working patterns:** - Employees must be aware that the flexitime scheme is designed to improve work/life balance and is not a mechanism of achieving additional days leave. Managers will have the right to challenge working patterns if productive and meaningful work is not being achieved. Equally the demands of the service must be paramount in deciding work patterns.
- **Flexi Cards:** - The Human Resources group will be responsible for card creation this will include system set up for new starters and deletion/ removal of operations for leavers from the system.
- **Technical Issues:** - Problems and technical issues with the system should be directed to the Information Technology group.
- **Modifications:** - to these instructions may be made from time to time to suit the operation of the system, or agreed modification to the system. All amendments will be consulted on with the Trade Unions prior to implementation.
- **Flexi Time Adjustments:** - Authorised requests for adjustments, time off or any absence from the workplace will be accessed by the employee's line manager via the Intranet link set up on the system.

### 3.2 Application

- **Flexi Leave:** - There is no presumption that flexi-leave will be granted and once flexi-leave has been agreed it will not usually be rescinded. All applications have to be approved in advance, however Managers will have the discretion to grant retrospective flexi-leave in emergency situations.
- **Abuse of the system:** - In the event of abuse of the system, a formal investigation will be undertaken. Disciplinary action may be taken against any officer who falsifies his/her record or abuses the flexi scheme and deliberate or sustained abuse of the system will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence, which may lead to dismissal. Disciplinary action will be in accordance with current procedures. The Human Resources Group will carry out audits of the system periodically.
- **Security:** - Employee's who start early or work later during flexible times will be expected to be especially careful about the security of buildings. Any strangers should be challenged for right to be in the building, and unusual occurrences should be reported to the Section Head as soon as possible.
- **Breaks:** - Employee's leaving the building for smoking or other breaks, must clock out.

### 4.0 Working Patterns

Start of Extreme Time	07.30
Start of Standard Day	08.45
Start of core time	10.00
Default time	09.00
Start of lunch	11.30

Default lunch break 1 hour  
Minimum lunch break 30 minutes

End of lunch	14.30
End of core time	15.00
Default time	15.00
End of Standard Day	17.00
End of Extreme Time	19.30

Daily target hours 07.24

Settlement period – 4 weeks

### 5.0 Core Time

Core time is the period during which all employees are required to be at work. Any booking in, out or business absence (if applicable), during those times will be recorded.

Staff wishing to leave at the end of core time must seek approval from their line manager, as any such request will need to address operational requirements, workloads and office cover.

### 6.0 Extreme Time

Extreme time is the hours within which the balance of the 37-hour week will be worked.

### 7.0 Part-Time Employees

Part-time employees will be eligible to join the flexi-time system, but it must be operated within their normal working pattern.

### 8.0 Lunchtime

A minimum lunch break of 30 minutes must be taken between 11.30 and 14.30. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure they take a 30 minute lunch in line with the Working Time Regulations.

If no break is recorded, one hour will be automatically deducted i.e. the default lunch break. If a break of less than 30 minutes is recorded, the system will automatically deduct 30 minutes. Employees booked out on business absence for periods containing part of lunchtime 11.30 to 14.30 and with no other lunchtime bookings 30 minutes will be automatically deducted.

### 9.0 Business Absence

This facility is only allocated to certain employees and all business absence bookings recorded on the system.

Start of Business Day 09.00

End of Business Day 16.30

#### Booking Out

If an employee books 'out' on business and does not return back to the office, the system will credit the employee to 16.30. Any adjustments to this should be recorded via the Intranet link to the flexi scheme.

Employees that book **out** on business absence and are not returning back to the office until the following day should **not** attempt to book back in on business absence on their return, they should book in normally or the system will consider them absent and credits a standard day.

#### Booking In

If an employee arrives late in the day because, for example, he/she has been on business absence straight from home in the morning, a business absence arrival booking can be made. This will give credit back to 9.00. Any adjustments to this should be recorded via the Intranet link to the flexi scheme.

#### Lunch

For periods containing part of lunchtime 11.30 to 14.30 30 minutes will be automatically deducted.

### 10.0 Absence for Medical/Dental/Opticians Appointments

Employee's are encouraged to arrange all medical appointments outside core time, if an appointment needs to be made within core time, permission should be sought from the appropriate Line Manager. Employees should always clock out for these appointments and they will be taken in the employee's own time.

In cases of appointments for eye tests under the Display Screen Equipment regulations, employee's should clock out but will be credited back with the appropriate hours by their line manager.

Paid time off will be granted for the purpose of a one-off urgent medical appointment: e.g cancer screening. Please see the Special Leave Policy for further details.

### 11.0 Training and External Meetings

On days involving travel to and from training and external meetings employees will be able to submit their actual hours including travel to the venue and returning to home or work which ever is the **shorter**, between the start and end of extreme time flexi bands, a minimum half hour lunch break must be recorded.

Where no travelling time is required the time involved in attending training courses or external meetings between the start and end of extreme time flexi bands of 7.30 and 19.30 should be calculated as working time and recorded on the flexi system accordingly. Employees can only submit up to a **maximum** of 7.24 hours for each day, a minimum half hour lunch break must be recorded.

### 12.0 College/Study

#### 12.1 Day Release

Time involved in attending educational establishments for the purpose of study including examinations, between the start and end of extreme time flexi bands of 7.30 and 19.30 should be calculated as working time and recorded on the flexi system accordingly. Employees can only submit up to a **maximum** of 7.24 hours including travel to the venue and returning to home or work which ever is the **shorter**, a minimum half hour lunch break must be recorded.

#### 12.2 Half Day Release

A morning or afternoon release of time to attend educational establishments for the purpose of study including examinations, between the start and end of extreme time flexi bands of 7.30 and 14.00 (morning) and between 14.00 to 19.30 (afternoon) should be calculated as working time and recorded on the flexi system accordingly. Employees can only submit up to a **maximum** of 3.42 hours including travel to the venue and returning to home or work which ever is the **shorter**. A minimum half hour lunch break must be recorded.

### 13.0 Working from Home

Employees working from home will record any adjustments. These times should be within the start and end of extreme time flexi bands of 7.30 and 19.30. A minimum half hour lunch break must be recorded.

### 14.0 Forgotten Bookings

Lunchtime if no break is recorded, one hour will be automatically deducted. Employees at the end of the day failing to key out will be booked out at the default time of 15.00.

Employees must submit the appropriate adjustments to their line manager. In the event of abuse of these default times, a formal investigation will be undertaken and if abuse is proven this may result in disciplinary action being taken.

### 15.0 Taking Flexi

Employee's will be allowed to take half a day or a full day in lieu of credits, to a maximum of 13 working days per leave year provided that this time off has been agreed in advance by your Line Manager. **Only** one day's flexi leave per settlement period is allowed (pro rata to part time staff).

Employee's will be allowed to accumulate up to 5 full working days to be taken later in the year, by banking them on the system, this is in addition to the 13 days. In these circumstances the hours must have been accrued in advance.

Holiday dates should be pre-booked into the system, if possible one week in advance. If a period of annual leave includes a flexi-day this must be identified when requesting flexi scheme adjustments.

The operation of flexible working hours will not, of itself, give rise to paid overtime working. Employee's 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 iTrent or overtime forms available in the intranet.

### 16.0 End of Period Reconciliation

At the end of the flexi-time four weekly accounting period, employees will be allowed to carry forward a maximum positive time balance of + 20.00 hours and a maximum negative time balance of -10.00. Any employee with excess credit will automatically default to the maximum permitted carry forward hours. Any employee who reaches the 10.00 hours deficit limit for more than 2 consecutive periods will be interviewed by their Line Manager in order to determine the reasons and provide assistance or guidance with a view to preventing the maximum being reached on a regular basis. The Human Resources Group will carry out audits of the system periodically on this matter and will inform line managers as applicable.

Employees leaving the employ of SLDC should have a zero balance of hours on the system any hours credit or debit are recorded on the leaver's paperwork by the line manager. Both the line manager and employee are responsible to ensure a zero balance. Employees in debit will have the appropriate monies deducted from their salaries.

### 17.0 Employees Excluded from the Scheme

The scheme will not apply to:

17.1 Employees that in the event of inappropriate use of the system may be excluded from the benefits of the flexi scheme and will be expected to work within the standard day of 8.45 to 17.00.

17.2 Employees employed on a seasonal basis.

17.3 Manual workers required working at times, which are outside the parameters of the scheme.

17.4 Any other officer who in the opinion of his Director or Manager, is required to adhere to special opening hours, or such hours as may be agreed. This category may include, information assistants, museum employees, lake employees, and certain employee's based at area offices or depots. Every effort will be made to ensure that as many employee's as possible are able to participate in the scheme.

### 18.0 Identity Cards

Lost/ misplaced cards must be reported to the Human Resources Group, who will cancel them and then issue, a new card. When **leaving** the employ of the Council, please ensure that you hand in your card upon departure and that your flexi balance is zero.

### 19.0 Review

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

