



Policy Number

24NS

Flexible Working Policy

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1. Ebor Academy Trust Diversity and Inclusion Statement:

We are one organisation working as one school, many sites and supporting each other to achieve our very best. We are dedicated to fostering an ethos where diversity and inclusion shape every aspect of the educational and professional journey for the adults and children within the Ebor team. As a family of schools, we recognise our responsibilities in educating our pupils, our staff and the communities we serve in celebrating differences and promoting equity, to ensure that every member of our Trust is valued for who they are. We aim to ensure that people feel a sense of belonging through overcoming challenges and celebrating successes together.

2. Process and Timeline:

This policy will be applied in the context of our values:

- Excellence
- Belonging
- Opportunity
- Respect.

2.1. Flexible working enables Ebor staff* to balance work with other commitments and responsibilities. This policy provides an inclusive and fair approach to support people to deliver their very best at work while meeting the full spectrum of life's demands and opportunities.

2.2. Our staff can submit up to 2 separate flexible working requests in a 12 month period.

2.3. Requests must be considered against the following business impacts:

- 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 employee proposes to work
- A planned structural change to the business.

2.4. Potential barriers to approval should be discussed with the applicant to seek a suitable and mutually acceptable outcome.

2.5. The process must conclude within 2 months of receiving a request (including appeal). The timeline from receipt of a request is:

- Meet with staff within 21 days to discuss the request and explore options
- Notify staff of the outcome within 14 days of the initial meeting
- Staff must appeal within 10 days of receiving the outcome
- The appeal must be heard (with staff notified) within 10 days of receipt

By written agreement these timelines may be extended in order to hold additional discussions, seek specialist advice, or to enable a trial period to take place to ensure the adjusted work pattern is suitable.

2.6. All documents relating to a flexible working request and any meetings held under this policy will be treated sensitively, confidentially and in line with the Trust's data protection principles.

*not applicable to agency staff, contractors or consultants

3. Requesting Flexible Working:

- 3.1. All requests should be made using the template form in appendix 1.
- 3.2. People request flexible working for many reasons however if the request relates to the Equality Act (2010) or any subsequent amendments or to a request for time off for training, this should be clearly stated on the form and ideally preceded by a discussion to provide context. Where applicable requests will be considered in line with other relevant HR processes which may affect the decision and basis of the outcome. Staff will be informed if their application falls under any other HR process.
- 3.3. Line managers may seek HR or other specialist advice in order to inform the decision making process
- 3.4. When making an application, people need to consider that it may impact on pay e.g. by reducing hours and that any changes are permanent once agreed and accepted.

4. Meeting to discuss a flexible working request

- 4.1. In some instances, a flexible working request can be approved without the need for a meeting. In this instance the line manager will notify the member of staff of the outcome.
- 4.2. Where a meeting is necessary, these will usually be conducted by the line manager, who may invite another colleague to attend perhaps to take notes or to provide advice or guidance. Employees have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative. Colleagues or trade union representatives will be entitled to speak and confer privately with the employee but may not answer questions on their behalf.
- 4.3. The aim of the meeting is to discuss the proposed working arrangements and explore options and alternatives (if necessary) in order to reach an effective outcome. The focus of the meeting should be on reaching approval through discussion.

5. Outcome of a flexible working request

- 5.1. After the meeting, the line manager will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements carefully by weighing up the potential benefits to the employee and to the school/team against any adverse impact of implementing the changes.
- 5.2. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Agreeing to one request does not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working pattern.
- 5.3. The employee will be informed in writing of the decision as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than 14 days after the meeting
- 5.4. The request may require further discussion in order to reach an effective outcome. In some cases the timelines may need to be extended in order to allow full consideration of the options.
- 5.5. The employee has the right to appeal the decision if their request is not agreed. Appeals should be submitted within 10 days of notification of the outcome.

- 5.6. Changes as a result of a flexible working application are permanent amendments to the employee's terms and conditions.

6. Flexible working requests that are granted

- 6.1. If the request is upheld in full or in part, the employee and the line manager will agree how and when the changes will take effect. By agreement, this may include trialling the proposal.
- 6.2. Any changes to terms and conditions, and the date on which they will commence, will be put in writing and sent to the employee as an amendment to their contract of employment as soon as is reasonably practicable. This is a permanent amendment and cannot be reversed.

7. Flexible working requests which cannot be accommodated

- 7.1. Flexible working requests should be discussed in an appreciative and constructive way in order to reach a position where they can be approved. However there are times where the request will be rejected following consideration under Section 2.3 of this document. In this case, the line manager will write to the employee clearly stating the applicable reason(s) for the refusal.
- 7.2. Following rejection the employee has the right of appeal which must be submitted to the line manager within 10 days of the date of the written outcome.

8. Non-attendance at a meeting and non-correspondence under this policy

- 8.1. If an employee fails to attend a meeting, including an appeal meeting, and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, their application/ appeal will be deemed to have been withdrawn. If the applicant does not correspond or fails to engage in the process without a valid reason, the request will become void and be considered to have been withdrawn.

Appendix 1 – Example Flexible Working Arrangements

The following examples of flexible working may help to navigate this policy and reach a suitable outcome:

- Part time working
- Compressed hours
- Hybrid working
- Dual location
- Working in multiple roles
- Job sharing

Appendix 2 – Other Policies to Consider

Flexible working may not be appropriate for the following circumstances (please seek HR advice):

- Requesting shared, maternity or parental leave
- Temporary adjustments as part of a return-to-work plan
- Reasonable adjustments following illness or disability
- Career Break
- Secondment or other career development

Appendix 3 – Flexible Working Request Form



[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST FORM](#)