



Windsor Academy Trust

Flexible Working Policy

Flexible Working Policy	
Responsible Committee:	People and Culture Committee
Date approved by the Committee	08 February 2024
Implementation Date:	1 April 2024
Next review date:	September 2024

Appendices

Appendices	
Appendix A	Flexible Working Request Form

1. Introduction

1.1 Windsor Academy Trust (WAT) is committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment and to develop work practices and policies that support work-life balance. WAT is committed to the development of flexible working practices that benefit the organisation and the individual and recognises that, in addition to helping balance work and personal lives, flexible working can raise staff morale and wellbeing, reduce absenteeism, support the attraction and recruitment of the workforce and improve our use and retention of staff.

1.2 This policy gives all employees an opportunity to formally request a change to their working pattern and applies to all employees of the Trust.

1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

1.4 Definitions:

- Chief Executive means the Chief Executive of WAT.
- Headteacher refers to all or any of the Headteachers or any of the academies within WAT or other senior manager delegated to deal with the matter by Headteacher.
- Leadership Team refers to any member of the Leadership Group as defined by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, or a senior member of staff with responsibility for support staff.
- Board of Directors/Directors means the Directors of WAT.
- Appeals Panel means: the Chief Executive, a member of the Executive and central Team, or panel of up to three Directors.
- Companion refers to a person chosen by the employee to accompany them, who shall be a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

1.5 You may withdraw your request or your appeal at any time before WAT reaches a decision. WAT may regard your application as withdrawn (and will notify you as such) where you have failed without good reason to attend a Consultation Meeting or an appeal meeting more than once, or you have refused without good reason to provide WAT with the information that is required to assess whether the request should be agreed.

2. Eligibility for the formal right to request procedure

2.1 All employees are entitled to request flexible working from their first day of employment.

2.2 Employees whose requests for flexible working are accepted under the formal procedure will have permanent changes made to their contracts of employment to reflect their new working arrangements

2.3 An employee is entitled to additional requests if they relate to a statutory entitlement e.g the Equality Act 2010 right to request reasonable adjustments, in which case this should be made clear on the application.

3. Type of request

3.1 By way of example (list not exhaustive), your request may relate to one or more of the following terms and conditions of employment:

- a) Your hours of work
- b) Your times of work
- c) Whether you carry out work from home or your normal place of work.

4. Making a formal request

4.1 A request should be made in writing by completing the Flexible Working Request Form (Appendix A) and passing it to the Headteacher/Manager. The Headteacher/Manager should then agree to the response in consultation with the Chief Executive. The Executive and Central Team must pass their request to their line manager.

4.2 Your request may be agreed without the need for a meeting (section 5 below). If that is the case the Headteacher (or line manager for the Executive and Central Team) will write to you (within 28 days), confirming the decision and explaining the permanent changes that will be made to your contract of employment.

5. Consultation Meeting

5.1 Where necessary, the Headteacher or nominated person (or line manager for the Executive and Central Team) will arrange to meet with you within 28 days of receiving your completed Flexible Working Request Form.

5.2 You have the right to be accompanied by a companion to the Consultation Meeting.

5.3 The meeting will be used to consider the working arrangements you have requested. If the arrangements you have requested cannot be accommodated, discussion at the meeting also provides an opportunity to explore possible alternative working arrangements. It may be suggested (with the employee or employer) that the proposed new working arrangements start under an initial trial period to ensure that they meet your needs and those of the Trust.

6. Decision

6.1 Following the Consultation Meeting, you will be notified of the decision within 14 days of the Consultation Meeting. Where we agree to your request, we will also confirm the variation agreed to and the date from which it is to take effect.

6.2 If more time is required to make a decision, agreement will be sought to delay the decision for up to a further 14 days. A request for an extension is likely to benefit you. For example, more time is needed to investigate how your request can be accommodated or to consult members of staff.

6.3 There will be circumstances where, due to educational, business and operational requirements, we are unable to agree to a request. In these circumstances, we will confirm in

writing the grounds for refusal, explaining why the grounds apply in the circumstances and your right to appeal.

6.4 The eight business reasons for which we may reject your request are:

- a) The request would, if agreed, impose a burden of additional costs on the Trust.
- b) The request would, if agreed, have a detrimental effect on the ability to meet parents'/carers or pupil's/students' demands.
- c) The Trust is unable to reorganise work among existing staff.
- d) The Trust is unable to recruit additional staff.
- e) The request would, if agreed, result in a detrimental impact on the level of quality at the Trust
- f) The request would, if agreed, result in a detrimental impact on the level of performance at the Trust.
- g) The work available to be done during the periods you propose to work under your request would be insufficient.
- h) Planned structural changes mean that WAT cannot agree to your request.

7. Appeal

7.1 If your request is rejected, you have the right to appeal.

7.2 Your appeal must be exercised in writing within 14 days of the date on which you received the written rejection of your request. You must set out your grounds on which you are appealing.

7.3 WAT will hold a meeting to discuss your appeal within 14 days of your notice of appeal being received. The appeal will be heard by the Appeal Panel.

7.4 You have the right to be accompanied by a companion to the Appeal meeting

7.5 The outcome of the meeting will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days of the appeal meeting.

7.6 Where WAT upholds your appeal, WAT will also specify the variation agreed to and the date from which it is to take effect.

7.7 Where your appeal is dismissed, WAT will also confirm the grounds for refusal and explain why the grounds apply in the circumstances. All employees are entitled to submit two flexible working requests in a 12 month period.

Appendix A

WINDSOR ACADEMY TRUST Flexible Working Request Form

Name

Role

I am making a request to work a flexible working pattern that is different to my current working pattern under my right provided in law.

This is my first / second (please delete) request to work flexibly under this right during the past 12 months

Date of first request (If second request within 12 months)

.....

Please confirm whether you are making this request as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to supporting a disability.

.....

.....

Describe your current working pattern (days / hours / times worked)

.....

.....

Describe the working pattern you would like to work in future (days / hours / times worked)

.....

.....

I request that the change would become effective from (date)

Signed Dated

Academy/Central Team

Notes

This form should be used by members of staff wishing to request a change to their working pattern under the WAT Flexible Working policy. The decision will be communicated to you within a two- month period.