



Business in the Community Flexible Working Policy

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Senior Responsible Officer	Head of HR

Overview

Business in the Community recognises the benefits of providing the widest possible range of appropriate flexible working patterns to employees. It enables the organisation to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce providing greater scope for work life balance and enhances productivity.

This document provides information on eligibility and the types of flexible working options available. It should be read in conjunction with the more detailed support document: *Flexible Working - Guidance for employees and Managers on Making and Handling Requests*, available on cascade.

This policy does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of the management

Eligibility

All employees with six months service are able to apply for a permanent change to their working arrangements. Although certain employees (for example those who have parental responsibility for children, or adult caring responsibilities) have a legal right to apply, the organisation recognises that flexibility is an important employment solution for many employees at different points in their lives.

Although there is no automatic right for employees to change to any flexible working patterns, BITC will work on the premise that many roles in the organisation lend themselves to some form of flexibility and full consideration will be given to each application in order to assess if the way of working proposed will allow operational requirements to be fulfilled. If the request is not suitable,

then managers and applicants will, where possible, try and work out a compromise. employees should normally make not more than one request a year.

Flexible Working Options

This policy considers the following options, but the organisation recognises that there may be alternatives, and that the working pattern that may suit any particular individual could be a unique one involving a combination of options such as:

- Working flexibly splitting time between home and an office base location
- Working from home permanently as a remote worker
- part-time working
- variation to days, hours or break time
- term-time working
- job-sharing

Please note however that BITC does not operate paid overtime, flexitime or offer compressed hours.

Working from Abroad

We are a UK based organisation. Our contracts of employment are UK based contracts and there are potentially legal, tax and pension considerations for both BITC and individuals if colleagues work from abroad that we would not be able to support.

With the additional uncertainty of Brexit also makes this a risk that we are unable to satisfactorily mitigate

If colleagues face exceptional circumstances which mean they need to spend extended time outside the UK, they should speak to their line manager and HR BP in the first instance so we can look at alternative arrangements (extended compassionate leave for example).

If the reason colleagues need to work from an alternative location are for reasons of their personal safety or wellbeing, please talk to your HR BP in confidence as soon as possible.

Types of Flexible Working

Working flexibly between home and an office location

In this scenario employees retain their office location but with the agreement of their manager work for part of the week from their home. Their permanent base remains the office location and colleagues must be able to commit to spending time in their office location. This will vary depending on the role requirements, but we believe that it is important that in normal circumstances a balance between office working and home working is maintained for collaboration. There may be specific circumstances where colleagues are asked to work from home for a longer period of time (e.g., pandemic, government restrictions) These remain interim arrangements.

Home Working

Home working is a system whereby the employee carries out all their duties from home rather than on the employer's premises. The majority of BITC employees will not be remote home workers but remain office based. Employees who are based permanently from home will have a remote worker contract

Any requests by an employee to move from an office-based contract to a remote home worker or vice versa must have line manager and HR approval

If a request is made for home working, the employee and their manager will undertake an assessment process before agreeing that the individual may work from home. The assessment will cover:

- Whether the employee has the skills and competences required for successful home-based working
- Whether the role is suitable or can be adapted for home working
- Whether the home environment is suitable (in terms of equipment available and Health and Safety issues)

Security while working from home

Colleagues must ensure that members of their family or third parties who are not employed by BITC are not allowed access to or use of BITC equipment or access our systems or data

Colleagues who work at home are responsible for keeping all documents and data associated with BITC's operations secure at all times. Paper documents should be kept to a minimum and specifically, the colleague must:

- Ensure that all paper documents containing either confidential, sensitive and or personal data pertaining to BITC, its members or beneficiaries and/or commercial data pertaining to BITC, its members or partners is kept in a locked drawer or locked cupboard.
- Colleagues who work from home are responsible for ensuring that when they leave BITC such paper documentation is transferred securely to their line manager (preferably in person to a BITC office location) or securely destroyed.

- Ensure that any personal IT equipment (including phones) used to access BITC systems have sufficient security including robust password protection. Please refer to the IT security policy for further guidance for remote working security

Part-Time

This could, for example, be 21 hours over 3 days a week, or working 5 mornings a week. For requests for a change from full-time to part-time employment the manager and the employee will discuss whether a new part-time job could be created.

Variation to Days, Hours or Break Times

Staff may wish to change the days of the week they work. However, employees are still required to work a set time each day and those working five or more hours a day will still be required to take a lunch break of one hour. Ad hoc arrangements can be made with managers as the need arises. Permanent changes will require a flexible working request.

Term Time Hours

Term time hours is a system whereby the employee works under a permanent contract but can take unpaid leave of absence during the school holidays. Salary is usually paid in twelve equal monthly instalments, although the employee could also be paid only for the time worked and could receive no pay during the holidays. At Business in the Community term time patterns are working 39 out of 52 weeks in the year. You will have 4 weeks of paid leave in addition to the 39 so your salary will be 43 weeks out of 52 over 12 equal payments. The paid leave is to be taken during school holidays.

Job-Share

Job sharing is an arrangement whereby two part-time employees share the responsibilities of one position. In a 'shared responsibility' arrangement the individuals both carry out all the duties of the job, for example working 2.5 days per week each. However, ideally an overlap in working days is recommended.

Procedures for flexible working requests

For any employee who wish to work flexibly between home and office this can be agreed locally between the line manager and employee and does not require any further approval

All other requests must be made by a formal request via a form which is available from your HRBP and submit it to your line manager. You must make this application as far in advance as possible of the date you wish the proposed change to start. Three months in advance is not unreasonable, particularly if the organisation needs to consider a job share arrangement.

You will need to give details of the arrangement you are proposing and what impact you think this will have on BITC and other colleagues. You will then need to set out how they think the effect on the business and on colleagues can be dealt with and you need to give your manager as much support as possible in finding solutions.

Your manager will discuss your proposals with HR.

Your proposals will be discussed in a meeting with your line manager, at which you have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or certified trade union representative.

The detailed guidance for dealing with a formal request can be found in the flexible working guidance for managers on cascade

Ad-Hoc or Temporary Changes to Working Patterns

Individuals may also benefit from flexibility on a more ad-hoc and short-term basis. All employees regardless of their length of service can request some flexibility on an adhoc basis. Individuals are asked to be reasonable in their requests and give consideration to the impact of their request on the business, their line manager and their team members. Reasonable advance notice (for example a week) should be given to enable the manager and employee to agree a suitable outcome.

Working beyond contractual Hours and Time off in Lieu

Managers may also, on occasion, require employees to work beyond their contractual hours. Reasonable effort will be made to give employees advance notice of the requirement and line managers will ensure time off is considered, provided the needs of the business allow it.

All time off in lieu must be approved by a line manager in advance. An individual cannot unilaterally decide that they are entitled to time off in lieu. Any days or half days granted as time off in lieu must be taken within three months of the days being awarded. They cannot be accumulated and added to an individual's annual leave allowance.

Further information

More detailed information is in the document *Flexible Working - Guidance for employees and managers on making and handling requests* and can be found on cascade.