

# **Flexible Working Policy**

## **1. What is Flexible Working?**

Flexible working is the term used to describe a change to an employee's current working arrangements to enable them to balance the needs of their jobs with the needs and responsibilities of their personal life. This may include changes to the number of hours an employee works, their start and finish times, normal working days or any other alterations that enable an employee to balance the needs of their work and home life.

To avoid confusion, a flexible working arrangement is considered to be in place when an employee has utilised this policy to request a change to their current working arrangements and this has been agreed formally in writing by the Company. A one-off change to working arrangements or informal agreements between team members and line managers are not considered flexible working arrangements within the scope of this policy. Any one-off changes need to be discussed and agreed with your line manager, and do not set a precedent for further requests or any application for flexible working arrangements.

## **2. The Statutory Right**

From 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014, every employee has the statutory right to ask to work flexibly after 26 weeks (6 months) employment with Pescado. You can only make a statutory request once in any 12 month period

You may wish to apply for flexible working to accommodate charity work, leisure activities, other caring arrangements or external study.

You can apply to vary the number of hours you work, the times you work or your place of work (between your home and the Company's place of business). Although the Company is committed to being flexible on working patterns for its employees, you must recognise that the requirements of the business are paramount and it may not be appropriate or possible for flexible working arrangements to apply to all jobs across all areas of the business.

## **3. The Flexible Working Application Procedure**

You should note that it may take up to 4 weeks to consider a request before it can be implemented and possibly longer where difficulties arise. You should therefore ensure that you submit your application to your line manager well in advance of the date you wish the request to take effect.

You should comply with the following procedure to make your application for flexible working arrangements:

- I. Make your request in writing to your line manager setting out the flexible working arrangement you seek. A Flexible Working Application Form is available on the Shared Drive. Your request must contain the following information:
  - a. The date of your application and when you wish the change to come into effect.
  - b. The change to your working conditions that you are seeking.
  - c. What effect the change you are requesting could have on your team or the business and how you think this could be dealt with.
  - d. Whether you have made any previous applications for flexible working, and if so, when this was made and what the outcome was.
- II. Within 28 days of receipt of your application, your line manager will set up a meeting with you to discuss the changes you have proposed, the effect of the proposed changes and any possible alternative work patterns that might suit.
- III. If the request is a straight forward one which the Company can easily accommodate, the

decision may be taken to not hold a meeting and instead simply confirm the changes to your working arrangements in writing.

- IV. Your line manager will consider your request and will make a practical business assessment on whether, and if so, how it could be accommodated.
- V. Your line manager will notify its decision to you within 14 days of the meeting. If the Company accepts your request, your line manager will write to you, establishing a start date and providing a written note of the contract of employment variation. If your application is refused, your line manager will write to you explaining the grounds for refusal in writing and confirm the internal appeal procedure.
- VI. Where your request is agreed to, it constitutes a permanent change to your terms and conditions of employment. This means you do not have the right to revert to your previous pattern of working at a future date.
- VII. You can appeal in writing against a refusal within 7 days of receipt of the Company's rejection letter. A director will discuss your appeal within 14 days after receiving your appeal letter. After that meeting has been held, the Company will write to you within 14 days to notify you of the outcome of your appeal.

#### **4. *Considering Your Request***

We will consider each request carefully and look at the benefits of the requested changes for the employee and our business and weigh these against any adverse business impact of implementing the request.

On occasions it may not be possible to grant an employee's request for flexible working. Where this is the case, we will advise the employee of this in writing, clearly setting out the reasons for the refusal. The Company is able to refuse an employee's request for flexible working on one or more of the following grounds:

- the burden of additional costs
- the detrimental effect it would have on the Company's ability to meet customer demand
- the Company's inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff
- the Company's inability to recruit additional staff
- the detrimental impact it would have on quality
- the detrimental impact it would have on performance
- the insufficiency of work available during the period when you propose to work
- the Company's planned structural changes.

In refusing an application, the Company will provide details relating to why the particular ground applies in the circumstances.

Please note that each request for flexible working will be dealt with individually, taking into account the likely effects the changes will have on the Company, the work of the department in which you are employed, your work colleagues and the particular circumstances of the case. This means that if the Company agrees to one employee's request, this does not set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted the same or a similar change to their work pattern.

In certain circumstances, it may not be possible to accept the original request for an employee, however, your line manager may be able to propose an alternative that they believe could suit both the employee and the Company. Where this is the case, you will be advised of this alternative in writing. You are under no obligation to accept this alternative and instead may choose to remain on your current working arrangements. Your right to appeal against the refusal of your original request will not be affected by the above.