

Guidelines for job sharing

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These guidelines relate to all University staff and to applicants for University vacancies and are intended to assist Heads of School, Directors and/or line managers who receive requests for job share or part-time working which they would prefer to consider in a job share context.
- 1.2. We are committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and aims, wherever possible, to create working arrangements that would facilitate job sharing. Each request for a job share will be considered objectively and sensitively; however, the Head of School/Director reserves the right to ensure that operational needs will not be adversely affected and agreement to a job being shared will not be withheld unreasonably.

2. What is a job share?

- 2.1. Job sharing is the sharing of the duties and responsibilities of one full-time post by two or more people with comparable skills and experience. Job sharing is different from part-time working where the job is distinct and separate for one person. Each job share partners should be capable of undertaking all the duties of the post. Each job share partner is also responsible for ensuring consistency and handover through an ongoing process of communication.
- 2.2. The University considers that all full-time and 0.8 posts are potentially amenable to job sharing; however, any request will be considered on its merits. The total maximum number of hours to be covered by a job share partnership shall be the normal full time equivalent to the job.
- 2.3. In most cases a 50/50 split of work would be appropriate and a split greater than 60/40 is not advisable for effective job share arrangements. Typical examples of a job-sharing pattern are:
 - Split day: one job sharer works the morning every day, the other the afternoons.
 - Split week: one job sharer works the first half of the week, the other the second half of the week.
 - Job share partners alternating: each working two days one week and three days the next.
- 2.4. Each job share partner will be issued with a separate contract of employment. This will be similar to that of a fractional post, as all terms and conditions, for example salary, entitlements to sick pay and annual leave, will be on a pro rata basis.

- 2.5. If one job sharer is absent on long-term sickness or maternity leave, the other may be offered the opportunity to work some or all of the remaining hours and duties for that period. If they are unable to do so a temporary job share partner may be sought to provide cover.
- 2.6. When new and replacement posts become available, the expectation is that the post will be open to job share. However, if a line manager considers that the duties of the post are not suitable for job share (examples of factors to consider are listed at the end of this appendix), they are advised to seek advice from HR and provide their rationale to their Head of School/Director.

3. Internal requests for a job share

- 3.1. A request for a job share should not be confused with a member of staff requesting flexible working or for a reduction in hours. The line manager may, however, in such instances discuss a job share with the Head of School/Director if they consider that the duties of the post are suitable. (examples of factors to consider are listed at the end of this appendix)
- 3.2. There may also be instances where two existing members of staff would like to be considered for job share. In the first instance these members of staff are advised to discuss their request and the circumstances around it with their line manager. During this discussion, consideration should be given to how the proposed working arrangements will affect students and colleagues as well as how it will affect the members of staff requesting a job share.
- 3.3. Following this discussion, the line manager is advised to discuss the matter with the Head/Director who will consider whether or not job sharing is operationally viable. They might wish to seek advice from Human Resources as appropriate.
- 3.4. Once the Head/Director has decided, the line manager is advised to meet with the members of staff to advise them of their decision and the reasons for this.

4. Job applicants applying for job share

Joint applications for job share

- 4.1. Where a joint application from two potential job sharers is received, each applicant is asked to complete an application form and submit both forms together indicating that they are applying for the vacancy on a job share basis. They are also advised to state whether they would be willing to share the post with another partner, in case the other applicant is unsuccessful.
- 4.2. The application for each individual will be treated separately from the shortlisting phase right up to the final selection. If the job share

applicants are both considered to be the most suitable applicants for the post, their appointment will be subject to a meeting with both job sharers and the Head/Director or line manager to discuss working arrangements. No formal job offer will be made until the practicalities of the shared duties are agreed.

- 4.3. If it is not possible to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement at this meeting, the manager is advised to seek advice from Human Resources. Alternative options for consideration in conjunction with Human Resources could include offering the post to one of the candidates, referring to the next best applicant, or re-advertising.

Individual applications for job share

- 4.4. When a request to job share is received, the applicant is asked to complete an application form stating that they wish to be considered for the post on a job share basis.
- 4.5. If the job share applicant is considered to be the most suitable applicant for the post and where a suitable job share partner can be identified from other applicants for the post, two offers of employment will be made, on a job share basis, subject to a meeting (see 4.2 above).
- 4.6. Where a suitable job share partner cannot be identified from other applicants for the post, the offer of appointment will be subject to a meeting being held with the job sharer and the Head/Director or line manager to discuss working arrangements in respect of the job share and the steps to be taken to fill the remaining part of the job share.

5. When a job sharer leaves

- 5.1. If one job share partner leaves, the line manager is advised to consider the possible options in consultation with the remaining job share partner. Each case will be reviewed individually in consultation with HR, and possible options include:
 - Offer the full-time post to the job share partner.
 - Advertise the job share vacancy.
 - Convert the post to two part-time posts.
 - Redeploy the remaining job share partner to another job share, part time or full-time post.
- 5.2. Pending a new appointment, the line manager is advised to consider, in consultation with the remaining job sharer, any alternative arrangements needed to ensure adequate cover of duties and responsibilities of the post. The remaining job sharer might agree to undertake all or some of the additional duties.

- 5.3. If the other job-sharer does not wish to become full-time and if a job share partner cannot be recruited, the manager/Head/Director is advised to consider of all the possible options in consultation with HR. In some cases it may be necessary to terminate the remaining job share partner's employment if an alternative solution cannot be determined.

Guidance for considering the suitability of a post for a job share

When considering whether a post is suitable for job share, without prejudice to the overriding needs of the University and students, managers are advised to consider the following factors:

- Is it operationally viable for the duties of the post to be undertaken by more than one member of staff? If not, why not?
- How might responsibilities be allocated? Options might include sharing the responsibility for the job between the partners so that there is no division of duties and the job-share partners are interchangeable; or dividing the responsibilities between the job share partners.
- How might tasks such as report writing, attendance at open days, staff meetings etc. be managed?
- Will the position require them to liaise closely, if so will a period of overlap be necessary? Are there any cost implications?
- Are there any limitations in accommodation and equipment? Where will the job sharers be located?
- What if any will be the impact on the other work functions of the School/Department?
- What is the position if one sharer leaves? Are the remaining hours a sufficiently viable package to attract new applicants?
- If the post is considered as unsuitable for job share, having looked objectively at the possibilities, are there any alternative solutions, which might be offered e.g. part time post.

These factors are not exclusive or exhaustive, but are some examples of the recommended considerations to be given before approving or rejecting job share requests. In all cases an objective view must be taken and the decision reached must be justifiable and sustainable. The manager is advised to document the reasons for their decisions.