



Flexi-time Policy



Introduction & Purpose

The main purpose of flexi-time is to provide a more flexible system of attendance for staff, within certain defined limits.

Flexi-time will be operated on the understanding that the efficiency and effectiveness of the University's operations are maintained at all times.

Flexi-time is not a staff entitlement as it is subject to the operating requirements and approval of the Head/Director of School/Unit. If the work of any section is negatively impacted, steps shall be taken to restore normal effectiveness of operations i.e. if the section is unable to restore normal effectiveness, flexi-time can be cancelled for a particular individual or unit. Operation of flexi-time in any given unit/area will normally be reviewed annually as to its effectiveness and impact on operations. The review will determine whether flexi will continue for the following year and/or whether any changes need to be applied. The review will take into account, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- Effect on provision of service, operational principles and ongoing operational needs.
- Current and future leave requirements.
- Current and projected employee numbers within the unit.
- Remote working arrangements.
- Any individual or group abuses within the unit.

The Human Resources Core Time system supports the implementation and maintenance of flexi-time in conjunction with a School/Unit's Flexi-Time Approvers.

Scope

This policy applies to all categories of professional grades up to and including the grades of Professional 5A (P5A) or equivalent. The policy, therefore, does not apply to the following:

- Administrative staff at the level of Professional 6 grade or higher;
- Academic staff by virtue of the fact that they have other flexibilities available to them;
- An employee who is already availing of a Reduced Hours Work Arrangement and/or Parental Leave during the period of the arrangement;



- New employees within the first six months service who have not completed the first and second probation meetings.
- Employees who are in either formal or informal performance management processes may be excluded from flexi until such time it is deemed their performance has improved sufficiently.

The availability of flexi-time is determined by the business needs of a particular unit. Therefore, flexi-time is not available in all University units. Should an employee be appointed to or transfer to a unit which does not operate flexi-time he/she will not have access to the scheme.

The appropriateness of flexi-time for particular individuals and categories of staff is normally a matter for agreement between the Head/Director of School/Unit and the individual. Line management can reserve the right to exclude certain staff from using flexi-time for operational or other reasons e.g. management level/staff with high travel commitments.

Policy Statement

The introduction and application of flexi-time is based on the co-operation from all staff in a section/unit, and the co-ordination of working arrangements to ensure appropriate cover is in place. Flexi-time will be the lowest level priority in terms of leave, i.e. annual leave and any other leave arrangements will take precedence. Sufficient staff must be available outside of core time to provide normal operational cover.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Employee

Provision of adequate cover is essential to the successful operation of flexi-time. There is an onus on staff members, in addition to line managers, to ensure that cover in a department / section is maintained.

Employees will be responsible for co-ordinating their working hours with other staff in their section and as necessary with support staff who do not operate Flexi-time/other sections if appropriate.

Employees must record their hours by clocking in via Employee Self Service (ESS).



Clocking in and out will be required for lunch times even if staff are not leaving the office. Employees must submit a “Missed Clocking Request” to their Line Manager/Flexi-time Approver, within the 7-day settlement period, for any adjustments to their time.

Employees must ensure that their clock has been correctly updated each week.

Role of the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager

The role of the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager is to actively manage Flexi-time ensuring that adequate staffing is in place to meet the service levels of the work area. This involves daily monitoring of hours worked, approving flexi-Leave for his/her area and ensuring that there is equitable distribution of flexi-time taken.

Operation of flexi-time in any given unit/area will normally be reviewed annually by the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager as to its effectiveness and impact on operations.

As attendance outside of the standard working hours is **dependent on work being available**, it might not be possible for the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager to allow individual(s) maximum flexibility on a particular day or in a particular section.

It may be necessary for the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager to ensure that adequate controls are in place to monitor the quality and quantity of work done outside of core time when supervisory or management staff may not be personally present. Such arrangements would vary according to the nature of the work and the grade at which it is performed.

The Head of School/Unit/Line Manager will confirm to the Core-Time Administrator any new employees who wish to avail of flexi following the completion of the first six months service and the successful completion of first and second probation meetings.

Role of the Flexi-Time Approver/Supervisor

The Flexi-Time Approver/Supervisor will be required to make manual adjustments and reconcile time balances on a weekly basis. Adjustments must be carried out within the settlement period of 4 weeks.

The Flexi-Time Approver/Supervisor will not be able to make such adjustments on behalf of the School/Unit after a settlement period ends.



The Flexi-Time Approver/Supervisor must keep themselves informed of updates to the CoreTime system and the operation of flexi-time. This requires them to attend available training sessions as necessary.

Role of the HR Core-Time Administrator

The HR Core-Time Administrator will be responsible for set-up on the Core-Time system to enable local management of flexi-time. Typical activities involve; Workgroups set ups / move staff into workgroups as requested by their manager / Setup Core Supervisors / Escalate technical issues to ISS/Core if required.

Definitions

Standard Day: Consists of, on average, 7 hours of work between the hours of 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.

To illustrate the operation of flexi-time the policy refers to the standard working day for professional staff of 7 hours (35-hour week).

Standard Week: A standard week is Monday to Friday.

Standard Time*: **Monday to Friday** normal working hours:
9.00 a.m. to 13.00 p.m. & 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.,
Note - the average working day for Flex users is 7hrs per day.

Bandwidth: The extended working time within which flexi-time operates
i.e. 8.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.

Flexible Time/Hours: Those hours outside of core hours at the beginning and end of the day and often at lunchtime, when arrival and departure times are flexible



Core Time/Hours: Core Time / Hours are the primary part of the working day when presence at work is mandatory.

Core Leave Time: This refers to all absence during core time/hours, which must be approved in advance by the appropriate manager.

Settlement Period: This is the period of four weeks during which an employee is normally required to work 140 hours and during which credits and debits should be adjusted.

Flex Credit: Is an allowable amount of time over the standard working period 7hrs which the employee has worked in one day, e.g. if an employee has worked 7 hours and 30 minutes in the one day, s/he has a flex credit (+) of 30 minutes for the day.

Flex Debit: Is the allowable amount of time below the standard hours that an employee is required to work, e.g. if an employee has worked 6 hours in the one day, s/he has a flex debit (-) of 1 hr for the day.

Carryover: The maximum carryover of either (+) or (-) from one settlement period to the next is 8 hours. Where an employee's flexible hours are in excess of (+) 8 hours at the end of the settlement period, there is no entitlement to increase the carryover amount beyond the maximum allowed or to receive salary payment for the excess hours worked. The excess time over 8 hours will be forfeited.

Where the carryover hours are in deficit (-) at the end of the settlement period and are greater than the maximum allowed

7hrs, then the excess must be worked back in the next settlement period. If the excess debit is 7hrs or greater for more than two settlement periods in a row, then the excess over 7hrs will be removed by way of a deduction from annual leave entitlement.

Time Off – Flexi-Leave: May be taken as 1 day or 2 half-days in a settlement period

Full Flexi Day: 7hrs

Half Flexi-day: 3hrs 30minutes

Rules of Flexitime

1.	A minimum of two nominated Approvers/Supervisors will be required from each School/Unit wishing to operate Flexitime.
2.	Sufficient cover in all areas* at all times is required during University hours of 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Monday – Friday *This includes cover of Public desks during 9.00 a.m. to 5pm.
3.	The extended working time - the “Bandwidth” - is 8.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. This is divided into two parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Core Time: 10.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. and 14.30 p.m. - 16.00 p.m. ● Flexible Hours: 08.00 a.m. - 09.59 a.m.; <li style="padding-left: 20px;">12.31 p.m. - 14.29 p.m.; <li style="padding-left: 20px;">16.01 p.m. - 19.00p.m.
4.	During the flexible band of 12.31 p.m. to 14.29 p.m., there must be a minimum lunch break of no less than 30 minutes.

	<p>If no lunch break is noted on the system, the system will automatically deduct two hours.</p> <p><i>Please note that in accordance with The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 an employee may not work more than 6 consecutive hours without receiving at least a 30-minute meal break. No employee can waive his or her rights as provided by the 1997 Act.</i></p>
5.	<p>Each day of Authorised Absence (including flexi-leave) will be recorded, on average, as 7 hours for a 35-hour week (or as appropriate for other grades).</p> <p>A half-day will be recorded as 3 hours and 30 minutes.</p>
6.	<p>Staff must be present during Core Time unless they are on an authorised absence. Failure to arrive on time at the beginning of “core time” or any unauthorised absence during “core time” is considered an “infringement”.</p>
7.	<p>Staff should endeavour to work the standard working hours (140 hours professional staff) in each four-week settlement period. However, a debit or credit variation of up to a maximum of +8 hours or -7.00 hours will be allowed to be carried forward to the next period.</p>
8.	<p>For credit carryover, balances in excess of the maximum of 8 hours, will be forfeited.</p>
9.	<p>In any settlement period a maximum of 1-day flexi leave is permitted. The following conditions apply to staff taking a half-day’s leave in lieu of credit hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning leave – must arrive before 2.30 p.m. • Afternoon leave – may depart after 12.30 p.m.
10.	<p>Staff who are resigning or whose fixed term contract is ending must ensure that they reduce their balance of additional hours worked to zero in the settlement period preceding their departure from the University.</p> <p>No payment will be made in respect of hours accrued through flexi-time at the end of an individual's contract of employment.</p>

	<p>Staff must also ensure that their final flexi balance is not negative. Any hours owed at the end of contract will be deducted from final salary.</p>
11.	<p>A staff member is responsible for recording their arrival and departure times on the CoreFlexi system using the allocated laptop or PC.</p> <p>A staff member may not clock in remotely or ask another individual on their behalf.</p>
12.	<p>Attendance outside of the standard working hours is dependent on work being available and in certain situations it might not be possible for the Head of School/Unit/Line Manager to allow individual(s) maximum flexibility on a particular day or in a particular section.</p>
13.	<p>The normal procedures for the working of overtime apply. Overtime must be pre-authorized by the appropriate manager and is recorded outside the Flexi-time System.</p> <p>Where overtime is authorised, any hours worked after the standard finishing time will be regarded as overtime. This may be subject to the individual being in credit and having already worked the standard working day.</p> <p>It is not permissible for any staff member to claim flexi time and overtime for the same period.</p>
14.	<p>Public Holidays: An employee is regarded as having worked their standard day for each declared public holiday.</p>
15.	<p>Personal Appointments: the system of debit and credit hours provides staff with the flexibility to arrange personal appointments at a time outside core hours.</p> <p>Examples of such appointments are routine visits to the dentist, doctor, child's school or professional advisor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should a member of staff need to be absent during their core period, e.g. a hospital visit to see a consultant, permission to be absent during core hours will be granted subject to a certificate being provided. • An appointment that is taken inside core hours must be recorded as a deficit in order that the time is made up.

16.	Antenatal appointments: may be taken in core time, and employees are not expected to work additional hours to make the time up. However, where possible and to avoid disruption, employees should try to arrange appointments for either the beginning or end of their working day.
17.	The University reserves the right to withdraw flexi-time if it is found to be detrimental to its operations.
18.	Flexi & Remote Working: As outlined in the remote working pilot, employees enjoying the benefit of a remote working arrangement may be entitled to accrue or use flexi leave during the period of the arrangement. Should an employee work a full day remotely it will be recorded as 7 hours in all instances for professional grades and 7 hours 15 minutes for technical grades. Please note that there will be no facility for swapping your remote working day on flexi. Employees availing of both flexi leave and remote working should <u>not</u> clock in/out on a remote working day. Flexi is not accrued on a remote working day.
19.	Priority of Flexi Leave: Bearing in mind the above principles of operation all other leave and remote working arrangements will be given a higher priority than flexi leave. In terms of practical application, a Line Manager will take into account the number of employees in the office on any given day before deciding whether it is possible to grant flexi leave. If the required attendance threshold for the office is not in place (including remote working arrangements) on a particular day, flexi leave may not be granted.
20.	Flexi Work Patterns: Flexi should not be used as a shift pattern i.e. 8am to 4pm or 10am – 6pm. Patterns of consistently clocking in at 8am or clocking out after 6pm with no valid reason to start early/stay late will also be prohibited ie. consistent shift pattern outside of the contractual hours of work e.g. 8am-4pm
21	Business Hours: The key priority for all Head of Units will be to ensure that the business hours of 9am to 5pm are sufficiently covered by staff within the respective unit. The review of all flexi-time applications will be cognisant of this principle.



Core Time Infringements

Non-compliance with the rules governing the operation flexi-time (known as “infringements”) will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

A member of staff who incurs five or more infringements within a calendar year may be subject to disciplinary action.

Sanctions

Established abuses of the system will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with procedures. Examples of such abuses include but are not limited to:

- persistent omission to clock in or out at any time during the working day;
- clocking in after the commencement of core times;
- clocking out before the end of core time;
- clocking in while not working;
- exceeding the permitted debit hours in three consecutive months; &
- clocking in remotely or getting a colleague to clock in on your behalf.

Serious abuse of the scheme, e.g. one person clocking in or out for another, will be regarded as gross misconduct and can lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of those involved.

Disciplinary proceedings in relation to the above will only be taken in cases of specific abuse and not in cases where it is proven that genuine errors occurred.

Contacts

All queries relating to the operation of this policy should be directed to a HR Business Partner <https://www.dcu.ie/hr/people/index.shtml>

Policy Review

The Flexi-time Policy is due to be reviewed in 2023.



Version Control

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End.