

# UWE policy on job sharing

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### **1    Introduction**

**1.1** The University is committed to developing policies and procedures that support equality of opportunity in employment. This policy is designed to offer a flexible approach to the recruitment and retention of staff.

### **2    Aims and objectives**

**2.1** The University operates an equal opportunities policy in the recruitment, selection and promotion of staff at all levels. As part of this commitment, the University will actively support job sharing for all jobs where it is reasonable and practical to do so and where operational needs will not be adversely affected. Job sharing represents an opportunity for staff to work flexible hours, while maintaining their career opportunities and development, in order to balance work and personal life. For the University, job sharing can help to widen the recruitment pool and retain the valuable skills of existing employees.

### **3    Definition of job sharing**

**3.1** Job sharing is when two people are employed to share the duties and responsibilities of a post, and where the salary and leave entitlement are divided between the job sharers in proportion to the hours they work. The job share partners will normally share the same post number. Each job share partner receives a separate contract of employment, is subject to the provisions of current employment

legislation, and is managed on a separate basis. However, the success of the job share depends on the co-operation and communication between the job share partners, and they jointly own the responsibility for delivering the whole job.

## **4 Job sharing arrangements**

**4.1** Guidance on job sharing arrangements should be sought from the HR Team when a post becomes vacant, or when a request to job share is received from an existing full-time employee. Agreement to a job being shared should not be unreasonably withheld and, when new and replacement posts become available, the expectation will be that the post will be open to job sharing and all posts will be advertised on this basis. However, if a manager feels that the duties of the post are not suitable for a job sharing, s/he should discuss this with the HR Recruitment Team initially.

**4.2** Considerations may include:

**4.2.1** The nature and extent of any managerial or supervisory responsibilities. Such responsibilities do not automatically preclude a role from being delivered through a job share and it is important to consider how the staff management aspects of the role could be successfully operated. A job share manager post responsible for a job share subordinate post would have particular challenges.

**4.2.2** The pre-existence of other job share or part-time posts within the section. It is not possible to be prescriptive on this. However, there will be a point beyond which it ceases to be operationally viable to offer any further job share or part-time arrangements within a section.

**4.2.3** The nature of the role, its duties and responsibilities  
For a job share to operate successfully it must be possible either for tasks to transfer effectively between the job share partners or, where this is not possible for certain of the tasks, for them to be assigned primarily to one partner without the timescale for completion being affected. Operating a job share arrangement successfully will be adversely affected by the following features occurring in combination: (1) greater number of on-going issues to be passed between partners (2) greater need for full contextual understanding in order to engage effectively with issues (3) greater need for continuity of service delivery (4) shorter timescales for delivering the service response.

**4.2.4** The availability of line management support  
There will be times when line management will need to provide support to the job share arrangement to ensure that it is operating effectively on a day to day basis, for example to provide additional briefing or to resolve issues affecting the continuity of service. The physical location of line management in relation to the role and the availability of line management time to the job share partnership are important factors.

#### **4.2.5 The effectiveness of handover arrangements**

Effective handover arrangements are critical to the successful operation of a job share partnership. There needs to be a sufficient period of overlapping time for work to be passed over effectively and this will either result in the role not being operated for the full 37 hours per week, or the need for the weekly hours of the job sharers to be increased to compensate.

#### **4.2.6 The need for briefing and communication**

Depending on the nature of the role, it may be necessary for both job share partners to attend briefings/meetings or it may be effective for one partner to attend and then brief the other. The greater the need for both partners to be present at particular business events and the more regularly such events occur then the greater the amount of working time lost to the position as a result of the job share arrangement - this may affect its viability.

#### **4.2.7 The skills and experience of the job share partners**

A job share is a partnership and requires each partner to contribute effectively and equally to its successful operation. The skills and attributes need to be equally balanced to ensure each is able to deliver all aspects of the role in the same way and with the same level of skill. Where there is a differential over more than an initial induction period then the tasks will naturally become split between the partners rather than shared and the post will not operate as an effective job share.

#### **4.2.8 The commitment of the job share partners**

Regardless of the effectiveness of handover arrangements, there will be times when one partner will need to be in contact with the other through the week to ensure any shortfall in contextual understanding does not affect service delivery. The availability of each partner to the other during non-working time is a critical success factor and requires a greater commitment to the role than would be the case for any other part-time arrangement. Whilst there can be no requirement for partners to cover for each other's annual leave or sickness, it would not be unreasonable to ask whether urgent work or a critical event could be covered.

**4.3** The way in which the actual hours of a job share post are divided between the postholders should be decided by the line manager in consultation with the job share partners, taking into account the following:

**4.3.1** the needs of the faculty, service, department and/or section;

**4.3.2** any limitations on accommodation, equipment etc;

**4.3.3** the need to build in a handover period or liaison time (the total hours worked by the job share partners should not exceed the normal full-time hours of the post);

**4.3.4** communication between the job share partners, between them and their

manager, between the job share partners and their colleagues, and between the job share partners and their students/customers/key contacts etc;

**4.3.5** the need to ensure consistency of approach.

**4.4** The overall duties and responsibilities of the post should be shared between the job share partners in liaison with the line manager.

**4.5** Advice and guidance on any of these practical arrangements is available from the HR Team.

## **5 Recruitment and selection**

**5.1** When recruiting for a post the normal approach of appointing the person (or job share partners) whose skills profile is best match to the person specification should be adhered to.

**5.2** When an application is received from a person wanting to job share, it must be assessed in the same way as applications from other candidates. The candidate should be shortlisted, interviewed and tested in order to be assessed against the person specification for the post. If this candidate is appointed, the other half of the post will then be advertised.

**5.3** Similarly, if a joint application is received from two people wanting to job share together, each applicant must be assessed against the person specification for the post. The normal practice will be to shortlist, interview and test each job share partner separately in order to assess each one against the person specification for the post. In addition, it may also be appropriate to meet the job share candidates together in order to discuss their joint application (eg their preferred practical arrangements). Any offer of employment to two people wishing to job share will be conditional on them agreeing the practical arrangements with their line manager, for example exact working pattern and job split.

## **6 Current full-time employees**

**6.1** All staff can request to work in a job share, and there may be occasions when a current employee who is employed on a full-time basis wishes to reduce his/her hours of work by sharing his/her post. Examples of possible circumstances are: employees returning from maternity, paternity or adoptive leave; employees caring for older relatives or disabled family members; disabled employees who may now wish to work on a part-time basis; or employees who may wish to spend more time on outside interests.

**6.2** Employees raise their request to make such applications to convert a post to a job share informally with their line manager, either in a 1:1 meeting or by e-mail. These requests should be carefully considered by the line manager and fully

explored with the member of staff concerned. If the line manager believes that the post is not suitable for job sharing, s/he should consult the HR Team in the first instance. The line manager must keep the employee informed of progress, and notify him/her of the decision within a reasonable timescale.

## **7 Advice on the implementation of job sharing arrangements**

**7.1** Hours of work - the way in which the hours are divided between the job share partners will be at the discretion of the line manager, in liaison with the job holders, to ensure that operational needs are met. However, examples of how the working week can be divided are as follows:

**7.1.1** half or split days, i.e. one partner working in the morning and the other partner working in the afternoon;

**7.1.2** half or split weeks i.e. one partner working the first 2.5 days (Monday to Wednesday morning) and the other partner working the remaining 2.5 days (Wednesday afternoon to Friday);

**7.1.3** two days one week and three days the next i.e. with the job sharers alternating to work the extra day;

**7.1.4** alternate weeks i.e. job share partners each work one on week on, one week off. Normally this is on a Wednesday pm to Wednesday am basis.

**7.2** This is not an exhaustive list but merely outlines a few examples. Ideally the job share partners should each cover half the hours of the post. However, sometimes it may be convenient to split the hours on an unequal basis, e.g. one partner working 2 days and the other partner working 3 days.

**7.3** Flexitime - Where a system of flexitime is in operation, the application of the system to a job share arrangement will be discussed between the line manager and the job share partners, and agreed in advance.

**7.4** Handover Period - It is usual to have a handover/changeover period, included in the working pattern. The details of the handover period will vary from post to post and working pattern and the advice of UWE's Human Resources Team should be sought where needed.

Further guidance on all aspects of flexible working can be found on the HR intranet: [http://imp.uwe.ac.uk/imp\\_public/listCategory.asp?pid=2&cat=121](http://imp.uwe.ac.uk/imp_public/listCategory.asp?pid=2&cat=121)

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## **Appendix A**

### **1) Terms and conditions of job sharing posts**

- a) The offer to one candidate of a job share is conditional upon another job share partner also accepting it.
- b) The offer letter and contract will outline:
  - i) each postholder's job title;
  - ii) the working pattern applicable to each job share candidate e.g. mornings/afternoon; or 2.5 days per week each; or 50:50 each week; or a job share on the basis of working one week on and one week off etc;
  - iii) if the job share partners do not work on a 50:50 basis each, how the actual working hours are divided e.g.40:60;
  - iv) salary will be paid on a pro-rata basis. Note that any additional hours worked by a job share partner will be paid at single time until the hours worked are in excess of normal full-time hours for the relevant staff group;
  - v) grade - although job share partners will be on the same grade, differences in levels of experience and/or previous employment may justify paying the job share partners different salary points on the same grade;
  - vi) annual holidays - the holiday entitlement will apply on a pro-rata basis;
  - vii) public, statutory and customary holidays will be shared between the job share partners on a pro-rata basis;
  - viii) job share partners are entitled to the normal provision of sickness payment and have to follow the same reporting procedures as all employees;
  - ix) job share partners are entitled to the normal maternity and other benefits as a full-time members of staff, on a pro-rata basis.
- c) job sharers will have individual performance development reviews (PDRs), in accordance with appropriate University policies. If it is deemed appropriate to share some information from individual PDRs, particularly in relation to the operation of the job share arrangement, then this can be done only with the consent of both job share partners, and the details of what can be shared will be mutually agreed. (Such information might include training and development needs and opportunities, communication issues etc).
- d) in normal circumstances the expectation is that the total hours worked by the job share partners will not be more than those of full-time staff;

### **2) Desk Space and Accommodation**

- a) Individual job sharers will normally share office accommodation, including office equipment e.g. computer, desk, telephone, filing cabinet. Where the sharers' working periods overlap substantially due to individual workloads etc, additional office/desk space should be provided. Work stations should be set up in accordance with health and safety requirements for each job share partner.

### **3) Development Opportunities and Work Responsibilities**

- a) Job sharers will be treated the same as full-time employees in respect of learning and development. Each job share partner should have the same opportunities for the development of their skills and expertise. Managers should ensure that the distribution of development opportunities, and allocation of work responsibilities, is done fairly and equitably between the job sharers.

### **4) Grading Review**

- a) Where a role has changed, job share partners may submit a joint request, in line with the University's Request for Grading Review procedure.

### **5) Resignation**

- a) If one job share partner leaves and the remaining job share partner does not want to cover the whole post, the following procedure should be followed:
- b) an assessment of the needs of the organisation/department, to ascertain whether full-time coverage is required;
- c) offer the other half of the job to the remaining partner;
- d) if the remaining partner does not wish to take up the whole post, the vacant half of the job share post should be advertised once;
- e) if a suitable job share partner cannot be found, the role should be reviewed to see if it can be done on a part-time basis, and/or some duties and responsibilities allocated elsewhere to enable the remaining job holder to continue in the role. If this is not possible, a University-wide search for suitable alternative work should be implemented for the remaining job share partner under the University's redeployment process;
- f) if all the above has been carried out and it is still not possible to either find a replacement job share partner or find the remaining job share partner a suitable alternative post, the remaining job share partner will retain the right to redundancy payments in line with UWE's redeployment procedure.

