

Designing Flexible Jobs: Managers Guide

The purpose of this document is to help you to increase the flexibility available to individuals in your teams and to job applicants, in a way which works for them, for you and for Hackney Council.

Types of Flexible Working

It is important to remember that there are range of ways people can work flexibly, many of which do not involve them reducing their hours. Types of flexible working include:

WHERE people work (also known as remote working):

- Working from home, either for part or all of the working week
- Working across different offices or from other locations.

WHEN people work:

- Flexible start or finish times – through the existing flexi-time arrangements
- Annualised flexibility – for example, not working in school holidays, or working in a more concentrated way at certain periods
- Compressed hours – such as working a 35 hour week across four days
- Shift work – a work pattern that isn't within the typical working day; for example 7am to 3pm.

HOW MUCH people work – remember this will affect pay:

- Part-time work – such as working a three day week
- Job sharing or job splitting – for example, two people sharing a full-time role, each working three days a week
- Unpaid leave.

The principles of flexible job design

Flexible working is most successful when you look at the design of the job proactively, rather than leave it to the job holder to make it work. We encourage you to consider job design when you are recruiting or restructuring, as well as when an individual makes a request.

Here are our key questions to consider when thinking about what kinds of flexibility you can offer, in line with the types outlined above:

1. WHERE does the work need to be done

Think about how important it is to work in a particular location, and the impact that working elsewhere might have on things like team relationships or knowledge sharing. Clearly, some roles are more suited to remote working than others; this kind of flexibility is less likely to suit customer facing roles, for example.

2. WHEN does the work need to be done

Look into the peaks and troughs of your team's activity. This may include considering the pace and predictability of the work, or the amount of interdependence that exists between different roles. For example, if your organisation involves some out of hours work, this will affect how you can build in flexibility.

3. HOW MUCH work different roles involve

Instead of assuming that every role needs a full-time solution, think about what tasks each one actually involves, and then work out how much time you need to achieve them. If you're changing a full-time role into a part-time one, you'll also need to think about how you resource any tasks that don't fit within the available time. Can they be delegated or covered by other team members? And if you're designing a job share, working out how to split the responsibilities and manage handovers will be key.

4. Where the roles lead to

You'll need to make sure you have proper pathways for flexible career development if you're going to keep hold of your employees in the long term. So as well as considering how a particular role can be made flexible, remember to think about what the next flexible steps could be.

Considering flexible working requests

We hope that the guidance above will help you to identify which types of flexibility will and will not work for roles in your team. Whilst we encourage you to positively consider all requests, there may be times when there is a genuine business reason why the pattern someone suggests will not work. If so, be prepared to negotiate to see if a compromise can be reached.

Our formal guidance around considering flexible working requests can be found here: [LINK](#)

Some examples of part time job design

There are a few ways which you can create part time opportunities, depending on the nature of the role.

- **Standalone part-time jobs**, designed by and for the individual
- **Job-sharing** with a partner to create a full-time-equivalent job
- **Team-based work sharing**, in which either the availability or the outputs are divided among a team of more than two people.

Examples of standalone part-time jobs	
Reduced-load work (output-based) with predictable work	Nadine is a tax adviser. It's a client-facing role, but her clients need non-time-sensitive advice, so her working pattern of Monday, Wednesday and Friday means that there is never more than a delay of 24 hours in responding to their calls or emails, which is in line with customer expectations. She works as part of a team, but has her own clients, so there is little need to interact with colleagues except to share knowledge and development.
Reduced-load work (output-based) with 'two-way flexible' hours	Caroline is a project manager who works three days a week but can swap her days around to attend key meetings as she has no fixed non-work commitments. She can also make herself available on other days to take urgent calls or deal with unpredictable events.
Part-time work (hours-based) with fixed hours	Jim is an occupational health advisor, working one-hour slots chosen from his 26 timetabled hours, which are 12.00-18.00 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and 9.00-17.00 on Thursdays and Fridays. Since his work is based upon one-hour slots, it was easy to reduce his hours from full-time to part-time when he became a father.
Job-sharing / phased retirement	Yashoda is a senior communications officer who wanted to reduce her hours as part of phased retirement. The salary saved by reducing her contract by half has enabled the employment of a full-time junior colleague, so this job-share allows the retention of expertise and creative skills, while also providing full-time availability to clients.
Team-based management	In a large operational area, there was previously resistance to offer opportunities for part time. However with several managers in the unit and overlap between tasks, they were able to share some responsibilities (those suitable to their grade) and facilitate part-time working for those who want it, while also ensuring

	appropriate management cover during their opening hours.
Team based rostering	One Council have extended their opening hours across Sports Services, introducing morning and evening shifts to cover 8.00-20.00, instead of a standard 9.00-17.00 operating model. The team got involved with agreeing the shifts, with many people preferring to choose early or late shifts to fit in with their other commitments.