



# Flexible Working Policy

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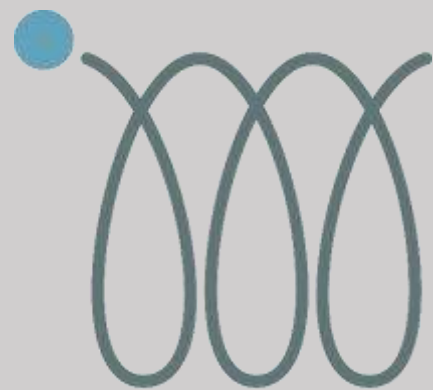
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3	05/21	HR Manager	Re-formatted

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## 1. Introduction

This policy is entirely non-contractual and does not form part of an employee's contract of employment. Throughout this policy, references to "the Company" mean I.M. Group Limited and/or your employer within the group of companies headed by I.M. Group Limited as appropriate.

This policy outlines the procedure to follow if employees wish to request to work flexibly. The Company wants to support its employees to achieve the best working, travelling and personal life balance possible, whilst continuing to support the needs of the business.

## 2. Responsibilities

The obligation is on you to make a well-thought-out written application, in good time, to your manager for any change in existing working arrangements that you may wish to request for consideration. You should be realistic about your contribution to service provision when requesting a flexible working pattern and consider what operational difficulties might be caused by the work arrangement requested and how these difficulties could be overcome.

Line Managers must consider all requests from employees, irrespective of grade, level, contracted hours, age, sex, sexual orientation, race, or religion or belief, or whether they have a disability, to change their existing working patterns either on a temporary or permanent basis. All requests for flexible working should be treated fairly and equitably. There is a need for all parties to be flexible in their approach when applying for or considering authorising changed working hours. HR is responsible for advising and supporting managers and individuals in dealing with flexible working requests and ensuring consistency in the way in which the policy is applied.

## 3. Key Principles

This policy outlines the framework within which requests for a flexible working pattern can be addressed with fairness and consistency. Its purpose is to provide advice for employees and managers on the range of options available to employees wishing to consider flexible working.

- All employees who have worked for IM Group for at least 26 weeks continuously at the date of their application have the right to apply for work flexibly, subject to you meeting the eligibility criteria set out in this policy.
- Applications for flexible working must be made in writing.
- All requests will be considered in accordance with the procedure and related legislation.
- The Company may require the proposed new arrangements to be worked for an agreed trial period prior to reaching a final decision.
- Accepted applications for flexible working will mean a permanent change in terms and conditions of employment unless temporary changes are agreed between them and their line manager.
- Flexible arrangements will only be put in place if it can be shown that the needs of the individual can be balanced with those of the Company and after full consideration has been given to the impact on other team members.
- The Company may refuse an application where the desired working pattern cannot be accommodated because of the needs of the business.

- Employees do not have an automatic right to work in a flexible way. There may be circumstances where the Company is unable to accommodate an individual's desired working pattern due to business needs not being met e.g. management positions with direct reports. Any refusal will be supported by a written explanation.
- The employee has the right to appeal against the decision.
- An employee can only make one request in a twelve-month period.
- The employee may be accompanied by a colleague when attending a meeting to discuss their application for flexible working.
- The Company positively supports personal and professional development and no employee will be excluded from training simply because they work reduced hours.
- A new working pattern (following a trial period) will normally be a permanent change unless otherwise agreed. The individual will have no right to revert to their former hours of work.
- The policy will be applied in accordance with IM Group's Equality and Diversity Policy.

## 4. Flexible Working Patterns

Flexible working is all about an employee and their line manager working together to implement, if possible, a new pattern of working that benefits both employee and the business. Flexibility does not necessarily mean a reduction in hours of work; it can also relate to the times you are required to work and the place you are required to work.

## 5. Eligibility

The Employment Rights Act 1996 gives employees with 26 weeks' continuous service the right to request a change to the number of hours that they work, the times that they work or their place of work. While it is our policy to be flexible on working patterns for all its employees, in order to ensure that it is complying with its legal obligations concerning the right to request flexible working, there may be situations where precedence has to be given to those who are eligible for this right. Whilst flexible working will be considered it should be recognised that not all of the patterns will be suitable for all sections of the business and will depend entirely of the need of the company within IM Group as each company will have different working structures from each other.

## 6. Procedure

### 6.1 Applying for Flexible Working

If you wish to request to change your present working arrangements, you must apply in writing to your Line Manager, completing and submitting the flexible working request form (see final page of this document).

We expect the flexible working request form to be carefully thought out and that you, if necessary, are prepared to be flexible yourself, in order to reach an agreement with your Line Manager. Once you have written the request, send it to your Line Manager and HR. HR will acknowledge your request has been received and confirm the date on which the application has been submitted. This is the date when the application was received.

## 6.2 The Meeting

Your manager has a maximum of 28 days to arrange a meeting with you in order to consider your request. The meeting will provide the opportunity to discuss your desired work pattern in depth and consider how it might be accommodated. Both parties should be prepared to be flexible, it may be that an alternative working arrangement may more be appropriate.

## 6.3 Reaching a Decision

Your manager will inform you of their decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting. There will be occasions when it is not possible to complete a particular part of the procedure within the specified time limit; such extensions of time limits must be mutually agreed in writing.

## 6.4 Acceptance

If your request is accepted, the letter will include a description of the new working pattern and the date from which it is to take effect. Further meetings may be required to establish the future working parameters and to consider what hand over arrangements will be needed. It may be necessary to agree that your new working pattern will take place for a trial period in order to see how it would operate. The agreed new working pattern will be a permanent change to your terms and conditions of employment, unless agreed otherwise.

## 6.5 Rejection

If your request is rejected after due consideration, the refusal could be based on one or more specific business reasons. It could be due to:

- The additional costs involved
- A detrimental effect on the Company's ability to meet business demands
- An inability to reorganise work among existing employees
- An inability to recruit additional staff
- A detrimental impact on quality or performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the individual proposes to work
- Planned organisation changes.

## 6.6 Appeal

If your application is refused you have the right to appeal, in writing, against the decision within 14 days of receiving the outcome of your application. An appeal hearing will be held within 14 days of an appeal notice being received by us. We will notify you of our decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting and this decision will be final.

## 6.7 Accompaniment

You have the right to be accompanied by a colleague of choice during any meeting held as part of this procedure.

# 7. Withdrawing an Application

Employees should tell their employer in writing if they want to withdraw their application. The employer can treat an application as withdrawn if the employee misses 2 meetings to discuss an application or appeal without good reason, for example sickness. The employer must tell the employee they are treating the request as withdrawn.

## 8. Appendix – Request for Flexible Working Form

<b>Request for Flexible Working Form</b>			
<i>To be eligible for flexible working you must have 26-week continuous service with IM Group or its subsidiaries. If you are uncertain whether you are eligible, please contact your HR representative and they will be able to advise. You can only make one request in every 12-month period.</i>			
Name:			
Employee Number:			
<b><i>I wish to submit a statutory for flexible working as detailed below.</i></b>			
<b>Please set out the working pattern you wish to take. (If you wish to change your working hours, please give your current hours and the hours you wish to work, or if you would like to work from home, please detail the hours you wish to do this.)</b>			
Date for change to begin:			
<b>Please detail the change you think this will have on the department and business and how this could be managed. (If you believe there are none, please state reasons why below)</b>			
<i>If your request is granted, you shall receive a letter detailing this change from your HR representative. It will help us to deal with your application if you provide as much information as you can about your desired working pattern. It is also important that you complete the questions about the effects that you think the changes you are requesting will have on the organisation and your colleagues.</i>			
<b>Employee Signature:</b>		Date Submitted:	
<b>Line Manager Signature:</b>		Date:	
<b>Department Head Signature:</b>		Date:	
<b>Executive Signature:</b>		Date:	

Details of any previous requests	
Have any previous requests been made?	Y/N
Date this was submitted:	