## Work Life Balance Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY:</th>
<th>Policy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLASSIFICATION:</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>PURPOSE</td>
<td>This document outlines the work life balance options available for staff.</td>
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<td>Executive Director of Delivery</td>
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<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
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<td>Board of Directors</td>
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</tbody>
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| - Essential Reading for: | Executive Directors
Directors of Operations
Divisional Directors
Heads of Service
Line Managers
HR Team |
| - Information for: | Trade Union Representatives
All staff |
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraph</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Policy Statement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Scope</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Framework</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Duties</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Implementation and Monitoring</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 References</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Associated Policy and Procedural Documentation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Monitoring Matrix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Monitoring Matrix</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Policy Statement**

1.1. The Trust recognises the importance of supporting staff to balance their work and personal commitments wherever possible and provides a range of flexible working patterns and leave arrangements to assist with this.

1.2. The purpose of this policy, and any related procedural documents, is to provide a clear and consistent framework for considering staff requests for work life balance options.

2. **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals directly employed by the Trust.

3. **Policy Framework**

3.1. This section describes the broad framework for the policy. Detailed instructions are provided in the associated procedural documents.

3.2. The Executive Director of Delivery shall approve all procedural documents associated with this policy, and any amendments to such documents, and is responsible for ensuring that such documents are compliant with this policy.

3.3. There are a number of work life balance options available to staff including:

3.4. **Flexible Working**

3.4.1. Flexible working includes part time hours, term-time working, annualised hours, flexitime, job-sharing and compressed hours.

3.4.2. All staff are entitled to make a flexible working request.

3.4.3. Decisions regarding flexible working requests will take service needs into consideration and there may be occasions where it is not possible to grant the request.

3.4.4. Any flexible working pattern must comply with the Working Time Regulations (1998).

3.5. **Career Break**

3.5.1. A career break is an extended period of authorised unpaid leave for between 3 months and 5 years. A career break may be used for childcare, elderly care, training, study leave or work abroad where this will broaden experience.
3.5.2 Staff with at least one year’s continuous Trust service are eligible to apply for a career break.

3.5.3 Where a career break is for one year or less, staff will return to the same role as far as is reasonably practicable. Thereafter staff can expect to return to a similar job where possible.

3.5.4 Further details can be found in the Flexible Working Procedure/Sabbatical and Employment Break Procedure for Medical and Dental Staff.

3.6 Flexible Retirement

3.6.1 There is no set age for retirement and it is therefore up to each individual to decide when they want to retire.

3.6.2 There are a number of options that staff approaching retirement may request to ease them into retirement irrespective of whether they belong to the NHS Pension Scheme. These include wind-down, step-down and retire and return.

3.6.3 The needs of the service will determine whether a request can be granted.

3.6.4 Further guidance is available in the associated Flexible Retirement Procedure.

3.7 Annual Leave

3.7.1 Under the Working Time (Amendment) Regulations 2007 it is a requirement that staff have a minimum of 28 days (inclusive of 8 public holidays) paid annual leave per year (pro rata for part-time staff).

3.7.2 Many staff are entitled to additional contractual annual leave depending on the terms and conditions they are employed under.

3.8 Maternity/Adoption Leave

3.8.1 Eligible staff are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity/adoption leave and pay. Staff with 12 months’ continuous NHS service are eligible for contractual maternity/ adoption pay.

3.8.2 Staff are entitled to be given reasonable time off to attend antenatal classes/official meetings in the adoption process.

3.8.3 Staff must take two weeks’ of compulsory maternity leave immediately after the birth of the baby/babies.
3.8.4 Staff may take up to 10 keeping in touch days (KIT) during maternity/adoption leave however these must be mutually agreed.

3.8.5 Staff retain all contractual rights during maternity/adoption leave except remuneration.

3.8.6 Further details can be found in the associated Maternity procedure/Family Leave Procedure.

3.9 **Paternity Leave**

3.9.1 Paternity leave applies regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation to either the:

- father of a child;
- adoptive father or partner;
- mother’s husband or partner; or
- nominated carer.

3.9.2 Eligible staff are entitled to two weeks’ paternity leave which has to be taken as two continuous weeks i.e. no split weeks.

3.9.3 Staff with twelve months’ continuous NHS service are entitled to two weeks’ occupational paternity pay.

3.9.4 Staff are also entitled to reasonable paid time off to attend ante-natal classes.

3.9.5 Further details can be found in the Family Leave Procedure.

3.10 **Shared Parental Leave**

3.10.1 Shared Parental Leave (SPL) allows eligible fathers and partners to be able to request more leave from work during the 12 months following the birth/adoption/placement of the child.

3.10.2 In order to do this the mother/adopter must reduce their Maternity/Adoption leave period.

3.10.3 SPL must be taken in ‘full’ weeks. SPL can be taken as one continuous period or discontinuous periods.

3.10.4 Staff have the right to return to the same job if they have taken leave of 26 weeks or less, regardless of how many periods of leave they have had. This includes any combination of maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave.
3.10.5 Staff who take more than 26 weeks leave have the right to return to either the same job, or a similar job if it is not reasonably practicable for them to return to the same position.

3.11 Parental Leave

3.11.1 Parental leave of up to 18 weeks’ leave per child is available for any member of staff who has nominated caring responsibility for a child under the age of 18 to enable them to take more time to spend with their child/children.

3.11.2 Parental leave is unpaid and must be taken in ‘full weeks.’

3.11.3 During parental leave, staff keep all their contractual rights, except remuneration, and are entitled to return to the same job following any period of parental leave.

3.11.4 Further details can be found in the Family Leave procedure.

3.12 Special Leave

3.12.1 This covers a range of needs from domestic emergencies to bereavement.

3.12.2 Special leave may be paid or unpaid depending on the individual circumstances.

3.12.3 All staff are entitled to request this leave.

3.12.4 Further details can be found in the Special Leave procedure.

4. Duties

4.1 Executive Director of Delivery

The Executive Director of Delivery will ensure that this policy is implemented and has authority to approve any related procedural documents.

4.2 Managers

Managers who have a responsibility for staff must ensure that:

4.2.1 They and their team are aware of the policy and associated procedures and have access to a copy;

4.2.2 They consider all applications on their merit whilst ensuring application of the policy is fair and consistent;
4.2.3 They respond to applications within timescales set out in the associated procedural documents;

4.2.4 The needs of the service are not compromised by requests; and

4.2.5 Records are kept detailing requests and whether or not they are granted.

4.3 **Staff side and Trade Union representatives**

Staff side and Trade Union representatives will:

4.3.1 Be familiar with this policy in order to provide advice and support to their members if requested to do so; and

4.3.2 Assist in raising awareness and communication of the policy.

4.4 **All Staff**

All Staff will:

4.4.1 Discuss any request with their manager as soon as reasonably practical;

4.4.2 Consider the needs of the service and the impact of any request on colleagues;

4.4.3 Give as much information about the request as possible.

5. **Implementation and Monitoring**

5.1 **Implementation**

5.1.1 This policy will be available on the Trust’s Intranet site. It will also be disseminated through the management structure within the Trust.

5.1.2 Human Resources will provide consistent advice and guidance to managers and staff on the application of this policy.

5.2 **Monitoring**

The monitoring of the operation of this policy and associated procedures is detailed in Appendix A.

6. **References**

Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions

ACAS
Equality Act 2010
www.gov.uk

7. Associated Policy and Procedural Documentation

Annual Leave Procedure
Family Leave Procedure
Flexible Retirement Procedure
Flexible Working Procedure
Maternity Leave Procedure
Sabbatical and Employment Break Procedure for Medical and Dental Staff
Shared Parental Leave Procedure
Special Leave Procedure
## MONITORING MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION</th>
<th>MONITORING LEAD</th>
<th>MONITORING PROCESS</th>
<th>MONITORING FREQUENCY</th>
<th>REPORTED TO PERSON/GROUP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of rejected applications for work life balance options to ensure no unlawful discrimination</td>
<td>Human Resources Department</td>
<td>Statistics of requests denied with reasons.</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Executive Director of Delivery at Operational Workforce Group</td>
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**ACTION PLAN LEAD**

Director of Human Resources