

Flexible Working Hours Scheme Policy (Flexi-time)

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1. Introduction

The Flexible Working Hours Scheme (FWHS) was introduced for the mutual benefit of the Library and participating staff. Its aim is to provide flexibility for staff with the opportunity to match working patterns to domestic arrangements and fluctuations in workloads and work-systems.

It is important that Managers and their staff approach the scheme with the understanding that whilst the FWH scheme provides flexibility it should be achieved without adverse effect on the overall efficiency of departments and the Library as a whole. To this end, line managers are expected to ensure that their sections are adequately staffed according to workload and service requirements.

Front line service staff that are rostered or on fixed hours will be expected to maintain service delivery expectations for their department and therefore are unlikely to accrue much credit leave as this will be closely managed. In addition, the business need relating to front line services roles is likely to result in significantly less flexibility being available to staff occupying these roles. This will be managed at local level with a view to ensuring fairness within the respective teams.

It is a condition of the FWH scheme that flexibility should be achieved without adverse effect on the overall efficiency of directorates or on their service to the public. TUS accept this and management accepts that the staff will co-operate fully to achieve it. TUS also accept that circumstances exist (e.g. in public service areas) which may inhibit the freedom of individual members of staff to use the agreed FWH scheme. These will be discussed with the TUS before any restrictions are imposed.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff who have flexible working hours (FWH) as part of their contract of employment or where staff have opted into the Scheme. This includes both full and part-time staff. However, there may be genuine operational reasons for excluding certain posts or department under the rules of the Flexible Working Hours Scheme.

The scheme does not apply to:

1. Roles or Departments which are designed around the specific timing of operational requirements e.g. building opening times to meet the appropriate levels of customer and service standards and have an operational requirement to be on site for designated hours which cannot be varied without detriment to the service or to the customer.
2. Roles which would result in an increase in direct staffing costs to maintain the current standard of service.
3. Roles which receive an allowance for working specific rostering patterns to meet business operational requirements which are compensated for working non-standard working patterns. (Allowances included are Shift Disturbance Allowance and Incentive Payment to Late Team.

(These examples of exceptions in which flexible working hours will not be available are neither exhaustive nor exclusive).

Out of Scope: This policy does not apply to Public Lending Right staff who have not harmonized onto British Library terms and conditions.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that the FWH scheme is managed appropriately within their own service area. It is also line manager's responsibility to ensure that their staff adhere to the rules governing FWH, and to implement disciplinary measures in cases of non-compliance with this policy.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that the FWH Scheme is operated;

- There is no detriment to service delivery and that service cover is maintained;
- Ensure the management of the FWH Scheme does not impose additional workload pressures on other employees and should consider the effects on other members of the team.
- Ensure adjustments and leave requests are processed in a timely manner.

Employees are responsible for:

- Recording their actual attendance and annual leave by way of the clocking terminals and PC's provided by the Library.
- Keeping a regular check on their hours worked and to send adjustments to their line manager in a timely manner.
- Ensuring that absences are regularly updated and recorded accurately.

Employee Services are responsible for:

- the administration of the FWH scheme and the system used to record and monitor the time and attendance of staff. Their advice may be sought on any matter concerning FWH scheme.

4. Definitions and Basic Principles

4.1 Permitted Working Hours – Bandwidths

The permitted working hours consist of the time between the earliest start of the working day and the latest finish. Subject to the demands of their work, staff may arrive at and leave work within specified periods each day. These periods are called bandwidths:

Band widths

London:	07.00 – 20.00	
	(Except for Reading Room Staff who are required to close the Reading Room where this will be 20.30)	
Boston Spa:	07.00 – 20.00	
Public Lending Right	08.15 – 18.00	

Staff requiring to stay after the end of the bandwidth to complete urgent work may do so, provided they have prior authority from their line manager. Staff should key out at the end of the bandwidth and then request an update for the extra hours worked through the Time off in Lieu procedure or as authorised overtime in line with Section C.

NB: If a member of staff is still keyed in at the end of the bandwidth, they will be automatically keyed out back to the end of the coretime.

5. Coretimes and Lunch Breaks

Within the bandwidths are coretimes, which are times when staff must be at work. During these times staff must be keyed in.

Core time

London:	10.00 – 11.30	14.30 – 15.30
Boston Spa	10.00 – 12.00	14.00 – 14.50
Public Lending Right	09.30 - 12.00	14.00 – 16.30

Lunch period

London:	11.30 – 14.30
Boston spa:	12.00 – 14.00
Public Lending Right	12.00 – 14.00

Staff who contractually work more than 6 hours per day are required to take a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch. Lunch breaks should be taken outside of the coretimes and staff should key out when on their lunch breaks. If a member of staff does not key out for at least 30 minutes during the lunch period, 30 minutes will automatically be deducted. Subject to line manager agreement, a member of staff who is prevented from going to lunch due to work considerations/pressure may return later than 14.30 in St. Pancras or 14.00 in Boston Spa/ Stockton on Tees having taken their lunch break. Staff should then request an update for their lunch break via their line manager.

NB: Exceptionally, staff who wish to arrive after the start of the coretime or depart before the end of coretime, may do so provided there is a good reason and this is approved by their line manager in advance.

6. Accounting Periods

The accounting period is the time over which actual hours worked are compared to contracted hours in order to calculate credit/debit balances. The accounting period runs from each Financial Year.

1st Quarter 1st April – 30 June

2nd Quarter 1st July – 30 September

3rd Quarter 1st October – 31 December

4th Quarter 1st Jan to 31 March

Full time staff are contracted to work 36 hours excluding lunch breaks per week. By the end of each accounting period it is necessary to have worked the standard hours) excluding lunch breaks plus or minus a time not exceeding the agreed maximum carry-over.

For part time staff the accounting periods will be the same but the amount of time will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

A link to the accounting periods is held on the Time and Attendance home page. Line managers should where possible ensure that optimum records are fully updated on the first day of each accounting period (see Optimum Time Recording System Guidance).

7. Credit and Debit Carry-over

Carry-over is the number of hours worked in an accounting period minus the standard contracted hours. For full time staff, the maximum carry-overs are 5 days in credit (36 hours).

For part time staff carry-overs will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

Any hours over the maximum credit carry-over are automatically deducted by the time recording system at the end of each accounting period.

For full time staff, the maximum debit carry-over is 1 day (7 hours 12 minutes) in debit. For part-time staff carry overs will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that any debit at the end of accounting period does not exceed 1 day (7 hours 12 minutes) pro rata for part time staff.

If a member of staff has excess hours in debit at the end of an accounting period, their line manager will take appropriate action. If there are extenuating circumstances staff may be allowed to carry-over an excess debit.

However, disciplinary proceedings will be implemented against staff who repeatedly exceed the maximum debit carry-over subject to paragraph 16.2 in the policy.

Where a member of staff is ceasing employment with the Library, the FWH scheme balance should be brought back to zero before they leave if practicable. If they leave with a debit balance a reduction will be made to the employee's final salary, and, if that is not sufficient to cover the debit, Employee Services will contact the individual. Where employees have a credit balance and for operational reasons they are unable to reduce this prior to their last day of service any owed hours will be paid to the employee.

8. Credit Leave

The FWH Scheme provides the opportunity for staff to use up accumulated credit by adjusting the hours of work within the flexible bandwidth. In addition, there is also a facility for staff to take up to 5 days per accounting period as credit leave. Credit leave of up to 2 consecutive days (pro rata for Part time staff) can be taken at any one time per accounting period (20 days per year) by full time staff (pro rata for part time staff), which can be taken in units of half or full days. A half day's Credit Leave must begin or end outside coretime.

Staff must seek approval for credit leave from their line manager at least 48 hours before the desired leave although this will not stop line managers granting leave at shorter notice if circumstances permit. Credit leave may be granted subject to the availability of other staff and current workloads at the line manager's discretion. Requests for annual leave will normally take precedence over requests for credit leave.

It is each member of staff's own responsibility to make sure that, by taking credit leave; they will not incur an excess debit carry-over at the end of the accounting period.

9. Time and attendance system

The FWH Scheme operates through the Optimum system that requires participating staff to key in and out of the system. Users can key in and out at clocking terminals or PCs. Users must key in when they commence work and key out when they leave their place of work at the end of the day.

The Optimum system commences each day by registering a reduced credit or debit equivalent to a user's Standard Working Day. As the cycle progresses and hours are worked, the display will show reduced debit or increased credit and depending upon the working pattern, may move into a credit / or reduced debit situation.

Users must key out of the system at commencement of their lunch break and key back in at the end of their break. If the total time taken for any break is less than 30 minutes, the system will automatically adjust the time taken to record 30 minutes.

Keying in and out of the Optimum system on behalf of another user is not permitted and will be regarded as a serious abuse of the system.

10. Absence Monitoring and System updating

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to ask their line manager to authorise a credit for an approved absence e.g. medical appointments, but it is both the member of staff's and the line manager's responsibility to ensure that any debiting action is taken. No credit or debit adjustment to a member of staff's FWH hours record may be made without their knowledge.

All updates can be made by logging on to the system and putting through adjustments for the line manager to approve.

Managers must ensure that they authorise all of their staff timesheets on a regular basis (i.e. at least once a week). This is to keep timesheets up to date so that the data can feed across to the payroll system each month.

11. Fire and Emergency Arrangements

Staff are reminded that they should always observe the fire and emergency arrangements whilst on the Library premises even if they are keyed out. Staff should not attempt to key in before evacuating the building, but should arrange with their line manager for a credit update afterwards. Staff keyed out should not leave the Assembly Point before reporting to their Fire Marshal. Staff keyed out should not leave the site before reporting to their assembly point.

12. Approved absences - general

12.1 Credit for approved absences

Staff will be credited for the following approved absences:

- Annual leave
- Special leave
- Sick leave
- Privilege days
- Official duties away from the Library
- Attendance at approved training events off site
- Medical appointments
- System failures
- Late arrival due to unavoidable transport disruptions
- Public holidays (staff working the same hours a week will be automatically updated)

All updates will be at the discretion of the line manager. Staff must be prepared to justify their applications if appropriate.

Credits for approved absences are as follows for full time staff:

Standard full day: 7 hours 12 minutes

Standard half day: 3 hours 36 minutes

Other durations: by agreement with the line manager.

The length of a standard full and half day will vary for part time staff according to their contracted working pattern. For example, a contract for 27 hours for a five day week, results in a standard full day of 5 hours 24 minutes.

12.2 Special Leave

A written request, where possible in advance, should be made for special leave to the individuals line manager (refer to section F, Part III, para 1 of the Staff Handbook).

12.3 Sick Leave

If a member of staff has to leave work due to illness, they should consult their manager where possible and key out and note the time of departure. If the member of staff has attended for at least 2 hours before leaving, the line manager will authorise a credit update to bring the hours recorded up to a standard day. If the member of staff has not attended for at least 2 hours, their record will be updated to a standard day but it will be recorded as sick leave. Therefore either a Self-Certified form or Medical Certificate must be sent to Payroll (refer to Section G, Part I, para 17 of the Staff Handbook).

12.4 Medical, Emergency and Ante-Natal appointments

Paid time off will normally be allowed to attend doctor's surgeries, hospital appointments and appointments with dentists, opticians, physiotherapists, chiropractors, clinical psychologists, chiropodists, osteopaths and cancer screening sessions. Paid time off will also normally be allowed to attend appointments with other alternative medical practitioners provided staff have been referred by their doctor. Applications for leave of absence should be made to the immediate line manager. Where possible an appointment card or letter should be produced to substantiate the claim.

Appointments (e.g. doctor, dentist or optician) should be made outside coretime where possible and advance notice should be given to line managers. Staff should therefore restrict the amount of work time involved to keep the impact on the Library's service to a minimum. If it is necessary to attend an appointment before staff begin their working day, they may be updated up to a maximum of 2 hours, provided that this does not bring the hours recorded that day to more than a standard day. Similarly, if staff have been to work prior to an appointment and return to work after the appointment, the hours recorded that day may not go beyond a standard day.

If staff do not return to work, they will normally be updated no more than 2 hours, unless there are exceptional circumstances, at the line manager's discretion, provided that this does not bring the hours recorded that day beyond a standard day.

Emergency appointments and specialist medical referrals (e.g. hospital appointments, but excluding examinations for insurance purposes or injections prior to holidays) can be updated at the line manager's discretion for the amount of time taken to attend the appointment including travel time. Ante-natal appointments can be updated at the line manager's discretion for the amount of time taken to attend the appointment including travel time.

An appointment card should be produced where possible. The same principles apply as above, in relation to staff who do not return to work or who do not attend for 2 hours before they go to the appointment.

If the member of staff does not attend work for at least two hours, the update will be recorded as sick leave and a Self-Certified form should be sent to Employee Services (refer to Section G, Part I, para 16 of the Staff Handbook)

12.6 Transport disruptions

It is the duty of all staff to attempt to get to work, taking into account the conditions specific to their circumstances. Staff are expected to accept the normal delay hazards of travelling to and from the Library by either public or private transport. Therefore **no credit update** will be given for late arrival due to:

- Foreseen traffic hold ups (except where it involves public transport);

- Missing a bus or lift;
- Foreseen industrial action (except where it involves public transport).

However, **a credit update may be** granted at the discretion of the line manager for late arrival due to:

- Exceptional unavoidable traffic holds-ups;
- Breakdown or theft of the vehicle/mode of transport in which a member of staff usually travels to work;
- An accident involving the vehicle/mode of transport in which a member of staff is travelling;
- Foreseen and unforeseen industrial action involving public transport where staff who travel by public transport have made every effort to attend, but have still incurred delays due to overcrowding, reduced services etc, or at line managers discretion if in exceptional circumstances failed to arrive at all.

The first 15 minutes of any delay will not be updated. The credit update will therefore be calculated back to the member of staff's normal arrival time minus 15 minutes. The update will also not normally exceed half a standard day. However, line managers have discretion to exceed this if they consider circumstances warrant it.

Permission to leave before the end of coretime is at the discretion of the line manager given the individual's personal circumstances, e.g. where they live, means of transport. If staff leave before the end of coretime they will receive an update up to a maximum of 2 hours, provided that this does not bring the hours recorded that day to more than a standard day. Line managers have discretion to exceed this in exceptional circumstances.

12.7 Adverse weather conditions

If arrival is delayed due to adverse weather, the first 15 minutes of a delay will not be updated. The maximum update permitted is half a standard day. However, line managers have discretion to exceed this if they consider circumstances warrant it.

Staff who attempt to get to work and have to turn back due to adverse weather may be updated for the time spent travelling, up to a maximum of half a standard day, at their line manager's discretion. The remainder of the day will be taken as either annual or credit leave. If circumstances warrant it, an update can be given at the discretion of line managers, to a full standard day.

It is expected that staff will make every effort to get to work. However staff who do not attempt to get to work will not be updated, and instead will have to take annual or credit or unpaid leave. Staff should contact their line manager as soon as practicable.

If the weather deteriorates during the day, Estates will monitor the situation and advise staff as appropriate via e-mail. If staff decide that, because of the

adverse weather, they need to leave before their normal departure time they will receive an update up to a maximum of 2 hours (line managers have discretion to exceed this if circumstances warrant it) provided that this does not bring the hours recorded that day to more than a standard day.

If the weather deteriorates during the day and management decides to close a site or building because of the adverse weather conditions all staff affected will be instructed to finish work at a specified time. Staff affected will be updated to bring their recorded hours up to a standard day.

12.8 Official duty away from the Library

The credit update is calculated as follows:

- If a member of staff does not attend the Library at all during the day, they will be updated for the time spent on official duty, including travel time, minus their normal time spent travelling to and from work and the lunch break.
- If a member of staff first attends the Library they should key in on arrival and key out when leaving site. They will be updated for the time spent on official duty, including travel time, minus their normal time spent travelling from work to home and a lunch break if applicable. (A similar calculation applies if a member of staff attends the Library after external duties).

Credit updates for official duties outside the Library may exceed a standard day where appropriate. When it is clear that the credit update achieved from undertaking official duties will result in excess credit carry-over, permission should be sought from the line manager.

12.9 Training courses

Staff participating in approved training courses away from their normal place of work will be updated to a standard day for each day they do not attend the Library. Where staff attend the Library and travel for training purposes at either the beginning or end of the day, they must deduct their normal home to office travel time from the update calculation.

12.10 Site or building -wide emergencies

If this occurs, FWH will continue for that day until such time as management decides that work is no longer possible, in which case all staff affected will be instructed to finish work at a specified time. Staff affected will need to submit an update to their manager to bring their recorded hours up to a standard day.

12.11 Technical failure of the time recording equipment

Staff will be notified by e-mail and site notices in the event of any faults with the time recording equipment. Staff should continue to key in as normal but also keep a manual record of the hours worked until they are informed otherwise.

12.12 Working lunches

Exceptionally line managers have discretion to agree updates for staff attending meetings over the lunchtime period for which no early or late lunch is possible. If lunch is provided managers would not normally allow updates.

13. Non-library business and events on site

Staff must be keyed out when on site but not on Library business. This includes:

- Using the staff restaurant at lunch break;
- Visiting the staff shop (except at tea break);
- When taking children to the on-site playscheme (Boston Spa only);
- Using the Sports and Social Club or attending any event organised by the Club except those listed below;
- Attending parties after presentations (unless in your official capacity);
- Attending non medically related on-site well-being appointments e.g. massage;
- Parking a vehicle before starting work.

Staff may remain keyed in to visit the on-site cash machines, attend presentations and other on-site activities such as the St Pancras Christmas party, Boston Spa Christmas Pantomime and Carol Service.

14. Use of cards for keying in

The FWH card is combined with the staff pass. The staff pass is for the sole use of the registered holder. No member of staff may ask another to key in or out on their behalf. Any member of staff asked to do so must refuse.

If you have left your staff pass at home or have lost it, you should clock in at a PC. Security at Staff Entrance (STP) or Gatehouse (BSP) will make arrangements for you to be issued with a temporary card/pass.

15. Failure to Comply with the Policy

If any member of staff intentionally misuses the FWH Scheme in breach of the rules and provisions contained within this policy such use may be considered to be misconduct under the Library's Disciplinary Procedure. .

16. Excess credit or debit procedure

16.1 Excess credit at the end of an Accounting Period

Extenuating Circumstances

The time recording system automatically deducts hours in excess of the maximum credit at the end of each Accounting Period. If the line manager (with Head of Service agreement) deems that there are extenuating circumstances, the hours over the permitted credit can be banked (i.e. retained) and leave can be taken in lieu at a later date with the line manager's prior permission. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to justify excess credit and request time in lieu from their line manager. Staff may submit an adjustment request for any hours they have lost due to the accounting period cut back rules and ask for the hours to be reinstated. These hours could be reinstated to the flexi balance – reinstating lost time is down to Manager's discretion. If approved the lost time should be reinstated where possible on the first day of the new accounting period.

No Extenuating Circumstances

If the line manager (with Head of Service agreement) deems that there are no extenuating circumstances, the excess hours cannot be banked (i.e. retained) and will be automatically deducted at the end of the Accounting Period. If a member of staff regularly incurs excess credit without prior notification or extenuating circumstances, their FWH record may be subject to investigation by their line manager.

16.2 Excess debit at the end of an Accounting Period

Extenuating Circumstances

Where excess debit has occurred, if a line manager deems that there are extenuating circumstances, a carry-over of the full debit can be authorised. Employee Services should be informed.

No Extenuating Circumstances

Where there are no extenuating circumstances, the following disciplinary measures are mandatory and apply within a rolling 12 month period, starting from the first occurrence of excess debit:

First occurrence: The line manager will authorise a carry-over of the full debit. However, the member of staff will receive an oral warning from their line manager and will be notified of the action that could result if there is a second occurrence.

Second occurrence: The line manager will discuss with Employee Services the possibility of deducting annual leave and/or pay in respect of the complete debit, including the part falling within the permitted maximum. The line manager may impose fixed working hours at their discretion though the member of staff will continue to key in and out. The member of staff will receive a written warning from the line manager. They will also be advised of the disciplinary action that may be taken if there is a third occurrence.

Third occurrence: formal disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the disciplinary Policy.