

Flexi Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions

Background

1. Why has the scheme changed?

The [revised scheme](#) supports the Council's drive to develop a more flexible and agile workforce as requirements change through modernisation and transformation of services. The new arrangements are designed to provide employees with greater flexibility and support to balance work and personal commitments.

The impact of this additional flexibility should be discussed within each team and assessed by managers. If you would like to change your typical working pattern this must be operationally acceptable and agreed with your Line Manager in advance.

2. What are the main changes to the scheme?

- ❖ Removal of core hours (10-11.30am and 2-3.30pm)
- ❖ Change from 13 x 4 weekly accounting periods to 12 x monthly accounting periods

3. When are the changes taking place?

The above changes took effect from 1st January 2019.

4. Who has been consulted on the changes?

Executive Directors along with the Trade Unions were fully consulted and in agreement with the changes.

5. Whose responsibility is it to monitor an employee's flexi?

It is your responsibility to monitor your flexi balance to ensure clock in/outs are accurate and make appropriate adjustments where necessary. Managers are responsible for monitoring the team's flexi time.

General

6. What are the accounting periods?

The accounting periods are 12 x calendar monthly periods.

7. How many flexi days/hours can I take per month and per year?

You can take a maximum of 2 days (14.4 hours) per month if you are contracted to work a standard 36 hour week, subject to an overall maximum of 20 days (144 hours) flexi leave in each calendar year.

If you work part time or compressed hours, manager discretion may apply to enable 2 days per month, subject to the overall maximum of 144 hours (pro-rated for part time employees) not being exceeded.

Part timer examples:

Per month: $14.4 \div 36 \times \text{contracted hours}$ e.g. $14.4 \div 36 \times 21.6 = 8.64$ hours per month

Full year = $144 \div 36 \times \text{contracted hours}$ e.g. $144 \div 36 \times 21.6 = 86.4$ hours per year.

Compressed hours – the maximum number of hours should not exceed 144 hours in a full year

8. Has my credit and debit limit changed?

No, these remain unchanged (maximum 18 hours' credit and 11 hours' debit for full-time employees and pro-rated for part timers)

Part timer examples:

Credit Hours: $18 \div 36 \times \text{contracted hours}$ e.g. $18 \div 36 \times 21.6 = 10.8$ hours per accounting period

Debit Hours: $-11 \div 36 \times \text{contracted hours}$ e.g. $-11 \div 36 \times 21.6 = -6.59$ hours per accounting period

9. Is there a minimum number of hours I have to work before I can leave?

Contracted to work (daily):	Minimum hours required to work:
4 hours or less	1 hour 30 minutes
More than 4 hours	3 hours

10. When does the minimum 3 hours start?

Where the minimum hours are worked, these should normally be during normal office hours of 8.45am to 5.00pm. An exception may apply where, with prior agreement from your manager, there is an operational need for you to work outwith these hours, for example to represent the Council at an evening meeting.

You may choose to start earlier but this will be in addition to time worked during 8.45am to 5.00pm.

11. Do I have to submit a request on MyView if I want to leave after working 3 hours?

No. Only full days need to be requested via MyView, anything less can be agreed in advance with your manager.

12. Can I use flexi credit and annual leave together to take a full day's leave?

No, you may;

- Work for half a day and take a half day annual leave
- Take a full day flexi
- Take a full day annual leave

The only exception is at the end of the calendar year to allow any small residual annual leave balance to be used in excess of your maximum annual leave carry forward.

13. As flexi half days are not required to be booked via MyView, how far in advance do I need to ask my manager for a morning off?

You should give your manager as much notice as possible e.g. if you would like Friday morning off you should ideally ask by Wednesday morning. In exceptional

circumstances, managers can approve time off at short notice. However, approval will be subject to there being sufficient cover to meet operational needs.

14. How will my manager record that I have asked for time off if it is not formally recorded as leave on MyView?

It is recommended that you send a calendar appointment to your manager requesting the time off (e.g. coming in late/ leaving early) therefore it will appear in both calendars once accepted.

15. Can I now leave before 3.30pm?

Yes, subject to prior approval from your manager you may clock out before 3.30pm.

Lunch and Personal Breaks

16. When should I take my lunch break?

If you clock out for at least 30 minutes between 11:00-15:00, Optimum will recognise this as a lunch break. However, if you have an earlier or later lunch outwith this time, a manual adjustment will be required through the normal approval process.

17. Do I have to take a 30 minute lunch break?

The Working Time Regulations state that employees should take a minimum unpaid uninterrupted rest break of 20 minutes where the working day is more than 6 hours. Employees who are under the age of 18 are entitled to a minimum break of 30 minutes where the working day is more than 4 hours 30 minutes.

The Council encourages all employees to take a 30 minute uninterrupted break to support your health and wellbeing. Taking a break is a proven way to sustain concentration and energy levels throughout the day.

Optimum is set up so that if you take less than a 30 minute break, 30 minutes will automatically be deducted, e.g. if you clock out for only 20 minutes, Optimum will deduct a further 10 minutes.

18. Why has the system not made the correct deduction of time when I clocked out/in twice during the period from 12noon to 3.00pm?

The system recognises the second clocking as the main break of the day and if it is less than 30 minutes, will automatically make the deduction up to 30 minutes. If this is incorrect you should submit an [adjustment request](#), via MyView, to your Line Manager for authorisation.

19. How are managers supported to monitor Optimum?

Managers have a responsibility to monitor Optimum to ensure that employees take the minimum 30 minute break in addition to any shorter periods taken during the working day.

If an employee repeatedly takes less than the 30 minute break (or no break at all if the employee works over 6 hours) this should be addressed by management. If

they continue to not take the minimum uninterrupted break, the manager should speak to Human Resources.

Abuse of the flexitime scheme including failure to comply with time recording arrangements, is regarded as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action.

20. I work less than 6 hours per day, do I need to take a lunch break?

There is no requirement to take a break if you work less than 6 hours. However, if you choose to do so you should seek prior line manager approval and clock out.

21. I am contracted to work 5 hours 30 minutes per day but on occasion I work longer do I need to take a lunch break?

It is recommended that you take a lunch break but, providing the extra time is not unreasonable or excessive and your manager is in agreement, you may work for longer.

22. Do personal breaks still apply?

Yes, the [personal breaks guidance](#) is unchanged and on each occasion you should have prior approval from your manager.

23. Why do we have personal breaks if we can now clock in/out anytime?

Most employees are able to take tea and coffee etc at their desk. However, if this is not operationally acceptable and practicable as an alternative a personal break will enable you to take a clocked in break of up to 10 minutes in the morning and afternoon in accordance with the [personal breaks guidance](#)

24. Can I regularly take more than one hour at lunch to exercise?

Yes, with prior approval from your manager you can take a longer lunch. You should be clocked out to shower or change your clothes etc if necessary before/after you exercise.

Flexi Adjustments

25. How do I make an adjustment to my flexi record?

[Guidance to make an adjustment](#) on the flexitime recording system is available to employees.

Impact on Other Policies

26. If I need to attend the doctor for a routine check-up, can I make an appointment at any time of the day?

Yes, appointments can be made throughout the day, subject to prior approval from your manager. You must remember to clock out and in. If you have a disability or medical condition covered by the Equality Act (2010) and attend your GP on a regular basis for this, a reasonable adjustment may apply.

27. I need to attend the doctor for an urgent appointment, can I claim time back?

Yes, subject to agreement with your line manager, you may claim reasonable time back the following day via MyView in accordance with the [Time off for Medical Appointments policy](#).

Examples	Eligible for Paid Time?
Experiences chest pains overnight and needs medical attention	Yes
Needs repeat prescription on same day as run out of medication	No
Surgery allocates appointments on same day basis but urgent attention is not required	No

28. I have an appointment at the hospital, can I claim time back?

Yes, the provisions for hospital appointments are unchanged as you generally do not have any input over allocation of hospital appointment times. You may claim reasonable time back the following day via MyView in accordance with the [Time off for Medical Appointments](#).

29. I have a dentist appointment at 2.30pm, can I claim the time back?

No. Dentist, optician appointments etc should be made in your own time and you should therefore clock out to attend.

30. Is Carer Leave still available?

Yes the [Carer Leave](#) arrangements remain and can be used to deal with incidents which require immediate attention. The revised flexi scheme allows employees to have greater flexibility that may be useful on occasion.

31. I think my colleague is abusing the flexi system, what should I do?

You should raise this concern with your line manager.

32. What happens during periods of severe weather?

The notional 3 hours maximum flexitime credit will continue to apply on designated days where the severe weather arrangements apply:

- 3 hours or more worked = no extra credit
- Less than 3 hours worked = maximum of 3 hours credit

See [severe weather arrangements](#) for more information

If you have any additional questions or queries regarding your Optimum account, please contact myview@pkc.gov.uk