

NASUWT

Job-share Arrangements

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Job-share Arrangements

Introduction

Job sharing is where two people voluntarily decide to share the responsibilities of one full-time job. The pay and benefits are divided between them according to the hours they work.

Job sharing is often considered by women returning to work after maternity leave and under the Flexible Working Regulations there is now a right to request this. Under these Regulations the employer could turn down the request on 'objective business grounds' but it is now well established that a refusal could be viewed by an Employment Tribunal as indirect sex discrimination.

Other teachers may also consider job sharing, for example, mature teachers wishing to reduce their hours leading up to retirement, teachers wishing to have time for further study, teachers with carer responsibilities, etc.

Advantages to the employer are:

- Two people's experience to a job, bringing complementary skills and knowledge.
- It can aid recruitment and retention of staff.
- Teachers who are highly motivated because they have a better work/life balance.
- Progress of pupils monitored by two teachers rather than one.
- Demonstrates a commitment to equal opportunities.
- The incidence of sickness is often lower among job-share partners.
- There is no evidence that job sharing has any adverse effect on education.

Applying for a job share

If you wish to change your full-time post to a job share you will need to apply to the governors via the headteacher either by letter or by completing any appropriate forms. The LEA may have a job-share policy and any procedures should be followed. If you wish to apply under the Flexible Working Regulations details are given in the booklet. Flexible Working available from your Regional Centre

Schools are sometimes reluctant to consider job-share arrangements and it is therefore essential to present a good case in your initial application. The following details should be given:

- The date you wish to commence the job share, although this could be a provisional date.
- The range of hours, days or sessions that you would like to work.
- The details, if known, of the person who wishes to share the job.
- The reason for requesting the job share – stressing your commitment to teaching in general and the school in particular but explaining the difficulties in finding childcare, or the need to reduce hours due to disability or winding down to retirement or time for study, etc.
- Practical application of the job share showing how it might be applied to future timetables.
- A statement setting out why you believe that the arrangement will be in the interests of the pupils and school using a personalised summary of the points under ‘advantages to the employer’ in the previous section.

Job-share request turned down

Obtain detailed written reasons for the refusal from the headteacher or governing body and contact your NASUWT Regional Centre (details can be found in the diary or on the website). We may contact the LEA personnel section and/or advise you about taking a case to the governing body using the grievance procedure. If it is considered appropriate to use anti-discrimination legislation there are strict time limits and it is therefore advisable to contact NASUWT at an early stage.

Finding a job-share partner

Ideally you should have a job-share partner arranged prior to application. If this is not the case, the school can agree in principle to the job-share arrangement but it could be dependant on finding a partner. The school should advertise the post in the same way they would advertise a full-time post.

Resignation of a job-share partner

If your job-share partner resigns you will be offered the full-time post. If you decline, the school should advertise the job-share post. If no suitable teacher can be found after all available and reasonable steps have been taken you could be dismissed and the full-time post advertised. As with any dismissal the school should:

- review whether there is any suitable alternative employment;
- discuss any available options;

- give written notice of the dismissal;
- give the teacher the opportunity of a hearing and an appeal.

Contract of employment

Too often employers try to offer job-share posts on a temporary basis; this should be resisted. A job-share contract should be offered on a permanent basis unless it is fixed term for an objective reason, e.g. maternity cover.

Each job-share partner will receive an individual contract specifying their post is a shared full-time post and giving details of hours, pay, conditions, etc. Job sharers should each be appointed at the appropriate incremental point and subject to normal incremental progression. It is possible for partners sharing one post to be on different incremental points. The pay will be pro rata and there should be provision for overlap time.

All conditions of service for full-time teachers should be applied to job sharers on a pro rata basis.

Working arrangements

The most usual arrangement is for each sharer to take half of the post. However, the arrangement could provide for one partner to take a higher proportion of the post than the other.

Working hours could be split between partners in a variety of ways:

- 2.5 days a week each;
- one partner could work mornings and the other one afternoons (but this would need to take account of the fact that afternoon sessions are shorter than morning sessions);
- alternate weeks.

Job-share partners should have pro rata non-contact time and provision for overlap time will be necessary to facilitate consultation over preparation and planning.

Job sharers may work additional paid hours to cover for the short-term absence of their partner. This must be voluntary, and if declined the usual cover arrangements will apply.

Only one job-share partner at any one time should be required to attend meetings, parental consultation and INSET training. Job sharers cannot be required to attend on days or at times when they are not normally available. However, if they choose to attend, additional payment based on the supply teaching rate should be paid.

Pension

Job sharers should be encouraged to remain in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Full-time teachers are automatically members of the Scheme but part-time teachers need to complete an election form.

Retirement benefits under the Teachers' Pension Scheme are calculated using the best 365 days' salary in the last 3 years of pensionable service. Retirement benefits are calculated using the 'final average salary' and 'reckonable service' figures. If you are working part time the 'final average salary' will still be the full-time equivalent salary figure. However, your 'reckonable service' for this period will be proportionately less, for example, if you work for two years at 0.5 this will count as one year's service.

National Agreement

The provisions of the National Agreement apply equally to job-share/part-time teachers as full-time teachers.

The table below shows the deadlines set out in the Agreement for the implementation of the changes:

Contractual change	To take effect on
Clerical and administrative tasks not to be routinely carried out by teachers	1 September 2003
Allocation of time for leadership and management responsibilities	1 September 2003
Reasonable work/life balance	1 September 2003
A limit on cover	1 September 2004
Minimum 10% planning, preparation and assessment time	1 September 2005
No routine invigilation of external exams	1 September 2005
Dedicated headship time	1 September 2005

Detailed information can be found in the NASUWT booklet 'A Step-by-Step Guide to Implementation'

Other booklets available in this series:

Flexible Working Regulations

Temporary Contracts

Part-time Employment

Working as a Supply Teacher

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