**How to manage the rejection of a flexible working request**

Managers must consider any request for flexible working fairly and reasonably, and in line with the time frames set out in the Flexible Working Policy. When it is unclear if a particular request is feasible, a manager may agree a trial period with the member of staff. During a trial period, there is no permanent change to terms and conditions.

Where a request cannot be agreed, either at the time of the request or at the end of a trial, the manager must ensure that there is appropriate communication with the member of staff. Ideally, the decision should be communicated face to face, and full reasons must be provided. This meeting must then be followed up in writing, and the individual notified of their right to appeal the decision. HR services should be notified and copies of any relevant notes sent for the individual’s personnel file.

A flexible working request can only be refused for one of the following reasons (the relevant reason must be stated to the individual):

* the burden of any additional costs is unacceptable
* an inability to reorganise work among existing staff
* an inability to recruit additional staff
* the University considers the change will have a detrimental impact on quality
* the University considers the change would have a detrimental effect on its ability to meet customer, student or service demand
* the University considers the change would have a detrimental impact on performance of the individual, the team or the University
* there is insufficient work during the periods that the employee proposes to work
* where the requested changes will not fit in with planned structural changes

HR can provide guidance and advice on flexible working requests. Flexible working may also be a reasonable adjustment for staff who have disabilities. Advice should be taken from DASS before rejecting a flexible working request relating to disability.