

# THE HIGHLAND & WESTERN ISLES VALUATION JOINT BOARD

## JOB SHARE POLICY

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### Introduction

Job share is a departure from traditional working arrangements whereby two employees voluntarily share the duties and responsibilities of one full time job, dividing the pay, holidays and benefits between them according to hours worked. Salary and conditions of service which apply to the post are shared between the job partners according to the amount of time that they each work. Job sharing is intended to provide flexibility of working arrangements with the advantage of allowing employees to balance career and family or other commitments and to return to, or continue working, through sharing a full time post. It can also be of interest to employees who are nearing retirement.

It is a condition of job sharing that no other remunerable employment is undertaken either within or outwith the Board including work on a self-employed basis, without the prior approval of the Assessor and the Board's Personnel Adviser (or their appropriate nominees). Job sharing arrangements must either be on a permanent basis while the participants continue to be employed, or for an agreed and pre-determined period, normally of not less than 12 consecutive months.

The Board reserves the right to re-assess any job share arrangements when part of a job share post becomes vacant for any reason, or at any other time.

### Eligibility

Job sharing will be available to all employees covered by the Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees.

Only permanent posts or fixed term or temporary contracts of over one year duration will be considered for job sharing and they must be full time posts. Part time jobs will not be included.

Within this group all posts will be eligible to be considered for job sharing subject to agreement by the Board's Personnel Adviser involved and the Assessor who will monitor the consistent application of the policy.

The decision on whether job sharing can apply to a post will be made by the department in consultation with the Board's Personnel Adviser, examining the request against the demands of the post (the duties, responsibilities and accountabilities); the needs of the department; continuity; and other arrangements necessary for effectiveness of the department and the Board.

Where a post is not regarded as suitable for job share, then the reason(s) will be specified to applicants.

## **Working Hours**

The proportion of work carried out by each job sharer will be by agreement between the sharers and the Assessor. Job sharers must each work at least 15 hours per week.

Jobs may be divided on a shared week or other arrangement with the agreement of the Assessor. Such arrangements must not be to the detriment of the department. Job sharers will be asked to submit their proposed working hours at the time of application as it is recognised that this will have an impact on the feasibility of organising a job share. The Assessor will decide if the arrangements are suitable for effective service delivery. It is essential that a normal working week (or working pattern) is established at the outset.

It is the responsibility of the Assessor and the job sharers to ensure that there is good communication to enable continuity of work.

## **Employees Sharing a Post**

Two employees will be allowed to share one full time post. They will have joint responsibility for the job, with a common job description. An employee can hold only one job share post at a time.

## **Pay**

Job sharers will be paid in accordance with the appropriate National Conditions of Service related to the number of hours worked.

All grades and salary placings will be determined in accordance with Board procedures. Salary placings, and thus incremental progression, will be determined individually for each job sharer. It will be possible for job share partners to be on different salary points within the grade and salary scale for the post.

If different patterns of work are agreed on a regular basis (for example, a short week and a long week), then the payment will be made on the basis of average weekly hours.

## **Conditions of Service**

The relevant National Conditions of Service will apply to job sharers where appropriate, unless otherwise specified.

## **Essential Car User Allowance**

Where a post is job shared both job sharers will be entitled to receive the full Essential Car Users allowance.

Actual mileage undertaken on business will be paid at the prevailing rates.

## **Maternity Leave**

Entitlement to maternity benefits is related to the employee's length of continuous service. An employee fulfilling the qualifying conditions will be entitled to maternity provisions and benefits.

An employee who wishes to commence job sharing following maternity leave should, where possible, declare such a wish to job share before going on maternity leave to allow time for the application to be considered and to make arrangements if appropriate. Consideration of the request will be against the criteria given under "eligibility". This will be without prejudice to the employee's rights under the maternity leave/maternity pay provisions.

Providing the job share application has been approved and a suitable job share partner has been appointed, return to work will be on this basis. If neither have occurred, the return to work would be on existing terms and conditions. Confirmation of return to work should be made in the normal way, three weeks before the date of return.

Leave will be calculated on the basis of full time service up to the date of return from maternity leave and part time service from the date of return on a job-share basis.

### **Annual Leave**

Entitlement to annual leave will be based on continuous service. The public holiday entitlement will be pro rata to the full time entitlement, but the entitlement for each partner may vary from year to year.

### **Overtime and Extra Hours Working**

Extra hours working is to be avoided and will not be compulsory. It will not be paid at the enhanced overtime rate until the hours actually worked by an individual post holder in any week exceed the normal full time hours of the post, e.g. 35 hours per week. It may be counted as time off in lieu, or if the flexi-time scheme applies, as a credit.

### **Sickness Entitlement**

Job sharers will be entitled to sick pay in accordance with the relevant National Conditions of Service.

### **Flexi-time**

Participation in the flexi-time scheme may be permitted depending on the demands of the post; the needs of the department; continuity; and other arrangements necessary for the effectiveness of the department and the Board.

### **Local Government Pension Scheme**

Job sharers will be entitled to enter into or remain within the Local Government Pension Scheme.

### **Eligibility for Removal/Relocation Package**

A candidate who must move home in order to take up a job share appointment to a post which would normally attract relocation and removal assistance, will be eligible for full assistance under the Board's scheme.

### **Training And Educational Opportunities**

Job sharers will be given equal training and educational opportunities as are available to other full time employees of the Board.

Where no suitable training courses are available on a job share day, then job share partners must be prepared to undertake training required by the Assessor that occurs on days or at times when they would not normally be working. Additional hours incurred should be credited to the job sharers flexi-time hours if participating in the Board's scheme or taken as paid time off at a later date. Direct payments will not normally be made for additional hours incurred while undertaking training.

## **Applying for a Jobshare**

### **Existing Employees Wishing to Job Share their Post**

Current employees may apply to share their own post by approaching their line manager who will discuss the application with the Assessor. A form of application will be provided at that time.

The line manager will advise the applicant within 4 weeks of the application being received whether the proposed job share is accepted in principle.

Where the job share is deemed unsuitable, the line manager will advise the employee promptly, giving the reason for the decision. If the employee feels aggrieved at the decision, then they have recourse through the Board's Grievance procedure.

If the job share is accepted as feasible the applicant will discuss the various arrangements with the line manager. Arrangements will be made to fill the other part of the post if it is deemed suitable for job sharing.

The post will be advertised internally. If no suitable partner is found then the post will be advertised externally. Failure to find a suitable job share partner after 2 consecutive external advertisements will be notified to the employee who will be required to continue to work full time. **Appointment will be made on the basis of the most suitable person for the post.**

Job share will be dependent on suitable arrangements being made to fill the other half of the post.

### **Vacant Full time Post Suitable for Job Share**

Where two applicants jointly apply to job share a particular vacancy they will both complete and submit application forms.

Each applicant's suitability for the post will be assessed in accordance with the Board's recruitment procedures. Where the post is suitable for job share and the job share applicants are shortlisted, the joint applicants will be considered in combination and not individually, although individual interviews will be held.

If an employee is only interested in job sharing with a specific partner then they must declare so on the form and the applications will be considered on their combined merits. If one applicant does not meet the selection criteria or is not appointed then both applications will fail.

It may be that only one job share applicant from all those interviewed is the most suitable candidate and in such circumstances the individual will be offered the job on a full time basis. If that person declines such a full time appointment then the post will be re-advertised.

As job share partners will be required to work closely together they should be given the opportunity to meet each other before any final commitment is made.

The Board's Personnel Adviser reserves the right to be represented at any interview where job share applicants are being considered.

### **When One Job Sharer Leaves**

When part of a job share becomes vacant for any reason the opportunity will be taken to review the job share arrangements in consultation with the remaining job partner. These discussions should include offering the remaining job partner the opportunity to work on a full time basis. If the job then continues on a shared basis the remaining hours will be advertised, and appointment made on merit following the recruitment procedure given above.

Where a replacement job sharer requests an amendment to the working hours arrangements this will be considered before any appointment is made and will involve the agreement of the existing sharer and line manager. However, if reallocation of hours cannot be agreed the potential new job sharer's appointment will not be confirmed. If a suitable sharer is not recruited after 2 consecutive advertisements the remaining sharer will again be offered the post on a full time basis. If accepted the job share will cease.

If it is not possible to fill satisfactorily a part of a job share post, and the remaining job sharer does not want to revert to full time, the post will be advertised on a full time basis. Reasonable efforts will be made to redeploy the remaining sharer to a suitable part time or full time vacancy but where this is not possible the contract of employment will be terminated with appropriate notice.

### **Promotion**

Two persons in a job sharing partnership may apply for promoted posts together provided the promoted post has been approved as suitable for job share. Application for promotion would require to be made under the Board's recruitment procedure. It is possible that only one job sharer is offered promotion. Where promotion is accepted then the vacant part of the post will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures given above.

### **Communicating the Policy**

#### Internally

Staff will be made aware of the policy through e-mail and accessing the document via the electronic diary. It will be drawn specifically to the attention of the Assessor and addressed specifically in the Board's recruitment policy.

#### Externally

Where appropriate a statement will appear on job details for posts considered suitable for job sharing to the effect that the Board operates a job share scheme.

### **Where the Jobshare is for a specific period**

A job share may be agreed when an employee wishes, for example, to undertake a particular educational course. This would normally be for a specific period and when the course is

completed the original postholder will wish to return to full time work. Accordingly, the partner will be employed for a temporary period. Such period would normally be not less than one year.

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