



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Department  
Of  
Human  
Resources.

## **GUIDELINES ON JOB DESIGN AND WORK ALLOCATION**

### **1. Context**

It is anticipated that changes in the business needs of departments and the University as a whole, coupled with changes in resource levels, may periodically lead to increased demands on individuals.

However whilst the University expects that all staff work flexibly and undertake additional duties and responsibilities from time to time, it is not expected that this will be sustained.

Together with their line managers, all staff should regularly review their progress towards agreed work objectives and re-prioritise their tasks if appropriate.

All staff are encouraged to discuss with their line managers any situation in which they are regularly working long hours, are experiencing increased levels of pressure over a sustained period of time.

### **2. Introduction**

The purpose of these guidelines is to promote a healthy work environment which engenders trust and co-operation between colleagues, and in which all staff are treated with dignity and respect.

These guidelines provide general guidance for all departments and University staff. Good practice already established across the University is embedded within these guidelines.

It is recognised that job design and work allocation models will vary between departments and between different roles. In all cases, the principles of fairness, transparency and open communication should underpin job design and work allocation across the University.

These guidelines apply to all staff and have been developed in full consultation with the Campus Unions.

### **3. Principles of Good Practice in Job Design**

All managers responsible for staff management, job design and work allocation should be aware of, and observe, the following principles:

- Clear communication will take place about the duties and requirements of a job when recruiting staff, and clear person specifications will be used.
- Clear job descriptions will be developed with staff to ensure that duties and responsibilities are clearly communicated and recorded.
- Clear lines of responsibility will exist for staff and managers and management structures will be in place.

- Consultation with, and open two-way communication with, staff will take place regarding the setting of departmental aims and objectives.
- Transparent and fair procedures for the allocation of work and specific duties and responsibilities will be put in place and communicated widely.
- Job design and work allocation will be based upon meeting the aims and objectives of the department and the University, taking into account individual skills and experience, individual preference and overall aspirations.
- Managers and Heads of Departments will be accessible to staff, with discussion with individual members of staff forming a key part of job design.
- Managers and Heads of Departments will be available to discuss any concerns relating to job design and workload with staff.
- Staff will not be expected to work excessive hours for sustained periods and job design and work allocation should allow staff to take appropriate breaks, in line with relevant legislation.

#### **4. Equal Opportunities in Job Design**

- Job design and work allocation practice will adhere to the principles set out in the University's Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practice. Heads of Departments are also reminded of the Excellence Through Inclusion strategy and the Staff Wellbeing initiatives.
- Heads of Departments will demonstrate reasonable flexibility to accommodate religious holidays, care of dependants and other external needs, in accordance with the University's Work Life Balance Policy and Flexible Working Procedure.
- Heads of Departments will be aware of the University's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and will demonstrate reasonable support and flexibility to accommodate the needs of staff with disabilities, in accordance with legislation and good practice.
- Job design and workload allocation practice will ensure that full-time and part-time staff are treated in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practice for Staff. Where staff work part-time, care will be taken to ensure that they do not carry a proportionally higher workload.
- Heads of Department will be aware of the legal requirement to allow reasonable time off for trade union activities and of the University's policy to allow reasonable time off for public duties.

#### **5. Responsibilities of Heads of Departments**

- Ensuring that where significant changes to the duties and responsibilities of staff are proposed these are discussed as far as possible in advance with the staff and communicated widely in the department.
- Ensuring that the development needs of new staff and those in their probationary period are taken into account in order to allow staff to develop fully in their new role.
- Ensuring that line managers, including grant-holders, take appropriate action to monitor the workloads of their staff.

#### **6. Responsibilities of Staff**

- Raising any concerns regarding job design and the allocation of duties and responsibilities with the relevant manager or their Head of Department.
- Renewing and updating their expertise and knowledge, recognising that they are dependent upon this for their continued effectiveness.

**Department of Human Resources**  
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