

# Flexi-time (Officers)

Procedure

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## Overview

### What is this about?

We want to have a flexible and adaptable workforce, giving our people the autonomy to manage their working time to the mutual benefit of themselves and the organisation. Here, we set out the arrangements for using and managing flexi-time.

### Who is this for?

This is for officers of the Inspecting and Superintending ranks.

### Key information

* Flexi-time is a way that officers can balance work and home life while still ensuring that service needs are met.
* Flexi-time is available to officers at Inspecting and Superintending ranks.
* Flexi-time only needs to be recorded on days when there is a change to an officer’s rostered hours or when additional hours are worked.
* Flexi-time does not affect the personal responsibility for all officers to record their own working time on SCoPE.
* There are no ‘core hours’ that you are required to work.
* Officers eligible for flexi-time must not accrue flexi-time when they are otherwise being compensated for time worked, i.e. required to work on a rest day, public holiday, annual leave or whilst on a double-lock deployment.
* Normal rules regarding additional hours for part-time officers will apply and should be claimed in the first instance before flexi-time is accrued.
* The annual leave year is broken into 13 four week accounting periods for flexi-time. Accounts should be updated for review at the end of each four week period.
* Managers are responsible for overseeing the application, use and recording of their team’s flexi-time.

## Staff/Officer

### What you need to do:

* Accurately record any flexi-time using the recording system in place and maintain your flexi record throughout the year.
* Be accurate and thorough with your records and make sure that you follow the rules of the scheme.
* Manage your time to ensure that you do not build up an excess of hours in credit or deficit.
* For flexi-time arrangements to work there needs to be co-operation between you and your manager. You are expected to manage your time according to your personal workload, working pattern and operational needs and keep your manager informed about your use of flexi-time.
* You might build up flexi-time credit when your workload increases or you are working towards a specific goal. Flexi credit should only be built up where there is a business need for additional time to be worked.
* Keep your manager informed about any concerns over your flexi-time balances and discuss options with them to lessen any problems.
* At the end of each four week accounting period you must get your flexi record checked and agreed by your manager.

### Recording flexi-time

To benefit from flexi-time you need to record changes to your rostered hours or any additional hours you worked. You will need to complete a flexi-time recording spreadsheet and update SCoPE to record for Working Time Regulation (WTR) purposes.

There is a template flexi-time recording spreadsheet included as a resource with this procedure.

You must record entries on the spreadsheet when flexi-time is gained or used. It is your choice if you want to record days where no flexi-time applies.

When updating the spreadsheet, you must make sure that the pattern on your flexi-time record includes your rostered start and end time and your actual start and end time in the appropriate columns. You will also need to include any extra time worked, such as recall to duty.

You must update SCoPE if you alter your rostered hours or book any flexi-time off work. When updating SCoPE to take time off you should amend the duty roster by using the Add/Amend Duty function from the dropdown list.

You must ensure that your record is updated on your spreadsheet at the end of each four week accounting period and retained for monitoring and audit purposes.

### Positive balances and time off

You can build up flexi-time hours in credit during each accounting period, a maximum of 16 hours can be carried over into the next accounting period. Any credit over 16 hours will not be carried over.

You can request up to two of your full normal working days’ flexi-time off during each accounting period. This can also be broken down into half days or hours if you prefer.

You normally need to request time off at least 24 hours in advance. Requests need to be agreed by your manager and are subject to operational demands.

### Negative balances and time back

A maximum of eight hours deficit can be built up within an accounting period in exceptional circumstances. Any deficit larger than this may be considered to be an unauthorised absence.

Any deficit hours must be made up as soon as reasonably practicable, taking individual circumstances into account. Deficits should not be carried into the next accounting period.

### Appropriate use of flexi-time

Flexi-time is a system that is based on trust, any misuse of flexi-time may be considered a breach of that trust.

Any misuse and/or abuse of flexi-time may result in a requirement to clear a deficit if appropriate and/or may be referred to Professional Standards Department (PSD) for consideration and disciplinary action.

Routine dentist, GP or opticians appointments etc. are expected to be made out with working hours however flexi-time can be used to accommodate them if operational circumstances allow.

### Leaving your post

If you leave, or change role within Police Scotland you should make sure that your flexi-time balance is zero. If you leave you will not be paid for any flexi-time in credit and if you have a deficit, we will claim back time that is owed from your final salary.

## Manager

### What you need to do:

* Ensure any flexi-time worked is correctly requested and recorded using the system in place at your team member’s work location.
* Review and monitor officer flexi-time records at the end of each four week accounting period, creating an auditable record for the full year to ensure accuracy and maintain a healthy work life balance in your team.
* Review applications for flexi-time off in accordance with business needs and individual circumstances.
* For flexi-time arrangements to be successful there needs to be co-operation between officers and management. Your officers are expected to arrange their time according to their workload, working pattern and operational needs and to keep you informed about their use of flexi-time as appropriate.
* Address any concerns you have with your officers about their flexi-time records and discuss options with them to rectify any problems.

### Recording flexi-time

To benefit from flexi-time your officers will have to accurately record any changes to rostered hours or additional hours they work. A flexi-time recording spreadsheet can be found in the resources section of this procedure.

Your team will need to update the spreadsheet when flexi time is gained or used.

Your team must make sure that their flexi-time record includes rostered start and end time and actual start and end time in the appropriate columns. Your team also need to include any extra time worked, such as recall to duty and any extra time taken.

You must make sure that the pattern showing on their flexi-time record is accurate and, if your officers have any time off arranged, that their record reflects that correctly.

SCoPE must be updated to reflect any changes to record for WTR purposes. Amendments to the duty roster can be made by right clicking on the relevant individual and using the Add/Amend Duty function from the dropdown list.

### Managing positive balances and requests for time off

A team member can build up credit hours within an accounting period although they should try not to let this get too high, bearing in mind carry-over limits as appropriate.

You are responsible for ensuring that they manage their flexi-time balance appropriately and are mindful of their work life balance.

The maximum credit carry over into the next accounting period is 16 hours. Any credit over 16 hours will not be carried over.

Officers can request up to two of their full normal working days flexi-time off during each accounting period. This can be broken down into half days or hours if they prefer. Officers will normally need to request this at least 24 hours in advance.

When considering a request for flexi-time off you should check they have sufficient hours in credit and also review business and operational requirements before making a decision.

Your team member is responsible for updating their own flexi-time record.

### Managing negative balances and time back

Sometimes situations arise that mean a negative flexi-time balance is created.

You are responsible for assisting your team to minimise this possibility and helping them manage the situation if it does occur.

A maximum of eight hours deficit can be built up within an accounting period. Any deficit larger than this may be considered to be an unauthorised absence.

All deficit hours must be made up as soon as reasonably practicable, taking individual circumstances into account. Deficits should not be carried into the next accounting period.

### Appropriate use of flexi time

The use of flexi-time is based on trust, any misuse of flexi time could be considered a breach of that trust.

Misuse and/or abuse of flexi-time in your team will need to be dealt with appropriately. Possible outcomes could include a requirement to work back hours if appropriate and/or referral to PSD for consideration and disciplinary action.

Routine dentist, GP or opticians appointments are expected to be made out with working hours however flexi-time can be used to accommodate them if operational circumstances allow.

### Maintenance and monitoring

You are required to review your team member’s flexi-time record at the end of each accounting period to ensure it is accurate.

You should check that scheduled hours are accurately recorded as per their working pattern as well as the actual times that they worked.

If annual leave or any other authorised time off is included in that accounting period you should ensure that no flexi credit is gained on those days. Equally if flexi-time off has been granted and taken their flexi record should reflect that.

Once you are content that the record is an accurate reflection of the hours worked you can sign off the accounting period and discuss any carry over if appropriate.

All records must be accurately maintained and retained for audit purposes. Please refer to the Records Retention and Management link below in the Information Governance Section for guidance.

## Resources

### How to Guides

* Flexi-time recording spreadsheet

### Reference Documents

* Frequently Asked Questions Officer/Manager

### Related Procedures

* Flexible Working
* Annual Leave (Officers)

### Useful Links

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**Feedback**

All Police Scotland People Policies and Procedures are subject to regular reviews. It is important that user feedback is taken into account when documents are reviewed.

If anyone wants to provide comment, or make suggestions for improvements to this or any associated document, please email

***Exempted Section 30 (c) - Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs***

Appendix A

Frequently Asked Questions – Officer

#### How do I record my worked time?

You will need to use a flexi-time recording spreadsheet. A version of this can be found in the resources section.

#### I want to arrange some flexi-time off what do I need to do?

Firstly speak to your line manager and make sure the time off you want can be accommodated then you will need to update your record with the time off. If they give you the go ahead you will then need to update the hours you work on your flexi-time record. If you have the whole day off your rostered hours will be what you were due to work and your actual hours worked will be zero.

#### I have gone into a negative balance on my flexi record, what does that mean?

If you have created a negative flexi-time balance you will need to make up the hours in the following days to make sure that you are back in credit as quickly as possible. You should discuss the situation with your line manager if you are coming to the end of an accounting period or if you are concerned that you might struggle to bring yourself back into credit again.

#### I have more than 16 hours of flexi-time and I can’t take any time off before the end of the accounting period, what do I do?

You will need to speak to your line manager and allow them to review the situation with you. The circumstances leading to your flexi balance being so high will need to be discussed.

**Can flexi can be gained if I am on-call and take a call in the evening after a full shift, which requires me to work?**

Yes. The on-call allowance is a payment to recognise the restrictions placed on you during the period you are on-call, not the time actually worked.

When you are on-call between rostered shifts, any hours actually worked within that period would count towards flexi-time accrual, because you are not otherwise being compensated for that time worked. If there was no call-out/requirement to work within that period then there would be no flexi-time accrued.

**Can flexi be gained when I am required to work on a rest day?**

You will not accrue flexi-time when you are otherwise being compensated for time worked e.g. requirement to work on a rest day. The normal working hours on a day which was a rest day and has now become a normal working day is 8 hours, regardless of whether the officer works on a VSA or not.  Therefore any duty performed beyond 8 hours can be accrued as flexi-time.

Where an officer of inspecting or superintending rank is on-call on a rest day, a requirement to work/call-out would be compensated through the provision of a re-rostered rest day (RRD) so there would be no accrual of flexi-time in that circumstance.  If there was no call-out/requirement to work within that period then there would be no additional RRRD provided.

**I have a dentist appointment and** i**t is during my working day, can I use Flexi-time?**

We expect you to make routine dentist, GP or opticians appointments out with working hours however flexi-time can be used to accommodate them if operational circumstances allow.

#### I have a personal appointment early afternoon, can I work from 7.00-12.00 and then 16.00-19.00 that day to accommodate this?

Yes, you may work these hours providing you have agreed this with your manager as operational requirements still have to be met.

**I have booked flexi-time off but I am now off sick from work. What will happen?**

If you are unable to use your flexi-time leave, you should notify your manager and update yourflexi-time record and SCoPE to cancel the time booked. You will be able to use your time on another day.

#### I need to have a late start one day but wouldn’t need a half day flexi off. Can I arrange with my manager to start at 11.00 and work until 19.00 as I have plenty of work to do?

Yes, providing you have the agreement of your manager.

#### If the business allows and I have flexi to support this, could I work for two hours and then finish for the day?

Yes, providing you have the agreement of your manager.

**I work part-time, when should I record part-time additional hours and when do I record flexi-time?**

Normal rules regarding additional hours for part-time officers will apply and should be claimed in the first instance before flexi-time is accrued. Part-time officers should only accrue flexi-time once they have worked the equivalent of full-time hours in a relevant week.

This distinction is important because if you are part-time and claim additional hours you will not only receive pensionable pay but you will also accrue additional annual leave hours on a pro-rata basis dependant on the number of additional hours worked throughout the leave year.

Appendix B

Frequently Asked Questions – Manager

#### Does this flexi-time scheme work for my team?

Although officers of the inspecting and superintending ranks have a published duty roster detailing shift patterns, flexi-time means that they have the ability to not have to default to these hours and can flex within the parameters of the scheme and as business requires. Having the ability to flexibly manage their working time means that issues such as travel to and from work, caring responsibilities or emergencies are managed more easily and at shorter notice whilst still meeting the needs of the business.

#### I am not sure how flexi-time will work for my team, how can I make sure that service needs are met and still facilitate it?

It is your responsibility to ensure that business needs are met by your team but even though there may be a requirement to provide cover between certain hours this does not mean that flexi-time cannot be used. You should discuss this with your team and ensure that they are aware of the requirement to provide cover and allow them to make arrangements as required. You should encourage them to discuss flexi-time use with each other and you, particularly if they know in advance if they are going to be in late or otherwise differ from their usual working day.

#### My team work a variety of patterns; how do I keep on top of things?

The starting point for hours worked is an officer’s published duty roster. As long as you know what each of your team members work you can make sure their patterns are recorded correctly. On the flexi recording sheet you can check if any flexi has used or gained at the end of every four weeks and ensure the time scheduled and worked is correct. You should ensure that any changes to rostered hours or additional hours are recorded on SCoPE for Working Time Regulation (WTR).

#### I have a team member who wants to come in for a few hours take a long break and then come back to complete their day; is this allowed?

Flexi-time is fine to use for this sort of arrangement as long as you are happy with the hours they work and business needs are met.

#### My team member wants to use flexi-time if they are running late for their shift. Can this be done?

Flexi-time should be used in line with business requirements and where possible agreed in advance. It is understood that there may be some occasions where advance notice is not always possible and flexi-time may be appropriate. Officer and manager should also be mindful of other types of leave which may be more appropriate such as Special Leave.

#### I work remotely from my team, how does this work for me?

As you work remotely from your team there is probably an element of trust in play already. The flexi recording system will formalise and standardise the records that you may already keep and ensure that your staff maintain a good work life balance with an auditable record.

#### I think one of my team may be abusing the flexi-time system, what do I do?

Have a look at their records and at an appropriate time review it with them. If there are any concerns about their time keeping or the records then discuss this with the individual concerned and ensure they are clear about how to use the flexi-time recording system. If any adjustments need to be made to that reporting period ensure that they are carried out. Make sure that the individual is clear about their responsibilities and arrange to carry out a further review at the end of the next accounting period. If the abuse/misuse of flexitime is chronic and/or sustained you may wish to consider referring to PSD for consideration and disciplinary action. Consider all circumstances and ensure that individual welfare issues are looked at before proceeding down this path. You would be advised to speak to People Direct to discuss any concerns before taking any formal action.

#### One of my team has asked for flexi-time off but they do not have enough credit, what do I do?

You need to consider if you can support the time off and what it is for. Managers have discretion to allow the creation of a negative flexi-time balance but individual circumstances must be taken into consideration. The other thing you may wish to consider is the likelihood of the balance being made up in good time. Remember that a negative balance should be paid back before the end of the accounting period. Perhaps other forms of leave may be more appropriate and you should refer to the annual leave procedure and the special leave procedure depending on individual circumstances involved.

Appendix C

Guidance for Flexi-time Recording Template

Flexi-Time only needs to be recorded where there is a change to your rostered hours or when additional hours are worked. It is your choice if you want to record days where no flexi-time applies.

If you are part time you must claim part time additional hours via SCoPE until you have completed the full time equivalent (FTE). If not claimed correctly you will lose your entitlement to additional annual leave. You may still use flexi-time to alter your rostered hours or take time off in the middle of a shift.

You should not accrue flexi-time when you are otherwise being compensated for time worked, i.e. required to work on a rest day, public holiday annual leave or whilst on a double-lock deployment.

When updating the spreadsheet, you must make sure that the pattern of your flexi-time record includes your rostered start and end time and your actual start and end time in the appropriate columns. You will also need to include any extra time worked, such as recall to duty, and any extra time take off during your shift.

You must update SCoPE if you alter your rostered hours or book any flexi-time off work to ensure Operational Base Levels (OBLs) are accurate. When updating SCoPE you should amend the duty roster by using the following Add/Amend Duty function form the dropdown list.

 

Using the Flexi-time Recording Template

The Summary tab in the workbook is a summary of the total of all balances across each of the 13 accounting periods for the year. Each accounting period has its own tab and balances from one accounting period automatically populate the outstanding flex-time balance to the next accounting period.

Columns which are headed in grey are the only columns you need to populate. All other fields will auto populate with the relevant balances.

The ‘Extra’ Time Worked (Recall etc.)’ column is where you complete the total number of hours you have worked which fall outside your actual working day e.g. recall to duty between rostered shifts. You may be interrupted a number of times but you are only required to submit the total time worked. This auto-populates the ‘Extra Time Worked/Taken’ column on the right hand side.

This effectively means you have two totals that cumulatively form your flexi-time balance, once for additional time worked during a shift and another for extra time worked between shifts.

If you shorten a shift to use up some time (either starting late or finishing early) then flexi balance will automatically adjust. However, if you want to use some time during your shift e.g. to attend a personal meeting you populate the Extra Time Taken Off During Shift column with the total amount of time you have used. Again this may be for one or more breaks in the one shift but you are only required to include the total amount of Extra Time Taken.

The bar to move the spreadsheet horizontally has minimised and is in the right hand bottom corner of the spreadsheet. If you click on the arrow heads this will allow you to navigate the page.

