

Guidance for Recruiting Managers:

Designing roles to support job sharing

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1. Introduction

The University of Greenwich is committed to creating a flexible, inclusive, and supportive working environment for all staff. In line with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and People strategies, we recognise the value that job sharing can offer in attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

This guidance provides practical support for recruiting managers to consider, design, and implement roles suitable for job sharing. It also sets out expectations for inclusive recruitment processes and how to ensure these arrangements work effectively once in place.

2. What is job sharing?

Job sharing is a form of flexible working where two employees share the duties and responsibilities of a full-time position. Each job sharer works on a part-time basis, with the role structured to ensure continuity and effective delivery of objectives.

Common arrangements include:

- **Split week:** e.g., one employee works Monday – Wednesday, the other Wednesday – Friday.
- **Alternate weeks or blocks.**
- **Task-based division:** responsibilities are divided based on role functions.

3. Benefits of job sharing

Job sharing offers benefits to both individuals and the organisation:

- Attract talent and broaden access to roles for individuals unable to work full-time.
- Supports work-life balance and mental wellbeing and caring responsibilities.
- Improves retention and return-to-work rates, particularly after career breaks.
- Enhances business continuity through shared knowledge and cover.
- Supports our institutional goals for EDI and inclusive recruitment.

4. Identifying roles suitable for job sharing

Most roles can be adapted to support job sharing with appropriate planning, however not every role will be suitable for job sharing and it will depend on the individual role. The following should be considered:

- Does the role have defined deliverables or project-based outcomes.
- Can thorough and planned handovers be maintained consistently.
- Will there be opportunities for both independent and collaborative work.

Roles suitable for job sharing:

- Professional services (e.g., HR, marketing, finance, administration).
- Academic administration and support.
- Student-facing roles (e.g., academic, advising, wellbeing).
- Project management and coordination roles.

5. Role design considerations

When designing a role for job sharing, consider the following:

a) Job Description and person specification

- Include inclusive language such as: *"We welcome applications from individuals seeking job share opportunities."*
- Clarify if responsibilities are divisible or shared.

b) Work patterns and handover

- Define proposed working arrangements.
- Ensure adequate budget is available (liaising with Finance contacts).
- Plan how job sharers will share updates and maintain continuity.

c) Communication and Collaboration

- Enable access to shared systems e.g., email inbox, shared documents.
- Set clear expectations around collaboration and team interaction, e.g. ensuring handover/notification is provided in periods of absence.

d) Management Structure

- Ensure both job sharers are line-managed equitably.
- Agree arrangements for individual appraisals and check-ins.
 - Neither staff member's performance and/or conduct would be contingent to the others as they would still be assessed as separate employees.

6. Advertising and recruitment

a) Advertising the Role

- Clearly state openness to job share arrangements in job adverts.
- Example text: *"This role is open to job sharing."*
 - Liaise with People Directorate to discuss other advertising means, e.g. staff networks and alternate websites.

b) Receiving Applications

- Individual expressions of interest in job sharing.

- Ensure recruitment systems can log and track shared applications appropriately.
- Enable an option for applicants to outline/indicate desire to work on a job share or any other similar arrangement.

c) Interview and Selection

- Maintain separate interviews- all applicants would still be assessed individually, however where a full-time role is requested to be worked on a job share arrangement, this should be noted.
- Assess compatibility, communication style, and shared vision for the role.
- Include assessment tasks/activities referencing job share to identify candidate's understanding of the potential working arrangement.

d) Decision Making

- Evaluate job sharers on both individual merit.
- Ensure consistency with organisational recruitment principles.

7. Appointing and onboarding job sharers

- Prepare individual contracts that reflect shared role arrangements.
 - Liaising with Staff Visa Compliance colleagues where non-UK and Irish candidates are offered a role.
- Organise an induction covering systems, team roles, and expectations and chemistry meeting to support candidate in managing job share arrangement.
- Encourage early development of a shared communication plan.
- Schedule regular individual reviews and line management check-ins with both individuals.

8. Supporting job sharing in practice

To ensure job share success:

- Define shared objectives and key performance indicators.
- Hold regular joint reviews to discuss goals and performance.
- Enable flexibility if adjustments are needed based on feedback or operational needs.
- Offer professional development opportunities equally to both individuals.

9. Case studies

Although there isn't an exhaustive list of job share arrangements within the University, common job share arrangements that can be explored include a 1 FTE Professional Services role, that is split across two members of staff, relatively proportionately.

Depending on each respective staff member's work pattern, this can include some period of overlap and direct collaboration, alternatively one may pick up in the other's absence. In any case, this has been successfully implemented within the PD

previously, with the key to success being a continuous level of communication and handover to prevent any disruptions to service delivery.

Nevertheless, other Higher Education institutions have also adopted flexible working practices such as job shares successfully, including the University of Cambridge, as seen with their Academic staff via their [SPACE \(Supporting Parents and Carers @ Cambridge\) programme](#).

Per this programme, a successful job share programme can be seen through the Professor(s) of Material Sciences role, held by Ruth Cameron and Serena Best, who currently work 0.8 FTE.

While the exact details of the post holders working arrangements have changed over the years to adapt to external circumstances. At present, Ruth works over 5 days while Serena over 4 days per week.

On an everyday basis they share most of their responsibilities, while some projects are particularly closely linked with one or the other, generally both are involved in projects together. This unique arrangement allows them to work together and, if necessary, for one to make a decision on behalf of the other.

This highlights how in a team, one can support each other and be altogether more effective. In this case, both have recently been awarded a joint Fellowship by the EPSRC in recognition, by the wider scientific community, due in part to their collaborative working arrangements.

Moreover, the Department has always been very supportive of their working arrangements- both were originally Lecturers when they first reduced their hours and have since been able to progress to Professorships without issue and through the entirety of their flexible working, every 2-3 years, both renew their flexible working arrangements on re-evaluating their circumstances to decide what is best for all involved.

10. Support and resources

To help managers design and implement job sharing arrangements, advice and support is available from the relevant People Operations Adviser and HR Business Partner for your faculty/directorate. Additionally, the following university resources are also available:

- [Job Advert Templates](#)
- [EDI Policy Statement](#)
- [Flexible Working Policy and Procedure](#)
- Working principles

11. Monitoring and review

This guidance will be reviewed by the PD and EDI team. Managers are encouraged to provide feedback to support continuous improvement.

For support or further advice, please contact [Horizon Help Desk](#)