

Case studies of flexible working (Names have been changed):

Jim has two young children who are under school age. He works a compressed 3-week period which means that every third Friday he is not at work. The arrangement is subject to work pressures and so the Friday is flexible and can change with mutual agreement. Both he and his manager gain from this arrangement, he can take care of his children every third Friday and save on childcare costs and his manager benefits from a committed worker who works outside core office hours and can therefore be more productive during 'quieter periods'.

Keith is a senior manager. His partner gave birth to their premature baby while they were on annual leave outside the UK. Mother and baby could not be discharged from hospital care for a number of weeks. Keith and his manager agreed that remote working would work on a short term basis. Everyone gained. Mother and baby are well and back in the UK. Father was able to provide support to his family at a worrying time, reduce his level of stress and continue to work at the same time. And his manager was able to manage business continuity, did not need to arrange replacement cover, and retained a valued and even more committed member of staff.

James has two school-age children. He starts work at 8am which means that he is able to be at home when his children finish school and his manager has someone in the office who can offer a customer service outside office hours.

Ann is disabled because of a health condition and has an elderly widowed mother who lives over 250 kilometres away from her without any close family support. She works a 9-day fortnight which means that she can look after own health whilst at the same time visiting her mother on a regular basis to provide support. This type of flexible working fits in with the nature of her work and she uses her iPhone and laptop to check if there are urgent messages and act on these on the day that she is not in the office. Her manager gains because Ann's sickness absence is below the School's average of 3.8 days per calendar year.

Geraldine is a senior manager of a large team of staff and a single mother of a school-age child. The Easter and Christmas School closures are very convenient for her in terms of childcare and she takes paid and unpaid leave every summer for the same reason. The unpaid leave arrangement suits her manager very well because most of some of units close down over the summer period.

Rosemary works for an hour at home from 6am, then stops to get her children up and have breakfast with them, so that she has a little time with them before leaving for work. She then travels to work to resume working. Her manager travels abroad a great deal and he appreciates getting a response to the emails that he has sent from the other side of the world during the early hours of UK time. One day of the week she works from home so that she can take her children to and from school. Her manager knows that the flexibility works both ways, and if there are urgent deadlines or meetings she is happy to come in early or work late on those occasions.

Matthew is a new father and he wants to be home for his baby's final feed of the day so his manager has agreed to change his working hours to 8.30-16.30. His manager gains because he knows that Matthew is prepared to log on to his email inbox in the evening in order to meet any urgent deadlines.

Greg has two children aged 24 months and 7 months and works full time. His wife is a part-time solicitor. Before Greg came to the LSE four years ago he worked in the private sector and had a very rigid working pattern and 12-hour days. After attending the '*Balancing Work and Being Dad*' he felt confident about talking to his manager about working flexibly. Now he can do the nursery run with his eldest child and be on hand to help out at bedtime. His manager judges him on his output rather than the hours he works. "Everyone trusts that I will do the work and I am judged on getting the work done rather than the hours I do. Knowing that I need to get the work done so I can leave on time, I am much more focused rather than pondering on things". The benefits for the LSE of this flexible approach are that they have a happy, motivated employee who is not constantly stressed about missing his children and is less likely to leave the organisation. Plus, says Greg, going home to a 'completely different world', he says, puts work issues in perspective. "I can step back a little more and take a different perspective on the issues and not be totally consumed by the pressures of work or end up running on empty," he says.