



Changes to Working Arrangements - Manager Guide



Contents

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Minor changes to working arrangements	3
3.	Changes to working arrangements: Step-by-step	3

1. Introduction

Keeping pace with our external environment means our business must constantly adapt. This can mean re-considering our employees' working arrangements to meet the changing needs of the business. This could include:

- redefining job responsibilities or content
- changing reporting lines
- working at different locations
- changes to working patterns (outside of changes within a pre-agreed shift pattern or roster)

Employees have a contractual obligation to demonstrate reasonable flexibility, whilst we have an obligation to act reasonably in managing any changes.

This guidance will help you to think about and manage changes to working arrangements; ensuring that you manage these situations reasonably and effectively, and in accordance with the principles that we have agreed with the Nationwide Group Staff Union (NGSU). The following principles apply whenever you are proposing changes to working arrangements, whether these affect one person or a team of people:

- we will seek volunteers wherever possible
- where no, or insufficient, volunteers are identified then changes to working arrangements must be made in accordance with the employee's contractual terms and conditions of employment*
- changes can only be made following individual consultation with the employee
- reasonable account must be taken of an individual's personal circumstances before implementing changes to working arrangements

This guide will take you through the steps of considering changes to working arrangements, and how to discuss these with your employees and manage these situations reasonably.

****If you believe that there is a genuine business need to consider changes to your employee's working arrangements which would fall outside of their existing terms and conditions of employment you should contact your HR Business Partner in the first instance to discuss your business need. For example, where there is a need to propose a change outside of the hours of an individual's existing contract framework. There may be a need to collectively consult with the NGSU under the Employee Involvement Committee structure, and your HR Business Partner will be able to provide further advice on managing such changes. You can seek information on your employee's existing contract of employment from AskHR.***

2. Minor changes to working arrangements

From time to time, you may need to discuss minor changes with employees. These types of changes could occur regularly, for example reporting lines, or the redistribution of work within a team. Alternatively, you may be aware of an employee's ability or desire, to vary their working arrangements.

Very minor changes can usually be discussed and mutually agreed with the employee without a need to conduct prolonged consultation, though it is still important that you involve employees in these changes. Minor or short term changes could be discussed and agreed within your team meetings, or during 1:1 discussions. However it is still important to follow the principles set out in the introduction during your discussions. In particular you should seek volunteers where more than one person could meet the need.

3. Changes to working arrangements: Step-by-step

Step 1: Consider the need for the change

Firstly consider carefully whether the business need you have identified can be addressed in another way without impacting existing working arrangements. You should think carefully about the following:

- what is the business' need for change?
- what alternatives have you considered to address the business need?
- how might the changes affect individuals?
- is the requirement temporary or for a longer duration?

If you believe that it is not possible to achieve the business requirements without impacting on individual working arrangements you should discuss this with your senior manager before proceeding to Step 2. Contact your HR Business Partner if your proposals for change fall outside of the existing contractual arrangements of your employees.

Step 2: Work with your team to find a solution

Involving employees in understanding the need for change and in identifying ways that this can be achieved can lead to an outcome that employees feel engaged in and happy to adapt to. Whilst it is not always possible to find a solution that suits all involved, involving your team in this discussion can help find a mutually acceptable outcome, which may be a different solution to the one you originally proposed.

Work with your team by clearly explaining the business need for different working arrangements and allow your team to work together to find potential solutions that can address the business need. You may find that volunteers come forward to meet the business need, or the team find another solution which suits both their needs and the business needs. Be open to suggestions, including trialling solutions where appropriate. You may even find that the team is able to identify a solution which not only meets your original needs, but delivers even greater levels of service or performance.

Consider carefully any proposals put forward by your employees and explain if it is not possible to adopt these and why. If you do reach an agreement which results in changes to some or all of your team members working arrangements then notify HR of any changes (see Step 5 below for more information of how to do this).

If working through this step does not resolve your business need, speak with your manager and take advice from your HR Business Partner before proceeding to Step 3.

Step 3: Planning for consultation

Where initial discussions with your team have not resulted in a suitable solution, you will need to prepare for consultation with your employees by working through the following steps:

- Where there are no or insufficient volunteers, or where the change only affects one person you need to check the employee(s) contract of employment to assess whether it provides the flexibility to meet the business requirement. Wording of contracts can change from time to time and some contracts include a period of notice which might need to be given for any changes to things such as hours or location. Make sure you consider the actual statement of terms and conditions of employment, together with any other documented agreements that might have varied the original terms. If you need help to identify this information, contact AskHR. If you work in the Branch Network, the Branch Network Working Arrangements Policy confirms the main contractual arrangements that apply to working arrangements for all employees in job level 1-3 non SE (excluding employees in Nationwide Financial Planning) from 1 January 2013.
- Consider the impact of the change as follows, both at the outset and through subsequent consultation with the employee:
- Location:
 - How far away is the new site?
 - How long would it take the employee to travel to the new site by modes of transport reasonably available to them? (Approximately 45 minutes one way, from the employee's home, is normally considered reasonable)

- Will the new location involve an increase of expense?
- Does it attract a location allowance – or will the move mean they are no longer eligible?
- Hours or working pattern – consider the impact of the change to the employee in light of any personal circumstances, such as caring arrangements, and how these can be resolved. Also, if your employee works on a part-time basis, remember that changes to their working pattern may affect the calculation of their Public Holiday leave surplus or deficit (for more information, see our [Public Holiday Calculators](#)). Consider the impact of the proposed changes during your discussion with your employee
- Other impact – are there any other impacts or concerns raised by the employee that you should consider and how, if at all, can these be addressed? For example your employee might have commitments outside of work that would make it difficult for them to work the proposed hours. This might include things like childcare or other caring responsibilities, study or volunteering commitments
- Consider what support under Nationwide's policies may be available to the employee to help with their transition to a new location / working arrangements (such as any specified phase out arrangements)

Once you have fully considered all of these factors, you are now ready to start consultations with your employee(s) under Step 4.

Step 4: Individual consultation

A [pro-forma](#) to assist you work through the steps of individual consultation is available and you should use this to record your discussions if you need to progress to Step 4. If you work in the Branch Network, you should complete this pro-forma via WorkSmart (code RETHR02).

There is no minimum period of time for consultation; this will depend on the nature of the proposed change and the permanency of the change. Consultation should however be meaningful and incorporate the following elements:

- meet on a one to one basis and set out the business need and how the proposed change will affect the employee / team
- allow employee(s) a reasonable period to reflect on the proposal and then arrange a further meeting to discuss their feedback
- listen and respond to any concerns or views raised. If the proposed change affects working hours you may receive requests for flexible working during this period, and the period of consultation should include listening and responding to these requests in accordance with the Flexible Working Policy, which can be found in the HR Policy Point.
- consider and respond to any alternative suggestions made by the employee (even where you have already sought feedback from the team under step 2)

During your consultation you must be open to reviewing and revising your proposals where viable alternatives are put forward. Even if you believe that you have already identified the only solution to your business need, remember that this remains a proposal until you have completed the consultation process.

Your HR Business Partner can advise you on an appropriate period of time for the consultation period, taking into account the extent of your proposed changes and the number of employees affected. You may need to extend the consultation period if needed to cover all of the points listed above. You need to also make sure that you can consult with employees who are away from work. When the consultation is completed you should reflect and consider if it is still necessary to proceed with the proposals. Discuss your next steps with your senior manager and HR Business Partner. You should always confirm to your team the outcome of the consultation in writing, even if you have not proceeded with your original proposals.

Information is available under You and Nationwide (on Nationwide's intranet) on how to develop your communication, influencing and facilitation skills.

4a) If a selection is required

You may have a group of employees who could equally fulfil the business need. If a selection is necessary, and where there are no volunteers, make sure your selection process is fair and free from discrimination; you can take more advice from your HR Business Partner.

You also need to consider the ability of the individual(s) to agree with the request, in light of any personal circumstances they may have, and also whether the contract of employment they have incorporates the flexibility you are proposing. An example of this is given below:

Example (not applicable in the Branch Network after 1 November 2012): You need to extend coverage of the team beyond 5pm to meet a customer need. 50% of your team are on a pre 1 Dec 2000 (9am - 5pm) contract and 50% on an 8am – 8pm contract. Before making a final selection you should seek volunteers; this may solve your need. If not make a fair selection; you will need to take into account any differences in the employee's contract together with the ability of the employee to comply with the request. Unless any of the employees on a pre 1 Dec 2000 contract agree to vary their terms, your selection will need to be made from those employees on an 8am – 8pm contract. You also need to consider the impact on the individual and his/her ability to meet the request. This could mean excluding individuals who have caring responsibilities or other genuine reasons that would make it difficult for them to work the proposed hours. This may not always be possible and ultimately the business need will have to be balanced against the need the individual impact.

Step 5: Implementing the change

If it has been necessary to continue with your proposals after Step 4, you will need to confirm the changes and action these. Where appropriate, HR will assist you to produce written confirmation to your employees:

- unless the employee has agreed otherwise, provide at least the minimum notice provided for in the relevant term of the employee's statement of terms and conditions. Generally, if minimum notice applies, this will be specified under the 'Hours of Work' or 'Place of Employment' section of the individual's Statement of Terms and Conditions. **However if the employee works in the Branch Network, refer instead to the Branch Network Working Arrangements Policy.** Where no minimum notice is specified and for employees in the Branch Network, you should provide reasonable notice of the change taking into account the circumstances involved, which will include the extent and impact of the proposed change and the urgency of the business need as well as any issues or concerns raised during consultation (for example, this might include providing reasonable time to make alternative transport or caring arrangements).
- ensure any financial support that is relevant under Nationwide policies is in place, for example location allowance. **You must not propose, discuss or agree with your employee any financial assistance or support outside of Nationwide's existing policies and procedures without the prior agreement of your HR Business Partner**
- key any changes relating to reporting lines, location or working patterns (which don't affect the number of contracted hours worked) to PeopleSoft HR through self service (see the relevant [HR keying guide](#)). If you work in an area that uses Blue Pumpkin you do not need to record working patterns on PeopleSoft
 - for other changes, or if the change has involved a change to the number of hours worked, use the [Change to Employment Details - Job Change Form](#) (where relevant, HR will then key any change to the working pattern on PeopleSoft).
 - if any transitional arrangements have been agreed (for example a staggered change to hours) ensure that these are recorded and take advice from AskHR if you are unsure how to confirm these

5a) If the employee does not agree

If your employee has not agreed with the change and if you have not already done so, you should seek additional support from your HR Business Partner. HR will work with you to address the situation appropriately.

Nationwide Building Society,
Head Office, Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon, Wiltshire SN38 1NW.

(Version 5 – July 2013)

