

Policy on Shorter Working Year for Non-Academic Staff

Scope

This policy applies to all non-academic staff members of Cork ETB. This policy operates within the terms and conditions of Circular Letter 14/2009 and should be read in conjunction with same.

Purpose

This policy has been developed to provide a framework within which the provisions of the relevant circular letter can be applied.

Objectives

To ensure that the terms of the Scheme are understood and are applied in an objective, transparent and fair way across the organisation.

Policy Statement

Cork ETB looks positively on the concept of flexible working arrangements and wishes to support staff in balancing their personal and work lives. Cork ETB recognises that flexible working arrangements, where carefully managed, can bring significant benefit to an organisation and its employees. However, as per the relevant Circular Letter, the operation of such schemes is subject to the condition that the operating requirements of Cork ETB are not adversely affected. Accordingly, all applications to participate in the scheme will be considered in the context of the organisational needs of Cork ETB.

Terms and Conditions of Schemes

- a) The terms and conditions governing the operation of the Shorter Working Year Scheme are set out in Circular Letter 14/2009, including pay, annual leave, public holidays, pensions etc. All applicants should familiarise themselves with these terms.
- b) All non-academic staff serving with the ETB may apply for unpaid special leave under the terms of the Shorter Working Year Scheme with the exception of those on probation at the time it is proposed to take the leave.
- c) Persons applying for the scheme must apply by 1st November each year except in exceptional circumstances. The closing date is set by local arrangement to ensure that the needs of the organisation are met and that all staff who may wish to avail of the facility in the following year are treated fairly. The closing date also allows for the provision of averaging salary on a pro-rata basis for the individual during the shorter working year as provided for by the Circular Letter. Late applications are accepted and considered on their merits, but salary averaging is not possible for these.
- d) Depending on the number of applications and on the nature/timing of the leave requested it may not be possible to facilitate all requests in order to ensure that the needs of the organisation are met and that provision is made for annual leave

for all staff. Priority may be given to those who have not previously availed of the scheme.

- e) Leave can only be taken in blocks as specified in CL 14/2009. The leave may be taken as one continuous period or as a maximum of 3 separate periods each consisting of not less than 2 weeks and not exceeding 13 weeks in total. Leave of less than 2 weeks will not be considered.
- f) Subject to the discretion of management, participants will not be granted leave (paid or unpaid) in the four weeks immediately prior to and following the period of special leave. This restriction will not apply to statutory leave such as maternity, adoptive, parental or carer's leave.

Consideration will be given to the following when assessing applications for Shorter Working Year

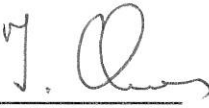
- Reduction of pay budget in line with the Employment Control Framework.
- Assisting employees in achieving/enhancing work life balance.
- Health and well-being of all staff.
- Personal development needs of employees.
- Educational purposes.
- Individual's personal circumstances as outlined on the application forms.
- Operating requirements of the organisation and pillar.
- Equal opportunity to be afforded to all staff.
- Management of workload.

Application Procedures

- a) Complete the official application form (available from HR) and provide to your manager by 1st November.
- b) Your manager will meet with you to discuss your application. Following this meeting, the relevant section of the form will be completed by the line manager outlining whether he/she supports the application (incl. reasons if not) and will be returned to you within 7 working days.
- c) It is recognised that circumstances may arise for individuals requiring an application at other times of the year and applications will be accepted on an exceptional basis in such circumstances. Where such applications are granted there will be no averaging of salary on a pro-rata basis.
- d) If your application is refused, you may appeal to the Principal Officer (administration and support staff) or to the Education Officer (all other staff), including the original application form and a letter setting out the grounds for your appeal within 5 working days of receipt of the refusal. Staff in grades reporting directly to the Principal Officer/Education Officer may appeal to the CEO.
- e) The Principal Officer/Education Officer may organise a meeting to discuss the grounds for your appeal, and, if so, a representative may accompany you to the meeting. (A representative may include a colleague of your choice or a trade union representative but not any person unconnected with the organisation.) Your line manager will be informed of the appeal and may make a submission in relation to same to the Principal Officer/Education Officer.
- f) You will be informed of the decision of the Principal Officer/Education Officer, including reasons for same, within 10 days of the receipt of the appeal.

Review

This policy will be subject to review in accordance with organisational needs and/or where it is necessary to do so due to changes in DES regulations, legislation or other such situations.

Signed: 

Mr. T. Owens

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 20/11/14