

Flexible Working Policy

Youth Start Limited

Company Number: 16864238

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

Website: youthstart.co.uk

Effective Date

1 January 2026

Last Updated

1 January 2026

Introduction

This Flexible Working Policy sets out Youth Start Limited's approach to flexible working arrangements for staff members. Youth Start is committed to supporting work-life balance and recognises that flexible working can benefit both staff and the organisation.

This policy applies to all staff members employed by Youth Start. It outlines the types of flexible working arrangements available, the process for requesting flexible working, and the factors that will be considered when assessing requests.

Flexible working arrangements may include reduced hours, flexible hours, compressed working weeks, job sharing, remote working, and other arrangements agreed between the staff member and Youth Start.

Youth Start recognises the legal right of eligible staff members to request flexible working under the Employment Rights Act 1996 and is committed to considering all requests fairly and seriously.

Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this Flexible Working Policy is to:

- Support work-life balance and employee wellbeing
 - Enable staff members to manage their personal and professional responsibilities
 - Attract and retain talented staff members
 - Improve employee engagement and motivation
 - Maintain business continuity and operational efficiency
 - Provide a fair and transparent process for considering flexible working requests
 - Comply with UK employment legislation
 - Promote a positive and inclusive workplace culture
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Scope and Application

This policy applies to:

- All staff members employed by Youth Start, including full-time and part-time employees
- Fixed-term contract workers and those on probation (after a qualifying period)
- Staff members who have been employed by Youth Start for at least 26 weeks

This policy does not apply to:

- Self-employed contractors or consultants
 - Volunteers or mentors (unless they are also employed staff members)
 - Staff members who have not completed 26 weeks of continuous employment
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Legal Framework

Youth Start operates in compliance with the following UK legislation:

- **Employment Rights Act 1996:** Provides eligible employees with the statutory right to request flexible working
 - **Flexible Working Regulations 2014:** Sets out the procedure for flexible working requests
 - **Equality Act 2010:** Requires fair treatment and prohibits discrimination
 - **Working Time Regulations 1998:** Governs maximum working hours and rest periods
 - **Employment Rights (Dispute Resolution) Act 1998:** Provides procedures for resolving disputes
 - **ACAS guidance:** Provides best practice guidance on flexible working
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Types of Flexible Working Arrangements

Youth Start recognises a range of flexible working arrangements that may be available, subject to business needs and operational requirements:

Reduced Hours

Staff members may request to work fewer hours per week or per month. This may involve:

- Working four days per week instead of five
- Working part-time hours instead of full-time
- Reducing hours on a temporary or permanent basis

Flexible Hours

Staff members may request to vary the times at which they work, subject to business needs. This may involve:

- Starting and finishing at different times
- Working compressed hours (for example, working longer days but fewer days per week)
- Flexible start and finish times within agreed parameters

Remote Working

Staff members may request to work from home or another location, subject to the nature of the role and business needs. This may involve:

- Working from home full-time
- Working from home on certain days per week
- Hot-desking or flexible location working

Job Sharing

Two staff members may request to share one full-time role, dividing the hours and responsibilities between them.

Career Breaks or Sabbaticals

Staff members may request a temporary break from work, subject to business needs and agreement. This may involve:

- Unpaid leave for a specified period
- Phased return to work after a break

Other Arrangements

Youth Start will consider other flexible working arrangements that meet the needs of the staff member and the organisation, such as:

- Annualised hours
- Shift swapping
- Flexible leave arrangements
- Gradual retirement

Eligibility

To be eligible to request flexible working, a staff member must:

- Be employed by Youth Start under an employment contract
- Have completed at least 26 weeks of continuous employment with Youth Start
- Not have made a flexible working request in the previous 12 months (unless circumstances have changed significantly)

Staff members on probation may be eligible to request flexible working after completing 26 weeks of employment, subject to satisfactory performance.

Fixed-term contract workers are eligible to request flexible working if they have completed 26 weeks of continuous employment.

The Flexible Working Request Process

Stage 1: Making a Request

How to Request Flexible Working:

A staff member wishing to request flexible working should submit a written request to their manager or to Nick Calin (contact@youthstart.co.uk). The request should include:

- The date the request is made
- The date the staff member wishes the flexible working arrangement to start
- Details of the flexible working arrangement being requested
- How the arrangement will be managed and how work will be completed
- The impact of the arrangement on the team and the organisation
- Whether the request is temporary or permanent
- Any other relevant information

Timing:

Requests should be made as soon as possible to allow time for consideration and discussion. There is no statutory deadline for making a request, but staff members are encouraged to provide at least four weeks' notice where possible.

Acknowledgment:

Youth Start will acknowledge receipt of the request within five working days and will provide:

- Confirmation that the request has been received
- The name of the person handling the request
- An outline of the next steps and timescales
- Information about the flexible working procedure

Stage 2: Consideration and Discussion

Meeting:

Youth Start will arrange a meeting with the staff member to discuss the request. The meeting should take place within 10 working days of receipt of the request (or as soon as reasonably practicable).

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Discuss the flexible working arrangement in detail
- Understand the staff member's reasons and needs
- Explore how the arrangement can be implemented
- Discuss any concerns or potential issues
- Consider alternatives or modifications to the request

Representation:

The staff member may be accompanied by a friend, family member, or trade union representative at the meeting.

Factors Considered:

When considering a flexible working request, Youth Start will take into account:

- The nature of the role and whether flexible working is compatible with the role
- The impact on the team, clients, and the organisation
- Business needs and operational requirements
- Customer service and service delivery
- The ability to cover the work during the flexible working arrangement
- Cost implications
- The staff member's circumstances and reasons for the request
- Any previous flexible working arrangements
- The feasibility of the proposed arrangement
- Whether the arrangement can be implemented with reasonable adjustments

Consultation:

Youth Start may consult with other team members, managers, or clients to understand the impact of the flexible working arrangement.

Stage 3: Decision

Decision:

Following consideration of the request, Youth Start will make a decision on the flexible working request.

Approval:

If the request is approved, Youth Start will:

- Confirm the flexible working arrangement in writing
- Set out the start date and duration of the arrangement
- Clarify the hours of work, location, and other relevant details
- Explain how the arrangement will be monitored and reviewed
- Confirm any changes to pay, benefits, or terms and conditions
- Provide a trial period (if applicable)

Trial Period:

Where appropriate, Youth Start may offer a trial period of up to three months to test the flexible working arrangement. During the trial period:

- The staff member will work the proposed flexible arrangement
- Youth Start will monitor the impact on the team and the organisation

- The arrangement will be reviewed at the end of the trial period
- A decision will be made on whether to continue the arrangement on a permanent basis

Rejection:

If the request is rejected, Youth Start will:

- Provide a written explanation of the reasons for rejection
- Set out the business reasons for the decision
- Explain any alternative arrangements that may be available
- Provide information about the right to appeal
- Provide information about external support and advice

Reasons for Rejection:

Flexible working requests may be rejected if:

- The proposed arrangement is not compatible with the role or business needs
- The arrangement would have a significant negative impact on the team or the organisation
- The arrangement would increase costs significantly
- The work cannot be covered or managed during the flexible working arrangement
- The arrangement would affect service delivery or customer service
- There are health and safety concerns
- The staff member has made a request in the previous 12 months

Timescale:

Youth Start will make a decision on the flexible working request within 28 days of receipt of the request (or as soon as reasonably practicable). If a decision cannot be made within 28 days, the staff member will be informed and provided with an updated timescale.

Stage 4: Appeal

If a flexible working request is rejected, the staff member has the right to appeal the decision.

Appeal Notice:

- The staff member must submit a written appeal notice within 10 working days of receiving the rejection letter
- The appeal notice must set out the grounds for appeal
- Grounds for appeal include:
 - The request was not considered fairly
 - Relevant information was not taken into account
 - The decision was based on incorrect information
 - The reasons for rejection are not valid or are not supported by evidence
 - Circumstances have changed since the original request

Appeal Review:

- The appeal will be reviewed by a senior manager who was not involved in the original decision
- The reviewer will consider all the evidence and the grounds for appeal
- The reviewer may request additional information or arrange a meeting with the staff member
- The reviewer will make a final decision on the appeal

Appeal Decision:

- The staff member will be informed in writing of the appeal decision
- The appeal decision will set out the reasons for the decision
- The appeal decision is final

Timescale:

The appeal decision will normally be provided within 14 working days of receipt of the appeal notice.

Monitoring and Review of Flexible Working Arrangements

Regular Review

Flexible working arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the staff member and the organisation.

Review Meetings:

- Formal review meetings will be held at least annually
- Additional reviews may be held if circumstances change
- The staff member and their manager will discuss:
 - How the arrangement is working
 - Any issues or concerns
 - Whether any adjustments are needed
 - Whether the arrangement continues to be suitable

Changes to Arrangements:

If circumstances change, either the staff member or Youth Start may request a change to the flexible working arrangement. Changes will be discussed and agreed in writing.

Termination of Arrangements:

If a flexible working arrangement is no longer suitable or necessary, it may be terminated. Termination will be discussed with the staff member and agreed in writing. Where possible, notice will be given to allow the staff member time to adjust.

Performance and Conduct

Staff members working flexible arrangements are expected to maintain the same standards of performance and conduct as other staff members. Performance will be monitored and reviewed in the same way as for staff members working standard arrangements.

If performance or conduct issues arise, these will be addressed through the standard performance management or disciplinary procedures.

Terms and Conditions

Pay and Benefits

Unless otherwise agreed, flexible working arrangements will not result in a reduction in pay or benefits. Staff members working reduced hours may receive pro-rata pay and benefits.

Pension

Staff members' pension contributions and benefits will be calculated based on their actual earnings and hours of work.

Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlements will be calculated on a pro-rata basis for staff members working reduced hours. Annual leave will be taken in accordance with the Annual Leave Policy.

Sick Leave

Sick leave will be managed in accordance with the Sickness Absence Policy. Staff members working flexible arrangements have the same rights to sick leave as other staff members.

Training and Development

Staff members working flexible arrangements have the same rights to training and development as other staff members. Training will be scheduled to accommodate flexible working arrangements where possible.

Promotion and Career Development

Flexible working arrangements will not disadvantage staff members in relation to promotion or career development opportunities. Youth Start is committed to ensuring that staff members working flexibly have equal access to opportunities.

Responsibilities

Staff Members

Staff members are responsible for:

- Submitting flexible working requests in writing with sufficient detail
- Attending meetings to discuss requests
- Complying with the agreed flexible working arrangement
- Maintaining performance and conduct standards
- Communicating any changes in circumstances
- Participating in regular reviews
- Raising concerns or issues promptly

Managers

Managers are responsible for:

- Receiving and acknowledging flexible working requests
- Arranging meetings to discuss requests
- Considering requests fairly and seriously
- Providing clear reasons for decisions
- Implementing approved flexible working arrangements
- Monitoring the impact of arrangements
- Conducting regular reviews
- Supporting staff members working flexibly

Senior Management

Senior management is responsible for:

- Overseeing the flexible working procedure
- Ensuring compliance with this policy and UK legislation
- Providing guidance and support to managers
- Monitoring flexible working arrangements across the organisation
- Ensuring that flexible working does not disadvantage staff members
- Reviewing and updating this policy

Flexible Working and Remote Working

Remote Working Arrangements

Staff members may request to work from home or another location as part of a flexible working arrangement.

Equipment and Support:

Youth Start will provide:

- Necessary equipment (laptop, phone, etc.) to enable remote working
- Access to systems and information needed to perform the role
- Technical support and troubleshooting
- Guidance on health and safety when working remotely

Health and Safety:

Staff members working remotely are responsible for:

- Ensuring their working environment is safe and suitable
- Taking regular breaks
- Maintaining good posture and ergonomics
- Reporting any health and safety concerns

Youth Start will:

- Provide guidance on home working health and safety
- Conduct risk assessments for home working arrangements
- Support staff members with any adjustments needed

Communication:

Staff members working remotely are expected to:

- Maintain regular communication with their manager and team
- Be available during agreed working hours
- Attend meetings and events as required
- Maintain professional standards of communication

Data Security:

Staff members working remotely must:

- Follow the Data Security Policy
- Use secure connections and devices
- Protect confidential information
- Report any security concerns

Flexible Working and Mentorship

Impact on Mentorship Arrangements

For staff members involved in mentorship activities, flexible working arrangements must not compromise the quality or consistency of mentorship provided to candidates.

Mentorship Continuity:

- Mentorship arrangements will be scheduled to accommodate flexible working arrangements
- Alternative mentors may be arranged if necessary
- Candidates will be informed of any changes to their mentor's availability

Mentorship Training:

Staff members working flexibly will have access to mentorship training and support to ensure they can deliver high-quality mentorship.

Flexible Working and Discrimination

Youth Start is committed to ensuring that flexible working arrangements do not result in discrimination or disadvantage.

Equal Treatment:

- Staff members working flexibly will be treated fairly and equally
- Flexible working will not be used as a reason for discrimination or unfair treatment
- Staff members working flexibly will have equal access to opportunities, training, and promotion

Reasonable Adjustments:

Youth Start will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate flexible working requests, particularly for staff members with disabilities, caring responsibilities, or other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Flexible Working and Statutory Rights

This policy sets out Youth Start's approach to flexible working. Staff members also have statutory rights under the Employment Rights Act 1996 to request flexible working.

Statutory Rights:

- Eligible staff members have the right to request flexible working
- Youth Start must consider requests seriously and fairly
- Youth Start must provide reasons for any rejection
- Staff members have the right to appeal against a rejection

Further Information:

For further information about statutory rights to flexible working, staff members can contact:

- ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service): www.acas.org.uk
 - Citizens Advice Bureau: www.citizensadvice.org.uk
 - Equality and Human Rights Commission: www.equalityhumanrights.com
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Monitoring and Review

This Flexible Working Policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains current and effective. The review considers:

- Changes to UK employment legislation
- Changes to Youth Start's operations or business needs
- Feedback from staff members and managers
- The effectiveness of flexible working arrangements
- Best practice guidance from ACAS and other bodies

Youth Start will monitor:

- The number of flexible working requests received
- The outcomes of requests (approved, rejected, appealed)
- The types of flexible working arrangements in place
- The impact of arrangements on business operations and team performance
- Staff member satisfaction with flexible working arrangements
- Retention rates for staff members working flexibly

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this Flexible Working Policy, or if you wish to request flexible working, please contact Youth Start Limited using the following contact details:

Youth Start Limited

Registered Office: 370 Osmaston Park Road, Derby, DE24 8FB

Email: contact@youthstart.co.uk

Telephone: 07470435603

Website: youthstart.co.uk

Relationship with Other Policies

This Flexible Working Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Employment Contract Policy
- Annual Leave Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures
- Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety Policy
- Data Security Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

Last Updated: 1 January 2026

Next Review Date: 1 January 2027