

Annualised hours policy

This policy may form part of your contract of employment (depending on the wording in your written statement of terms and conditions). The councils are entitled to introduce minor and non-fundamental changes to this policy by notifying you of these changes in writing and will consult all employees on any significant changes.

Introduction

1. The councils' annualised hours scheme applies to the majority of employees. If you have an annualised hours contract you will have a yearly total of hours you need to work, rather than a weekly figure. This allows you greater flexibility to manage your workload and balance work and domestic responsibilities. You can start work earlier or finish later than in a traditional working pattern, and potentially vary your hours each week.
2. The annualised hours scheme also has benefits for the councils:
 - it helps with the recruitment and retention of employees
 - it is a self-regulating framework within which casual absenteeism can be reduced
 - managers have the potential to arrange the working hours in their team to effectively deal with varying workloads
3. You can request to work at times that are convenient for you although your preference needs to fit in with the demands of your job and team. Before agreeing to any request, your manager will need to take into account predicted workloads and the demands on your colleagues. However, annualised hours do provide a flexible working arrangement between a manager and employee and your manager will usually be able to accommodate temporary or permanent changes to working patterns that do not have a detrimental impact on service delivery or the balance of work in a team.

Employees with annualised hours

4. The annualised hours scheme applies to the majority of employees. Your written statement of terms & conditions will state whether you have an annualised hours contract. The scheme does not apply to the chief

executive, strategic directors, heads of service, service managers and a small number of other employees.

Working patterns

5. Some examples of flexible working arrangements that have been put into place under the annualised hours scheme are:
 - commencing work early and finishing early
 - working longer hours across fewer days (e.g. a full time employee working ten days full time hours in nine working days)
 - term time working (working solely during school terms)
6. These types of working patterns can be agreed on a long term basis. Subject to agreement from your manager, you can also change your working pattern on a short-term or irregular basis.
7. These changes in working pattern can be used to assist you with childcare or dependent arrangements. Equally, the opportunity to work a different regular pattern is available to everyone and is not subject to you having specific personal or family needs. Changes in working hours can also be arranged to assist with social activities or simply to accommodate personal preference.

An annualised hours year

8. An annualised hours year mirrors the calendar year from 1 January until 31 December. If you work full time you will have an annualised hours figure of 7 hours and 24 minutes per day multiplied by the number of week days in a year. For example, if there are 261 week days in a year you will have an annualised hours figure of 1931 hours and 24 minutes. This figure is pro rata for part time employees according to the hours you work each week.
9. If you are a full time employee you should not have a credit or deficit of more than 37 hours (one week) at the end of the year. This figure is pro rata for part time employees e.g. if you work 20 hours per week you should not have a credit or deficit of more than 20 hours. The balance of hours you have at the end of the year will be carried forward into the next annualised hours' year. You will lose any hours you have in credit above 37 hours (or your weekly working hours if you are part time). The councils do not pay for hours in credit. Equally, if you are in debit at the end of the year you will not have pay deducted as a result although you will be expected to ensure this deficit is reduced to zero within a reasonable timescale.
10. You are not required to work a minimum or maximum number of hours in any particular month, apart from taking into account requirements to cover work specific to a particular team, and your credit or debit of hours may fluctuate

during the course of the year.

An annualised hours day

11. All hours worked between 7.00am and 10.30pm Monday to Friday, count towards your annualised hours total. If you are required to work outside these hours you will also include the additional hours worked under the annualised hours' scheme, or in exceptional circumstances, depending on the requirements of your job and with the agreement of your head of service, you may be paid overtime. The Learning and Development Policy contains details of how to record an annualised hours day if you are attending an external training course.
12. There are no council-wide core hours of attendance under the scheme although some teams may have core hours they need to cover, for example the hours that phone lines are open to the public. Subject to agreement from your manager, you can generally plan your working pattern around your personal preference between the council offices' opening hours of 7.00am to 7.00pm. However, you should inform your manager if you will be arriving later than your usual start time or will be finishing earlier than your regular finish time on any particular day.
13. During a working day, you are required to take a minimum break of thirty minutes if you work continuously for more than a six and a half hour period. This must be a break in working time and should not be taken at the start or the end of your working day.
14. If you are working away from the council offices you should note the time you leave and return home. If your journey is longer than your usual commute the annualised hours you record that day will be the time you leave and return home minus your usual commute to work. For example, if you leave your home at 8.00am and your usual commute to the office is 40 minutes your start time will be 8.40am even if you begin work later than this.
15. If your journey is shorter than your normal commute you may record the actual time you start work at your first destination or finish working at your last port of call. For example, if you leave home at 8.00am, your usual commute is 40 minutes but you start working at your first destination at 8.20am you may record 8.20am on your annualised hours timesheet.
16. If the offices close early on the last working day before Christmas you can only claim for the hours you have worked, not the hours you would normally work. Similarly, if the offices close early or open late for any other reason e.g. bad weather, you can only claim for the actual hours you have worked.

New employees and leavers

17. New employees at either council will receive a pro rata figure for annualised hours from their start date until the end of the annualised hours leave year on 31 December.
18. If you leave the council you should ensure that you have worked the correct number of hours pro rata as near as possible by your leaving date. If you have excess annualised hours to take off you should liaise with your manager about how to achieve this during your notice period, allowing for service delivery to be met. You will not be paid for annualised hours you have in credit at the point of leaving. The council does reserve the right to deduct payment for excessive negative hours at the time you leave the council.
19. If you resign or accept voluntary redundancy it is your responsibility to manage your outstanding annual leave and any excess annualised hours during your notice period to reduce the amounts to zero on your last day of employment.
20. If you are made redundant and have outstanding annual leave and excess annualised hours then you should agree with your manager how to handle this.

Recording time worked

21. You should record the hours you work on a spreadsheet (your timesheet) which can be downloaded from the intranet or is available from the IT team. Recording your hours works on a trust basis. It is up to you to note the time you start and finish work and how long you take for lunch. If you are office based this will usually reflect the time you are at your desk although there are likely to be occasions when you are working away from your desk or office. Regular cigarette breaks or lengthy breaks should not be counted as work so you should deduct the duration of these breaks from the total time you work that day. You are expected to use common sense and not to abuse the annualised hours system. If anyone is found to have incorrectly recorded hours they may be subject to the disciplinary procedure.
22. If you work full time (37 hours per week), your average annualised hours day will be 7 hours and 24 minutes. This figure will be pro rata if you work part time. For example, if you work 18.5 hours across five days, your average annualised hours day will be 3 hours and 42 minutes (the equivalent to a full timer's half day).
23. Details of how to input into the timesheet are on the notes tab of the timesheet itself and in the Appendix below.

Managers' responsibilities

24. You should work with your manager to help you manage your on-going annualised hours total. Your manager will be responsible for:
- ensuring that the hours you and your colleagues work enables your team to provide an effective service to your customers
 - ensuring that work commitments are shared equitably between you and your colleagues so that no-one is significantly disadvantaged from any temporary or permanent changes to working patterns
 - monitoring your on-going credit or deficit of hours to assist you in managing your workload and reviewing your timesheet on a monthly basis
 - working with you to ensure that you do not have a credit or deficit of more than 37 hours by 31 December (pro rata to a week's hours if you work part time)
 - ensuring that if you leave the council your annualised hours total is as close to zero as practically possible.

Booking time off using annualised hours

25. The annualised hours system enables you to vary your start and finish times each day, subject to the requirements of your manager and team. If you start later or finish earlier one day than you usually do you will simply record this on your timesheet.
26. You can also take full or half days off using accrued annualised hours rather than annual leave. If you do take a minimum of a half day off, you will need to request this on HR Pro and have it authorised by your manager prior to you taking the time off. As with booking annual leave, being able to book time off using annualised hours is dependent on service delivery and your manager is not obliged to authorise time off on any particular day. There is not a limit on the number of days off you can take using annualised hours each year.
27. To request a day or half day's annualised hours on HR Pro, you will need to apply under *other leave*. If you work full time you will request the time off as a full or half day (even if the actual hours you take off on a half day vary slightly from this). If you work part time you can specify the hours you take off. Keep in mind that on the annualised hours timesheet, a part of an hour is expressed in minutes. In HR Pro an hour is split into decimals e.g. 3 hours and 30 minutes will be shown as 3.5 hours.

Sickness during pre-booked time off using annualised hours

28. If you fall ill during time you have taken off work using annualised hours, you may record this as sickness absence and retain your annualised hours for use at a later date. This must be approved by your line manager and you will need to produce a medical certificate if the period affected is more than seven days. If the period is less than seven days, your manager has the option of requesting a medical certificate before approving your absence as sickness. You should contact your line manager as soon as you can after you become ill. You may also record your absence as sickness if you fall ill before you are due to take pre-booked annualised hours and the sickness continues during the time you were due to be off work.

Alternative formats of this policy

29. Alternative formats of this publication can be made available on request. These include large print, braille, audio, email, easy read and other languages. Please contact the HR team on 01491 823424.

Version 3 issued: December 2012

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Appendix - How to use the annualised hours timesheet

Getting started

Annualised hours are recorded in an Excel spreadsheet. The annualised system applies to the calendar year from 1 January to 31 December.

If you work full time you will have an annualised hours figure of 7 hours and 24 minutes per day multiplied by the number of week days in a year. For example, if there are 261 week days in a year (which is 52 weeks and one day) you will have an annualised hours figure of 1931 hours and 24 minutes. This figure is pro rata for part time employees according to the hours you work each week

The first time you use the annualised hours timesheet there are five steps to follow:

1. Enter your name in cell B3 on the *Notes* worksheet. Your name will then appear on the sheet for each month.
2. In cell B5 on the *Notes* worksheet, choose from the dropdown list to select which council you work for (South only, Vale only, or both South and Vale). If you work for both councils, enter the budgeted split of your hours if it is anything other than 50% to each council, by putting the South percentage into cell B7. Cell B9 will calculate itself.
3. If you are starting a new timesheet after 1 January, enter the start date in cell B11 on the *Notes* worksheet, otherwise this can be left showing 1 January.
4. Enter your brought forward balance, if any, from the previous year. Do this in cells J4 and K4 on the January worksheet. If your brought forward balance is positive enter a + in cell J4; if negative enter a – in cell J4. Then enter the hours and minutes in cell K4 in the form h:mm.
5. If you work part time, or you are in the CCTV team, or have a two-week shift pattern, you will need to enter some details into the *MonthlyHours* worksheet:
 - If you work part-time, enter your usual working hours in cells C26 to C32.
 - If you are in the CCTV team, enter “Y” in cell C22.
 - If you work a two-week shift pattern, enter “Y” in cell C23, then enter your usual working hours for weeks A and B in cells C26 to C39. Each monthly worksheet will show you the dates of weeks A and B in column R.

You are now ready to start the routine of daily time recording.

Recording your hours each day

Each day you work, enter your start and finish times in columns C and D (morning), F and G (afternoon) using a 24 hour clock in the format hh:mm. The spreadsheet will calculate the time you have worked that day.

Cells will be highlighted in red if you record more than six working hours without a break, or a lunch break of less than 30 minutes.

Recording time off

If you take time off for annual leave, volunteering, or are off sick, record this as an adjustment by entering +7:24 for a whole day, or +3:42 for a half day, in columns J and K (or, if you work part-time, enter the hours you would normally work for a full or half day as recorded on the *MonthlyHours* worksheet). Then click in column W and select the reason for the absence. You should still record these absences in HR Pro as usual.

These adjustments will be split between South and Vale according to your percentages entered on the *Notes* worksheet.

If you take time off using annualised hours that you have built up, you should not enter any adjustment in columns J and K, but do select an appropriate entry in column W.

Employees in shared roles

If you work for both councils, use columns M and N to record time spent on projects or tasks which are specific to one council only. The rest of your hours will be allocated equally between the two councils according to the proportion you entered on the *Notes* worksheet. If you are not in a shared role you need not enter anything in columns M and N.

Occasional work for the other council

If you are not in a shared role but do occasionally work for the other council, for example to cover a period of absence, you should record these hours in the appropriate column (M or N).

Your manager should be aware of the hours worked for the other council so that a recharge can be made if necessary.

Changes during the year

If you change your hours during the year, or if you change from a single council job to a shared role, you will need to start a new timesheet spreadsheet. Follow the same five steps as above to begin your new timesheet. If you have a balance of

hours brought forward from the previous timesheet, enter them as an adjustment in columns J and K on the date immediately before the start date of your new timesheet.

Please contact the IT help desk if you need any assistance.

At the end of the month

At the end of the month your manager should sign off the timesheet. A space is provided for a manual signature but many people may prefer to do this electronically, which is fine. You should keep some evidence that your manager has signed off your timesheet, in order to maintain an audit trail.

Each service team should keep a full set of records so that they can be checked if necessary, and summaries can be collated to provide management information. Some services have automated this process by creating a master spreadsheet linked to every individual sheet, drawing summary data automatically into the master spreadsheet. If you haven't got an automated process and would like one, please contact the IT help desk.

Variance to date

You will see that there is a column Q headed "variance to date", and a summary at the bottom of each month's worksheet.

The information shown here is purely for your guidance, and compares the hours you have worked so far in the year with the hours you would have worked if you had spread your time evenly over every working day.

If the variance to date shows a large positive figure then you have built up a lot of annualised hours and should consider taking some time off. You can only carry forward a surplus of a maximum of one working week at the end of the year.

If the variance to date shows a large negative figure then you have been falling behind with your hours, and you should agree with your manager how you are going to get back on track. You can only agree a deficit of a maximum of one working week at the end of the year.

Overview of the year

To see your total hours worked for the year to date, go to the S-V worksheet. Here you will see monthly totals of your South and Vale hours compared with the budgeted percentages that you entered on the Notes worksheet, along with a simple pie-chart.

If you are a member of the CCTV team, you can also see on this worksheet the total number of hours you have worked within the various bands.

Getting help

Please contact the HR team if you have any questions about annualised hours, or the IT help desk for technical assistance with the spreadsheet.