

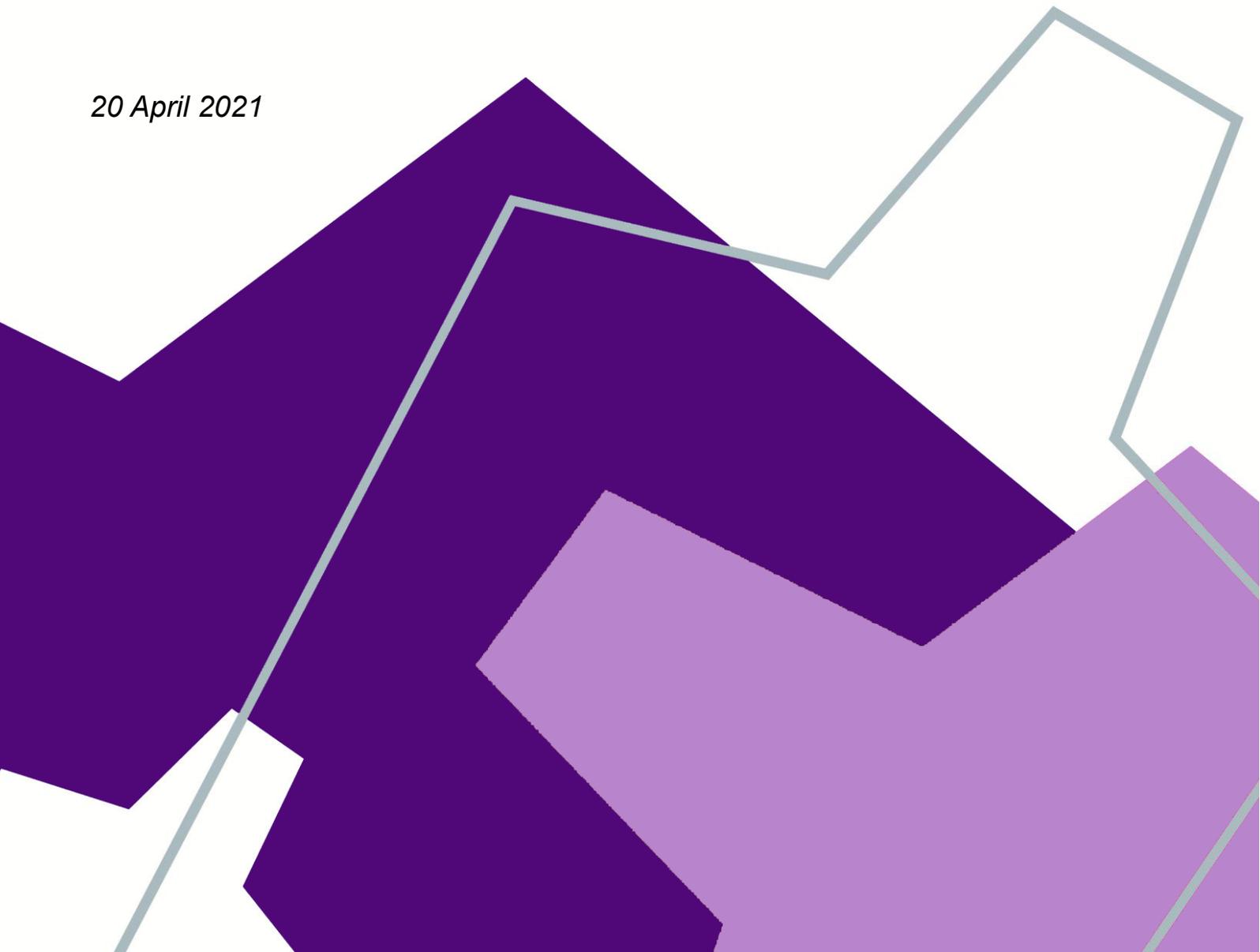


The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Work Life Balance Policy

Poileasaidh air Cothromachadh Beatha/Obrach

20 April 2021



Work Life Balance Policy

What is work life balance?

Work-life balance will mean different things to different people. In general terms, it is about having meaningful achievement and enjoyment in your everyday life. In the context of work, there are many ways in which you can be supported in achieving your chosen balance. It is not always about working fewer hours; it is also about having an influence over when and where you perform your role so it fits with the rest of your life. This could mean, for example, time off to have children, to care for a dependent, to update your skills or gain a qualification, to become involved in your local community, to attend cultural celebrations or to pursue interests and hobbies.

How can the SPCB help me to achieve my work-life balance?

The SPCB recognises that achievement and enjoyment at work are a critical part of your work-life balance. It will help you to achieve your work-life balance by being a supportive employer, recognising your individual needs and promoting a healthy, balanced and flexible approach to delivering our business.

What will this mean in practice?

We are committed to developing a culture that encourages diverse ways of working and to creating a framework that will allow you to select your work-life balance option whilst still delivering the business of the organisation. To enable this we will:

- ensure you are made aware of and understand how different working arrangements can benefit the organisation whilst meeting your individual needs at various stages in your life;
- encourage flexible thinking in the design of jobs to ensure you have the opportunity to access a range of options within your own business area;
- enable you to make a personal choice so that you have the opportunity, in consultation with your Head of Office/Group, to agree the balance you wish to strike between work and other aspects of your life;
- ensure you are not treated less favourably in terms of recruitment, promotion or training opportunities as a result of making changes under this policy to improve your work-life balance;
- monitor the uptake and impact of these arrangements; and
- review and look for opportunities to improve our current working arrangements and introduce new ways of working as required.

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Is the policy open to all staff?

The overarching policy is open to all staff. However, it will not be possible for all staff to access some of the individual procedures. For example, if you work in security, you will be able to apply to be considered for part-time working or a career break, but clearly it will not be possible for you to work from home. Similarly if you are on call - for example, if you work in the Media Relations Office - you will have access to all of the procedures but particular arrangements will have to be agreed locally to ensure that out of hours business needs are met. Also, if you are on secondment, we may have to consult with your parent organisation before we can make a decision on your application.

What are the various working arrangements and benefits?

They are a combination of both existing and new working arrangements and benefits. The new arrangements have been developed in partnership with the TUS and a representational group of parliamentary staff:

- flexible working hours;
- 30 days annual leave plus 11.5 days public and privilege holidays;
- healthy living and well-being policy;
- special leave;
- enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption pay;
- Tax free child care scheme;
- part-time working;
- other flexible working arrangements;
- career break; and
- home working.

Are all of these arrangements open to me?

No. The concept of work-life balance is to be flexible enough to respond to individual needs but also to the needs of the organisation. The arrangements will not, therefore, be open to everyone at the same time and access to them will depend on your individual circumstances and life choices and the needs of your job (see above).

There might therefore be legitimate reasons why particular arrangements might not be open to you. However, at the same time, it is important to note that, in line with the SPCB's Equality Framework, it will not be acceptable for any member of staff to be refused access to any of the arrangements on grounds of their gender identity, sexual orientation, marital, family or part-time status, racial group (includes colour, race, nationality, national or ethnic origin), religion, disability (unless objectively justified), age or trade union membership/activities or lack thereof (except as permitted by law).

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Are all of these arrangements open to me? (Continued)

If you wish to discuss your individual needs and circumstances, please contact the [People and Culture Office](#) (ext: 86500).

How do I apply?

Clearly, some of these benefits do not require you to make a formal application; for example, for SPCB staff, enhanced maternity/paternity/adoption pay. You should, therefore, look at the individual working arrangements to check whether you do need to make a formal application through your Head of Office/Group to the People and Culture Office.

How do I make a formal application?

If a formal application is required, you should follow the procedures set out in the Flexible Working Arrangement Policy and Procedure of the Employee Handbook. Before you make your application you may want to discuss this in confidence with the [People and Culture Office](#) (ext: 86500). All applications will be considered on their merit, taking account of your desired working pattern and the reasons for your request, together with the business needs of the organisation, and the views of your parent organisation, if appropriate.

Please note:

- **that the timescales may be extended when considering applications for homeworking**
- **Under exceptional circumstances it may not always be possible to complete a particular part of the procedure within the specified timescale. Any extension of these requires the specific agreement of the Head of People and Culture.**

Work Life Balance Policy (English only)

For further information contact:

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