A photograph of a soldier in a camouflage uniform and a beret, seen from the back, holding a young child with blonde hair. The child is smiling and has their arms around the soldier's shoulders. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

FLEXIBLE SERVICE

Guide for Regular Applicants
and the Chain of Command



ARMY
BE THE BEST

Flexible Service: Guide

Disclaimer:

This guide is intended to assist both potential applicants and the Chain of Command. The authoritative policy documents remain Joint Service Publication 750 (Chapter 2) and Army General and Administrative Instruction Volume 2, Chapter 44. Both documents must be consulted if you are involved in the application process for a Flexible Service arrangement.

Foreword:



Over the recent years changes to the wider working environment, coupled with your feedback, have highlighted the need to achieve a better work-life balance during certain periods of your Army career. This has driven the creation of Flexible Service which will offer you greater choice to balance better your commitment to the Army with your personal circumstances.

From the 1st April 2019, Flexible Service, comprising of either part-time working or restricted separation, will enhance the existing flexible working opportunities already available. This important initiative will continue to modernise the employment opportunities in the Army and broaden the way we support our soldiers and their families. This innovative approach and our commitment to it demonstrates the importance we place on supporting our people and will, I believe, strengthen the Army as an institution.

Major General Ivan Jones CB
Director Personnel



Flexible Service (FS) will enable Regular personnel to apply, for a temporary period, to work part-time and/or restrict their separation from their Duty Station.

Why does the Army need Flexible Service?

Our Continuous Attitude Surveys have highlighted that for many of our people, achieving a better work-life balance is increasingly important. FS is designed with this in mind and will offer greater choice to our soldiers. As well as being an important modernising initiative, it is anticipated that FS will aid retention – allowing us to keep talented individuals in the Army for longer.

What's the difference between flexible working and Flexible Service?

FS adds to the number of flexible working policies that already exist, and is designed to replace the Flexible Duties Trial (FDT). The existing policies can be found in JSPs 750 and 760, and include:

- Working from home
- Variable Start and Finish times
- Compressed hours
- Transfer of leave
- Special Unpaid Leave

Will our ability to deliver operational capability be compromised?

No. Ultimately, the British Army exists to do several things, including protecting the United Kingdom. Maintenance of operational capability was a key principle throughout the design of FS policy, and will be equally important when applications for FS are considered by the Approvals Authority. The MOD will retain the ability to return individuals should circumstances arise, such as a National Emergency.

Who is the Approvals Authority for the Army – a Commanding Officer?

The Army Personnel Centre (APC) will be the Army's Approval Authority. The APC is best-placed to consider any wider Army capability issues before approving an application, and will draw a range of SME input in the process. CO input will be an important one of these.

What are the key points for a Part-Time arrangement?

For planning purposes, the policy takes a working week as a 5-day week. You can 'dial down' by 20% (1 day) or 40% (2 days). If your situation requires more flexibility than this, you may wish to consider instead other leave types, or Reserve service. Your arrangement will be between 3 months and 3 years. Your days off (or Non-Duty Days) could be taken weekly i.e. every Thu and Fri, or you could aggregate up (i.e. take a week off every 5 weeks; a month off every 5 months etc. – this would be agreed with your CofC in the application process.

What are the key points for a Restricted Separation arrangement?

You will reduce your deployment liability to no more than 35 days per year. This means you will have liability for some separation i.e. to attend courses, duties; but will not be eligible for longer deployments (i.e. 6 month operational tours).

What will it cost me?

The two arrangement types are different. A Part-Time (PT) FS arrangement will affect your pay (a 20%/40% reduction). A Restricted Separation (RS) arrangement will affect your X-Factor (for most people, the additional 14.5% you, as a Regular Soldier, get on top of your salary for serving in the military). A RS FS arrangement will reduce this by 20% (i.e. from 14.5% to 11.5%). A PT & RS arrangement would affect both.

Can my Unit call me back in on Non-Duty Days?

No, it's not that simple. The financial cost you pay for undertaking a FS arrangement also comes with strong protections in both law and policy. There are reasons you can be called back immediately (i.e. national emergency, change in operational requirements), but for less-imminent reasons you must be given 90 days' notice.

The same applies to you; you must give the chain of command 90 days unless there is a mutual agreement to reduce this timeframe.

Flexible Service: Guide

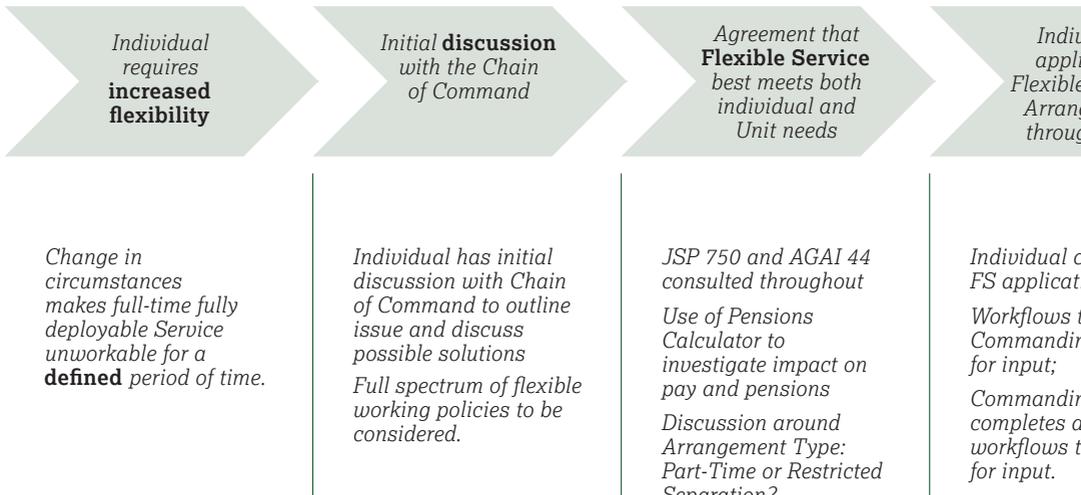
As a new private soldier, can I apply for this?

The Army view is that it is important that people spend a period of time in full-time Regular service in the early part of their career; most importantly, to get used to life in the Army and really understand Service ethos – what it means to be a soldier. Therefore, the Army don't intend to make FS available to Regular soldiers until they have served for 24 months at their initial posting, after completion of both basic and initial trade training. As an

example: for an infantry soldier, this will mean about 6 months in training and then 2 years at batallion.

Once I am on a Flexible Service Arrangement, how long is it for?

A FS arrangement will be for no less than 3 months, and no more than 3 years. No-one will be allowed to be on FS arrangements for longer than 4 years in a 12-year period. Agreeing the length of your arrangement will be a key part of the application process.



Search Defnet for the:
[Flexible Working and You Guide](#)

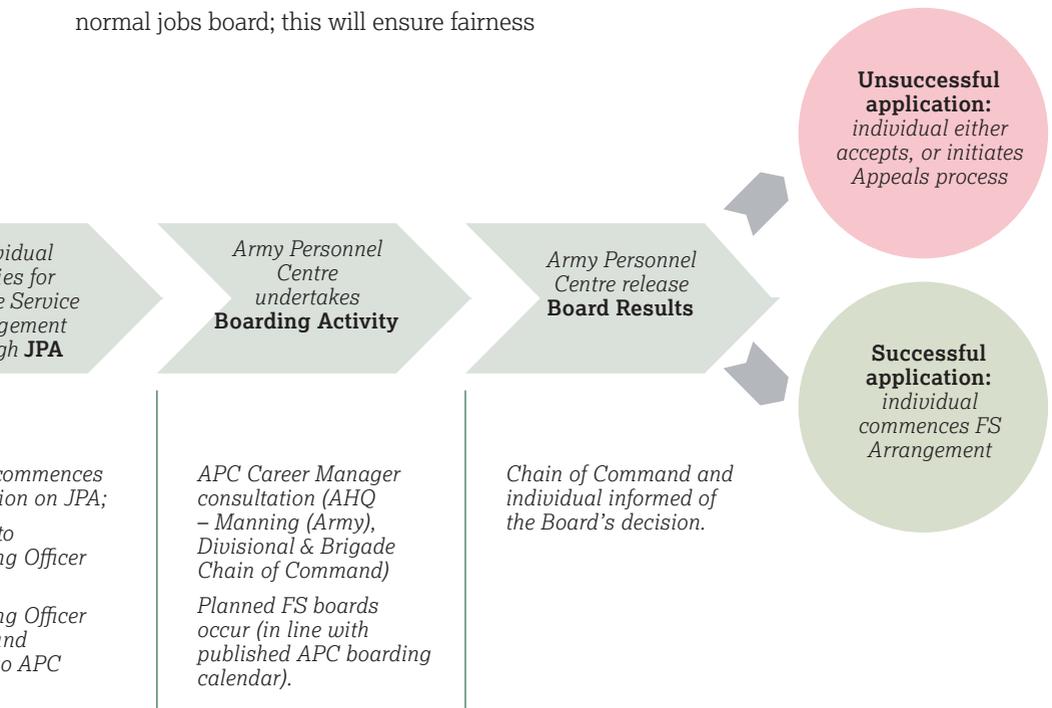


Visit:
[Discover Flexible Service](#)
<https://flexibleservice.mod.gov.uk>

How do I apply for Flexible Service?

The first step in any potential application for FS is a discussion between the individual and the chain of command. If agreed, the application process is then automated (through JPA), with a 'workflow' from unit (CO) to the Army Personnel Centre (APC). APC will consult across the Army (including Brigade, Division and cap-badge manning bricks) to prevent widespread capability gaps forming. The application will be boarded like a normal jobs board; this will ensure fairness

and consistency. Subsequently, your FS arrangement will also be managed through JPA (e.g. tracking your Non-Duty Days). Below is a useful flowchart to demonstrate the application process:



Find the APC on Sharepoint at [MS Web:](https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/teams/2678/SitePages/Home.aspx)
<https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/teams/2678/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Common questions:

‘I need to understand the quota for my unit – how do I know who to support in their application?’

Quotas have been deliberately avoided. Not only would they undermine the local Chain of Command, it is recognised that no two units or formations are the same. What may be permissible in one may be completely unacceptable in another. The Chain of Command must have a significant vote in supporting (or otherwise) applications for FS



arrangements to the Approvals Authority (APC). How a Unit or organisation decides to balance multiple applications is their business.

‘I don’t think I can support this FS application; is ‘saying no’ the only thing I can do?’

Not necessarily. Have you considered the full range of other Flexible Working Policies? Could you accept an amendment to the application i.e. a 20% reduction in working as opposed to a 40% reduction? Continued discussion with the applicant is likely to reveal a solution that is agreeable to all parties.

‘How can I support an application for a Part-Time FS arrangement when it isn’t guaranteed that I will get some form of replacement?’

FS is fundamentally different to other Flexible Working Policies. It is not about someone doing the same in less time; it is about the Chain of Command actively accepting a reduction (or re-prioritisation) of outputs in order to allow individual flexibility for a bounded period of time. Surely it is better to have someone working 60 or 80% of the time, than stand a full-time gap because an individual signs-off?



‘How am I supposed to write an honest and fair Appraisal of someone when they have only been working Part-Time for a reporting period? Surely they naturally drop down the order of merit?’

Report writing (for which the key document still remains JSP 757) is about assessing performance against specified objectives during a set reporting period. An individual’s objectives may have to

be revised at the start of a reporting period during which a FS arrangement is underway, to take account of their reduced opportunity to demonstrate performance. But, FS should not be a systemic bar to an individual reaching their full potential; it is envisaged that FS may actually assist this as individuals develop additional Knowledge, Skills and Experience (KSE) outside of their primary role.



‘What reasons are acceptable for a soldier to request FS?’

There may be many reasons an individual requests FS: for family reasons, to undertake additional study, or due to a caring commitment. A soldier doesn't have to reveal their reasons, although this will probably form part of the initial discussion with the Chain of Command.

‘Can I be trowled if I'm on an FS arrangement?’

Every trawl will be different. For example, if you were on a RS arrangement you could potentially support a two-week exercise if required; you are still liable for some separation. You could not routinely support an overseas deployment for six months - an RS arrangement is designed to protect you from unexpected separation of



this nature. As ever, discussion with the Chain of Command is crucial. FS arrangements are designed to provide a high degree of certainty, but there are circumstances where the Army or Defence may need the capability you provide (e.g. a national emergency).

References:

- [MOD 'Flexible Working and You Guide'](http://defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/News/Announcements/Pages/Flexibleworkingandyou.aspx)
http://defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/News/Announcements/Pages/Flexibleworkingandyou.aspx
- [JSP 750 \(Centrally Determined Terms of Service\)](https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/defnet/HOCS/Pages/JSP750.aspx) https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/defnet/HOCS/Pages/JSP750.aspx
- [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/defnet/HOCS/Pages/JSP760.aspx)
https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/defnet/HOCS/Pages/JSP760.aspx
- Directorate of Manning (Army) policy contacts
ArmyManning-Empl-Pol-SO2@mod.gov.uk
ArmyManning-Pol-SO1a@mod.gov.uk
- [2018DIN01-112: Regular Flexible Duties – Trial \(Transitional\)](http://defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/libraries/corporate/DINSpersonnel/2018/2018DIN01-112.pdf)
http://defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/libraries/corporate/DINSpersonnel/2018/2018DIN01-112.pdf
- [MOD Flexible Service SharePoint site](https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/defnet/HOCS/Pages/Flexible-Service.aspx)
https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/defnet/HOCS/Pages/Flexible-Service.aspx
- [Army Flexible Service information](http://defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/Organisations/Orgs/Army/Personnel/Military/Pages/ArmedForcesPeopleProgramme.aspx)
http://defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/Organisations/Orgs/Army/Personnel/Military/Pages/ArmedForcesPeopleProgramme.aspx

