



A Toolkit for Gender Equality in Practice - Initiative

Leeds Metropolitan University

Project to support the work-life balance

Summary of the initiative

The Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) is based in Leeds and has over 27,000 students and 2,800 staff.

A wide range of flexible working options and innovative leave provisions has been introduced to boost the proportion of women in senior positions. Leeds Metropolitan University (LMU) is the largest university in England and Wales to have achieved an "Investor in People award". The assessment report following successful re-recognition in January 2001 stated: "A good employer in terms of equality of access to training, fair recruitment, pay and conditions."

Research undertaken in 2000 resulted in a promotional campaign to raise awareness of flexibility and a revision of the way in which policies are presented.

All posts can be considered for part-time, job-share and compressed-hours arrangements. A range of flexible employment options are on offer, including condensed working weeks and home working. Leave provision is strong and includes bereavement leave, caring for sick dependants, exam and revision leave – all formal policies, jointly negotiated with recognised unions which receive regular updates on take up. Leave provision also includes flexibility around taking paternity leave and parents can choose to share maternity leave.

Recent organisational restructure changed the role of technical support staff and offered them the opportunity to dispense with the normal working week. Staff can now work flexibly within the boundaries of Monday to Saturday 8am to 9pm. The human resources department has the right to approve finally any recommendations by managers for a particular option, thus enabling monitoring of take up and maintenance of consistency throughout the organisation. There are regular updates and training for all managers on policy, particularly when updated, revised and reviewed. Managers are encouraged to promote policy through team briefings. All policies are formalised and jointly negotiated with recognised unions which receive regular updates on take-up.

LMU has a crèche, holiday play schemes and a care referral service. Counselling and mentoring are available and the employee assistance programme supports staff and immediate dependants on a range of personal and professional issues.

Priorities

Supporting work-life balance

Sector(s)

Education

Type

Enterprise initiative





Country

United Kingdom

Model of social partnership

Unilateral / Employer

Launch date

2000

Number of employees

>250

References

<http://www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/>

This initiative was submitted by:

TUC- ETUC

Website

<http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/>