



KPMG

KPMG provides audit, tax and advisory services to both public and private sector organisations in the UK. It operates from 22 UK offices with over 11,000 employees.

The flexible benefits package 'Flextra' was introduced in 1999. 'Flextra' allows staff to sacrifice salary in order to tailor their rewards package to fit in with their personal needs and changing lifestyle. It is very broad based and includes childcare, health and dental care, additional holidays, accident insurance etc. The range of options available under 'Flextra' have changed over time in response to demands from staff and to activity by competitors.

Sarah Bond is Head of Diversity and Employee Engagement: *"We have an absolute commitment to attracting and retaining talented people. Many of these have parenting and family responsibilities and want more flexibility. What is good for parents is also good for business and getting it right for employees will mean getting it right for clients."*

Some public sector clients ask about the diversity of the workforce and want to know about the specific approaches that KPMG has adopted to improve this. KPMG is also aware informally that a much larger group of companies want to know what the firm is doing in this area. *"Our commitment to our clients is something we will not compromise on. But we know that there are a range of flexible options that can work successfully with our clients."*

Currently 10% of women and 5% of men have a formal flexible option. This tends to be focused in particular parts of the business. A recent survey demonstrated that in the advisory practice about 60% of people work flexibly, of whom 80% do so informally. Many of these are using 'glide time' which involves flexible start and finish times, and working from home.

"Reduced working hours are generally more of a challenge though. In some parts of the business there is more to do on this particularly in those areas of activity that are very transactional and fast paced. We are not complacent about this, we can't afford to be and more importantly we don't want to be. In the 2009 Sunday Times Best Companies Award not only were we The Best Big Company to Work For but we were also awarded a Lifetime Achievement award. This really pleased us."

At KPMG there is a network of flexible working champions who are mostly client facing people. They work in different offices and in different parts of the business acting as advocates for flexible working. One of these is a senior partner who is the Chief Finance Officer.

As a result of unprecedented market conditions KPMG have recently introduced an innovative flexible working programme to help minimise the risk of future redundancies. This scheme, called 'Flexible Futures', provides an opportunity for every member of the firm in the UK - partner and employee alike - to volunteer to reduce their working hours on a temporary basis, should the business need. There are two options - reducing the working week by one day, or taking extended time off at 30% salary, or both. In recognition of the sacrifice which our people are prepared to make, the maximum loss of salary is capped at 20% of annual base salary. 85% of our Partners and employees have volunteered to reduce their working hours under 'Flexible Futures'. Managers have been told to meet individual needs and preferences where they can. At the same time anyone can apply for the existing flexible working options under the normal arrangements. *"This response sends a very positive message. 'Flexible Futures' was based on our desire to retain our talent and put ourselves in the best possible position for the future."*

Sarah Bond is particularly pleased with 'My Family Matters' which provides ongoing support for those with family responsibilities. Retaining talented women employees in particular remains a key priority. *"We can't afford to be complacent. We will keep focused on those hard to reach parts of the business to ensure we retain and develop our female talent in all areas."*

Supporting Statement

Organisation: KPMG

Approximate number of employees: 11,700

Sector: Professional Services

Brief description of nature of business: KPMG offer audit, tax and advisory professional services

1. Why is your organisation a good place for parents to work today? We are looking for evidence (eg, maternity return rate, men working flexibly, extra support for carers, senior level diversity) as well as any programmes or initiatives which mark you out from your competitors.

At KPMG we offer flexibility as standard:

- We continually seek to ensure our flexible working policies and practices remain ahead of the competition (see also 'Flexible Futures' below).
- We offer a wide range of flexible working options to all of our people including:
 - Glide time (flexible start and finish times)
 - Part time including term-time working
 - Job share
 - Additional holiday purchase
 - Unpaid leave
 - Career breaks
 - Regular or *ad hoc* home working
 - Annualised days (contracted number of days per calendar year)
- In practice however almost any form of flexible working request is given serious consideration
- Over 98% of the flexible working requests that we receive are accepted
- Our policy is not to ask why someone wants to work flexibly thereby sending a strong message that flexible working is available to everyone
- Currently 10.3% of our women and 5.4% of our men have a formal flexible working arrangement in place
- In addition there are also many more with informal and *ad hoc* flexible working arrangements in place. Research last year with Working Families revealed in our advisory practice that around 60% of people work flexibly, of whom 80% do so on an informal basis

Flexible Futures

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My Family Matters

Introduced in 2008, 'My Family Matters' is an ongoing package of support for those with families comprising:

- Emergency childcare. This allows all Partners and employees a fully subsidised maximum of 20 days' childcare per child per year
- Enhanced communication and information channels including a newsletter to keep people on maternity, paternity and adoption leave in touch with events in the firm, and a dedicated 'My Family Matters' intranet site
- Practical support including parenting seminars and employee networks such as a carers' network

and a parents' network (both under development)

- Accreditation by Tommy's, the baby charity, as a pregnancy-friendly employer under their Pregnancy Accreditation Programme.
- We are currently developing guidance for employees and their managers on supporting people going through IVF treatment.

'My Family Matters' supplements our **existing package of policies and support** for parents and carers:

- We conduct detailed work-based assessments for pregnant staff and allow time off for antenatal appointments for both mothers and fathers. We offer 10 fully paid 'Keep In Touch' (KIT) days during maternity leave and our maternity policy and pay itself is service related and enhanced over and above statutory levels. Over 62% of our maternity returners are still with us one year after returning. We also offer all fathers two weeks' fully paid paternity leave for the birth or adoption of a child – over the last year 31% of our male staff have taken advantage of this leave
- Our flexible benefits package 'Flextra' enables staff to 'buy' childcare vouchers and benefit from the associated income tax and NI savings. Currently 850 staff take advantage of this option. Staff are also able to 'buy' an additional two weeks' holiday each year via 'Flextra' – 3,266 staff have elected to take this option this year.

2. Please describe up to three milestones, changes or initiatives which helped the organisation become the great place for working parents that it is today.

- A key milestone for KPMG was the launch of our Employer of Choice agenda about five years ago, when we made explicit our aim to be the best choice for our clients and linked this to being the best choice employer for talented people. Having in place policies and practices that actively support working parents is key to our ability to attract and retain talented people with family responsibilities. We continually review both policies and practice in line with legislation and best practice in the market. Examples include our maternity and paternity policies and practice and our parental leave policy.
- In 2006 we launched a programme called 'Retaining Talented Women'. This was based on internal and external research around the barriers to career progression for women. At that time women identified challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities and we have worked hard to address these through flexible working and through 'My Family Matters' (outlined above). Our most recent 'People Survey' confirms that women are as positive as men about flexible working opportunities in KPMG.
- The introduction of our flexible benefits package 'Flextra' in 1999 – this offers our staff the opportunity to tailor their reward package in a way that suits them and their home/work needs and responsibilities. Examples include additional holiday purchase and childcare vouchers.

3. What was the driving force behind these initiative(s)? This might have been, for example, a particular business challenge, internal or external; leadership shown by an individual; employee demand for change, etc.

At KPMG our business strategy is to be the best choice for our clients and our people, making us the best choice of professional services firm overall. To make this a reality we need to attract, recruit, develop and retain the best people in the marketplace. We know that the most talented people want to work for an employer that offers flexibility and the opportunity of a good work-life balance and proactively supports people with families, so we place this at the heart of our approach to recruitment, retention, motivation and reward. Our clients too want to see demonstrable evidence of our commitment to flexible working and support for working families as part of our overall approach to valuing diversity. And in the current market conditions flexibility is more than just a nice-to-have; it also offers us a unique business solution, vital to our success in difficult economic times. At an individual level, we have some influential role models in the firm who have families to which they are very committed and which they balance successfully with demanding careers. The impact of such role models on the culture of the firm is immeasurable.

4. How do you think that your initiative(s) or practice, past or current, have influenced other employers?

We have benefited as much from other employers doing great things in this arena as we have been able to influence others! But we were delighted to receive significant external recognition for example our success in the Sunday Times Best Big Companies to Work for – being placed in the Top three for the past five years and winning twice in a row - which has led organisations to look to us to share our experience. We are often asked about our approach to employee engagement and diversity and in particular our approach to working parents. Also our placing in the 'Where Women Want to Work' list generates interest by clients and contacts alike. Most recently there has been a lot of interest in our work on Flexible Futures as other employers identify flexible working as a business solution in challenging times.