



Lloyds TSB Bank plc

Lloyds TSB is a major name in British banking. With the launch of Work Options in 1999 Lloyds TSB introduced a new and comprehensive approach to work-life balance which was extremely progressive. From 1999 all staff could ask for a flexible work option.

Fiona Cannon is the Equality and Diversity Director: *"With Work Options we moved away from the assumption that work-life balance was only an issue for women with children. Flexibility became an option for all staff and now managers had a toolkit which meant that they could say no as well as yes. They felt supported"*

Before the launch of Work Options Lloyds TSB was a traditional banking environment. There was a large number of women working part time, but the hours worked were often very rigid. *"There was no support for managers and flexibility was not seen as a strategic priority. There was no flexibility higher up the organisation; working part time was often seen as a career killer. With Work Options all this changed. An employee and their line manager can now have an open and honest conversation about their own needs for flexibility and the needs of the business for flexibility and performance."*

There were two main reasons why Work Options was developed. There was a clear gender perspective – a concern that there were few women in senior roles in the bank. There was also an awareness that the bank needed to be more accessible to customers beyond the traditional 10 - 3pm opening hours. The organisation itself needed to be more flexible to meet changing customer needs.

The bank also has enhanced maternity and paternity leave and offers an array of leave options and other support to cater for staff with very different needs.

Lloyds TSB has taken a very public stance on the issue of work-life balance. They have become a market leader arguing that flexibility is at the core of what the bank does. *"We wanted to make a public statement to our current and potential staff and to our customers. 'We don't follow the pack. We are the best place to work.' We are also aware that we don't work in a bubble. We knew that the issue was bigger than a single company and that we had to work with other companies and with the Government to ensure that the agenda moved on. We wanted to create the environment so that business can do those things that it is best at. "*

Lloyds TSB has developed different ways of assessing the impact of their flexibility policies. They regularly monitor employee engagement and know that their flexibility offer is a key concern for potential recruits. *"We also know from our performance management system that flexible workers really are delivering great performance."*

Lloyds TSB imposes no artificial barriers on flexibility but like in many organisations flexibility at more senior levels has been a challenge. Now more senior people that work flexibly are becoming role models for other staff. *"We want to say that flexibility isn't something that stops when you are promoted. Although the nature of the flexibility might change we want to let people know that you can work flexibly successfully whatever level you aim for."*

As Work Options has embedded and developed, good practice has emerged. One area of growth is the number of men, particularly fathers, who have asked for flexibility. It has now become culturally acceptable for men to ask for and then work a wide range of flexible options. *"Our plans remain ambitious. At a time when bonuses and higher pay will be difficult flexibility becomes even more important, not less so. You really do show that you are the best place to work at times like these. Flexibility has become part of our DNA – part of the way that we operate."*

Supporting Statement

Organisation: Lloyds TSB Bank plc

Approximate number of employees: 63,000

Sector: Financial

Brief description of nature of business: A leading UK-based financial services organisation providing a comprehensive range of banking and financial services in the UK and overseas.

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.

We have broken ground in developing an outstanding package of work-life balance initiatives which makes LTSB a great family friendly place to be, regardless of gender, grade or circumstance. They include:-

- 'Work Options': group-wide **flexible working** scheme - all employees can apply to change their work pattern. Work Options encourages innovative working practices on an individual/team basis to achieve a better **work-life balance** for all staff. Includes part time, job-sharing, tele-working, compressed/reduced/variable hours and term-time working. **Case studies** constantly feature on our internal website and portray real-life flexible working scenarios in branches and head office departments.
- On-line **Job-Share** register: facilitates finding a partner for current roles/new positions (also available externally to those on maternity/adoption/partners leave).
- Generous **maternity/adoption package**, topping-up statutory pay during the first 26 weeks of leave and offering 63 weeks maternity/adoption leave.
- Two weeks fully paid **paternity** leave and up to 52 weeks **partners' leave** for fathers/partners (including same sex partners) when they are the main carer.
- 13 weeks parental leave for **parents/carers** (18 weeks for disabled children).
- **Support packs and planners** for staff taking maternity/adoption/partners' leave including guidance on our policies and processes. Hard copy or on-line, they include a guide on **health in pregnancy** and additional **information for fathers**.
- Similar support packs and planners for **line managers** of staff taking maternity/adoption/partners' leave providing practical advice and guidance to help them support staff through the process.
- Website link to 'Dad': information for **fathers** on pregnancy, birth and babies, plus financial, legal and educational advice.
- Compassionate and emergency leave (usually paid) to help manage unplanned absences for urgent/serious situations affecting **family/dependants** or for compassionate reasons.
- Life event leave: one week's paid leave for major life events eg. adding to **paternity**/other leave.
- Career Break scheme (short and long term options). Particularly useful for longer term care of **children/dependants**.

Our flexible benefits scheme is family-focused, including:

- Childcare vouchers
- Private medical cover: staff can opt for cover for their **partner, children or both**, and those who do not qualify on grade can take a tax-free refund towards cost of medical benefits which can be extended to **partners/children**.
- Holiday trading: buy/sell up to five days leave p.a.

Our monitoring shows our initiatives work for a broad range of staff:

- Before Work Options, less than a quarter of staff worked flexibly – we now have over a third.
- Whilst our centrally held data shows that more **women** work a part time pattern, recent research demonstrates that there's **little gender difference** in the number of other flexible patterns worked across our organisation.
- A high proportion of those working flexibly are **senior managers**, who are great **role models**. Chris, a Managing Director in Lloyds TSB, works a compressed fortnight "**Flexible working is crucial in allowing my partner and I to achieve an acceptable balance and enabling me to play an active role in both of my children's lives.**"
- Sharon, Branch Manager, says **job-sharing** "*has enabled me to successfully balance my career and home life.*"
- Approximately 2,000 of our women take maternity leave p.a. and our **return rate** is 86%. Having a family is no bar to **career progression** - women make up just under a quarter of our senior managers and just over 40% of general management.
- **Top level commitment** is fundamental to our approach – our key executives and board sponsor our diversity work.

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) Work Options: a **pioneering flexible working** approach, unique when launched (1999), gives the right to request flexible working to all employees at any stage of their career, regardless of their reasons for requesting it. Provides a fair, consistent process where requests can only be refused if there's a clear, negative business impact.

Individuals may combine different options or suggest own alternatives on a permanent or temporary basis.

Our 2008 internal research provided the following feedback:

- * 65% of survey respondents who joined recently said that flexibility was **important in their decision to join**.
- * Those who work flexibly are **happier with their work pattern** and more likely to **recommend LTSB** as a great place to work.
- * Those working flexibly are more likely to have **outstanding or exceeded performance ratings**.
- * 75% of flexible workers were **happy in their current role** compared to 49% of non-flexible workers.
- * 86% of respondents said that **LTSB is committed** to supporting flexible working.
- * **Childcare and caring responsibilities** were the single biggest reason that employees work flexibly (28.6% of all respondents).

- b) Parents' Policies. 2002: introduced policy for partners to take equivalent of maternity leave if the main carer – years ahead of legislation and well ahead of the majority of our competitors. Also policy for adoption, and full pay for paternity leave (2 weeks), which went beyond current legislative requirements. In 2007, increased maternity/adoption pay to provide generous company pay package.
- c) 2008 Flexible Working Survey: group-wide research, consisting of on-line questionnaire, focus groups and 1:1 meetings. This gives us the data to inform our future flexible working strategy and take this agenda to the next level. Over 10,000 responses were received.

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.

- (a) 1998: Research with our senior women showed they felt the biggest single factor leading them to consider leaving the organisation was being unable to work flexibly; and a cohort of senior men said the same – Work Options was the solution.
- (b) 2001: a review of our policies for parents resulted in a full-scale overhaul of our family-friendly policies. In 2006, we researched over 4,000 women who had recently returned from maternity leave to identify ways to improve the experience of our new and expectant mothers. Pay was one of the most important factors, leading to enhancement of our maternity pay provisions.
- (c) 2008: Our flexible working policy has been in place since 1999. To test its effectiveness and ensure our approach continues to support the business and individuals, we conducted a review – the latest in a series of evaluations we have carried out over the years.. The results of our latest research will inform our future strategy and ensure we continue to be a leading edge, best practice employer.

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

We pioneered the work-life agenda in 1999 by introducing an approach to flexible working, revolutionising the traditional 9-5, five day working week ethic. As a high performing organisation, seeking to attract and retain the best people, we have led the way in introducing innovative internal practices and pushing the work-life balance agenda forward across UK industry. We have also helped shape the Government agenda in this area. We've done this by leading or being involved in every important work-life balance campaign/initiative in the last two decades, eg:

- 1992/93 Founder of Employers for Childcare which successfully influenced Government to introduce the National Childcare Strategy in 1998.
- 2001 Member of the Government's Work and Parents Taskforce shaping parents' rights to request flexible working arrangements.
- 2000-03 Founder member and Chair of Employers for Work-life Balance promoting the business case for work-life balance and sharing best practice amongst employers. Legacies include a Guide for Small Businesses; a website, now run by The Work Foundation; and a ground-breaking Investors in People module.
- 2004 Chair of the advisory board for the UK's first General Formal Investigation on pregnancy discrimination.
- 2009 Think Fathers Campaign: member of advisory board to Government on fathers at work and in society.

Lloyds TSB is proud to have been involved in a total of 16 ground-breaking campaigns/initiatives to drive the UK family and work-life agendas forward.