

## **The Royal Bank of Scotland Group**

Yourtime- Making flexibility at work, work

### **The company**

The Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBS), founded in 1727, is the fifth largest bank in the world and the second largest bank in the UK and Europe.

RBS has nearly 30 million customers worldwide and is the largest provider of banking services to small, medium and large businesses across the UK. It is the second largest general insurer in the UK, the leading provider in motor insurance and the lead corporate bank in the UK.

Total income £19.229m

Pre-tax profit £6,159

\* All figures are based on the financial year ending 31 December 2003

### **Workforce**

The Royal Bank of Scotland employs over 120,000 people world-wide, and looks after the needs of nearly 30 million customers. With just over 102,000 employees in the UK alone, it has nearly 22% of employees working some form of flexible working pattern.

No. of worldwide employees 120,000

% female 60

### **The challenges**

RBS has a large number of female employees – many combine their career with being the primary carer of children

Employees – not only those with caring responsibilities – are seeking a fuller life outside work, with time to devote to personal interests

There is a need to retain business agility in an increasingly competitive market

### **Response**

RBS developed its suite of flexible working options across the group in 2002 and extends the right to flexible working was extended to all employees, not just those with young children.

### **How policies are communicated:**

Each UK business area nominates a Business Champion to work on the work-life project. This ensures that group-wide policies meet local business needs  
Each flexible working policy is supported by a fact sheet for employees and managers giving information on how changes affect individuals' contracts  
Access to the policies and fact sheets are available to all employees and managers via:

- The intranet (insite)
- HRdirect (a telephone service for line managers and employees), and
- HelpDirect (RBS's employee assistance programme)
- Key messages are communicated to all employees via:
- insite

- Internal Group publications such as Your Magazine
- HRdirect
- Line and Human Resources Managers in the business area
- Live case studies published on Insite
- Questions in the annual employee opinion survey mean that the impact of these policies can be measured

### **Policies:**

Flexible working policies are divided into Time at Work:

- Part-time working
- Term-time working
- Home working
- Variable hours
- Compressed hours
- Job share
- Maternity and Adoption 'phase back'
- 'Wind down to retirement'

And Time away from Work including options such as:

- Holiday 'banking'
- Buying and selling of holidays
- Short- and long-term career breaks
- Special leave
- Compassionate leave
- Study leave
- IVF leave
- Adoption leave
- Business benefits

Balancing business needs with the preferences and commitments of individuals, has led to the following benefits:

- More flexible and agile business
- Reduced employee turnover
- Reduced sickness absence
- Increased retention of key skills and experience
- Increased employee commitment and motivation
- Attraction of quality candidates for positions

### **Challenges**

Although the right to request flexible working patterns has been extended to all, the 'flexibility agenda' is still seen mainly as a parenting and caring issue by many employees. RBS continues to capture take up rates for the flexible working options in order to promote further embedding of Yourtime in the necessary areas.

### **The future**

RBS is undertaking further work on raising awareness of flexible working within the Group and embedding the flexible working agenda within the organisation.

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