



Part time career suicide?

Going part time as a work and lifestyle choice can be an attractive option for many, allowing them to balance family commitments or personal choice with work and AXA has a very good policy for employees who wish to apply to go part time. By law, part time workers should not be treated less favourably than their full time colleagues, but in reality is that the case?

Unfortunately **Unite** has been made aware of a number of incidents within **AXA** where part time workers are passed over for promotion for "being part time", where staff meetings are arranged for times they are not contracted to work and instances where employees have made requests to change to part time which are refused as the local manager does not want part time workers as "they are too much trouble". This is despite the law on part time workers and **AXA** being a "family friendly" employer with good part time policies.

Clearly these instances are not the norm throughout **AXA** and there are a number of examples of local managers happily accommodating the wishes of employees to go part time and promoting part time workers to positions of seniority. However, the fact that such instances still occur is reason for concern and **Unite** would like to see some positive action taken to make it easier for employees to go part time, see systems put in place to ensure part timers are not discriminated against when applying for senior roles (there is a big fall in the number of part time workers the higher the grade, but clearly it is not impossible to be a part time senior manager) and make sure managers are aware of their responsibilities under the *Part Time Workers Regulations* not to treat part timers less favourably.



% of part time workers in AXA

Grade	Ins	Life	Sh Srv
9	31.08%	15.84%	38.46%
8	21.34%	17.42%	21.02%
7	20.15%	17.29%	17.24%
6b	10.09%	7.09%	5.71%
6a	6.39%	5.07%	9.97%
5	5.41%	2.60%	7.88%
4b	5.32%	3.50%	7.53%
4a	0.00%	2.04%	4.88%
3	4.00%	0.00%	1.20%

Part Time Workers Regulations

Ever since the year 2000, the law states that part time workers were entitled to pro-rata pay and no less favourable treatment in terms of their contract when compared with full time employees.

The Part Time Workers Regulations state, simply, that all part time staff are entitled to be paid at a rate equal to or greater than the rate per hour for a full time employee.

Pro-rata means paying a worker proportionately to an employee doing the same duties, i.e.

- at an equivalent hourly rate,
- with all necessary duties covered by payment, and
- the right to progress up the pay scale.

No less favourable treatment applies to all aspects of the contract, and non-contractual rights, with one important exception (redundancy protection for workers who are not classified as employees).

It covers, for instance:

- parity of esteem and full involvement in the life of the department, and
- the same access to necessary training in order to carry out the duties.

It may also apply to other questions such as access to continuous professional development.

AXA agree to menopause changes

Following on from the **Unite** proposals on menopause made to **AXA** last year, the company have agreed to amend a raft of existing policy wordings to include the menopause and ensure women are not treated less favourably whilst experiencing the menopause.

Policies being updated include the absence policy, harassment and bullying, equality and diversity and flexible working policy.

Visit the IWD website: www.internationalwomensday.com



2008 International Women's Day



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