

## **Mock Motion Debate**

### **Development of a flexible working system**

A flexible working system covers a number of adaptable work arrangements. A common approach is for employers to allow employees to freely adjust their working hours and locations to enable the latter to balance the needs of work and personal life. This will, in turn, ease the pressure on working persons, enhance their productivity and sense of belonging, and help employers to retain and attract quality talents. This Council urges the Government to enact legislation to implement a flexible working system and provide appropriate support for employers, with a view to improving labour welfare in the long run and creating a win-win situation for employers and employees.

# Mock Motion Debate

## Development of a flexible working system

Role	Script
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	: Members' motion: Development of a flexible working system. <u>Hon _____</u> (Name of the student acting as Legislative Council Member A who moves the motion)
<b>MEMBER A (LABOUR FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY)</b>	: ( <i>Stands up</i> ) President, I move that the motion be passed to urge the Government to enact legislation to implement a flexible working system, which allows employees to choose their working hours and locations flexibly in order to balance the needs of work and personal life such as raising children, looking after families and pursuing further education, so long as the arrangement is acceptable to both the employers and the employees. Although the Government has been encouraging enterprises to adopt family-friendly employment practices, this is on a voluntary basis and the response from employers seems rather lukewarm. Being a cosmopolitan city, Hong Kong should consider following the practices of the United Kingdom and Australia, by legislating to provide employees with the relevant rights, and retaining and absorbing quality talents through a people-oriented management approach. I hope the Government will enact legislation to facilitate the development of a flexible working system to bring practical improvements to labour welfare ... ( <i>Student may express more views freely</i> ) Thank you, President. ( <i>Sits down</i> )
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	: I now propose the question to you and that is: That the motion moved by <u>Member A</u> be passed. Does any Member wish to speak?  ( <i>The student acting as Legislative Council Member B (Geographical Constituency) raises his/her hand</i> )

<b>Role</b>	<b>Script</b>
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	: <u>Hon _____</u> (Name of the student acting as Legislative Council Member B (Geographical Constituency))
<b>MEMBER B (GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCY)</b>	: <i>(Stands up)</i> President, I support <u>Member A</u> 's motion. Working from home enables employees to commute less and take more time out. Even those working in sectors that requiring extended working hours can achieve work-life balance more easily. With fewer commuters during peak hours, wage earners will not encounter traffic congestion frequently, which will also help to enhance their quality of life. Moreover, a flexible working system can relieve the pressure faced by working mothers, and fewer of them will be forced to leave the workforce for family reasons. For grassroots families, this can improve their livelihood ... <i>(Student may express more views freely)</i> President, I so submit and support <u>Member A</u> 's motion. Thank you. <i>(Sits down)</i>  <i>(The student acting as Legislative Council Member C (Election Committee) raises his/her hand)</i>
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	: <u>Hon _____</u> (Name of the student acting as the Legislative Council Member C (Election Committee))
<b>MEMBER C (ELECTION COMMITTEE)</b>	: <i>(Stands up)</i> President, I oppose <u>Member A</u> 's motion. Quite a number of employers are doubtful about implementing a flexible working system, worrying that they may not have the resources to establish a secure communications network for ensuring the confidentiality of business information. Besides, if the members of a team have different working hours and locations, the supervisor may find it difficult to monitor subordinates' performance and impossible to provide timely support in unexpected situations, thus undermining the interests of the enterprise. If the Government does not offer sufficient financial incentives to employers, like the direct cash subsidy available in

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<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	<p>Singapore and other places, it may be difficult to motivate employers to support the implementation of a flexible working system ... <i>(Student may express more views freely)</i></p> <p>President, I so submit and oppose <u>Member A</u>'s motion. Thank you. <i>(Sits down)</i></p> <p><i>(The student acting as Legislative Council Member D (Technology and Innovation Functional Constituency) raises his/her hand)</i></p>
<b>MEMBER D (TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY)</b>	<p>: <i>(Stands up)</i></p> <p>Thank you, President. I support <u>Member A</u>'s motion. Rapid technological developments have removed the physical constraints on traditional workplaces. Nowadays, "smart offices" can be set up with the aid of video conferencing, cloud storage, online banking, etc. Even if an employee is not in the office, he or she can still work as usual, and remain in close contact with the team members and clients any time. With a wider adoption of flexible working system by enterprises, this adaptable and efficient mode of work may help develop Hong Kong into an international smart city and give people a better quality of life ... <i>(Student may express more views freely)</i></p> <p>President, I so submit and support <u>Member A</u>'s motion. Thank you. <i>(Sits down)</i></p> <p><i>(The student acting as Legislative Council Member E (Wholesale &amp; Retail Functional Constituency) raises his/her hand)</i></p>
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	<p>: <u>Hon _____</u> (Name of the student acting as Legislative Council Member E (Wholesale &amp; Retail Functional Constituency))</p>

<b>Role</b>	<b>Script</b>
<b>MEMBER E (WHOLESALE &amp; RETAIL FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY)</b>	: <i>(Stands up)</i> President, I oppose <u>Member A</u> 's motion. Regarding work locations, there is very limited room for flexible adjustment in some sectors, especially retail which covers cosmetic, jewellery and automobile businesses, as many customers prefer shopping in person and receiving professional advice and service from shop assistants. The mass implementation of a flexible working system in some sectors will greatly reduce the recruitment attractiveness of the others that cannot adopt such work patterns. As a result, the employers concerned will have to offer a higher pay to employees, resulting in increased operation costs and an unfair business environment ... <i>(Student may express more views freely)</i> President, I so submit and oppose <u>Member A</u> 's motion. Thank you. <i>(Sits down)</i>
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	: Does any other Member wish to speak?  <i>(The rest of the students acting as Legislative Council Members may raise their hands to indicate their wish to speak. Students should wait until the President calls his/her name to stand up and speak)</i>  <u>Hon _____</u> (Name of the student acting as Legislative Council Member)  <i>(One by one, the President calls upon the students who have raised their hands to indicate their wish to speak to stand up and speak)</i>
<b>HON (LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBER)</b>	: <i>(Stands up)</i> (Student to express his/her views) <i>(Sits down)</i>
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	: <i>(All students who have raised their hands to indicate their wish to speak have finished delivering their speeches)</i>

Role	Script
<b>SECRETARY FOR LABOUR AND WELFARE</b>	<p>Does any other Member wish to speak? (If no Member indicates a wish to speak)</p> <p>Secretary for Labour and Welfare.</p> <p>: <i>(Stands up)</i></p> <p>President, I am delighted that quite a number of Members have spoken enthusiastically. Over the years, the Government has been encouraging employers to adopt family-friendly employment practices by promoting five-day work week, etc., in order to help employees meet their family responsibilities and needs. Hong Kong has a working population of nearly 4 million. A business's ability to offer flexible working depends on its size and the nature of its work. The Government has to introduce improvements to employees' benefits gradually in the light of the economic development and actual situation of enterprises. The Government undertakes to step up publicity on the flexible working system and conduct timely assessment on its effectiveness. We will consider enacting legislation after a consensus is reached between employers and employees ... <i>(Student may come up with more points of his/her own)</i> Thank you, President.</p> <p><i>(Sits down)</i></p>
<b>PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL</b>	<p>: <u>Member A</u>, you may now reply. This debate will come to a close after <u>Member A</u> has replied. <u>Member A</u>.</p>
<b>MEMBER A (LABOUR FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY)</b>	<p>: <i>(Stands up)</i></p> <p>Thank you, President. Enactment of legislation to facilitate the development of a flexible working system may bring changes to the labour policy and improve labour welfare in the long run. I believe, when introducing the new law, the Government will give employers support to assist them in adapting to the relevant measures. An enterprise which adopts a flexible working system may build an image of being a good employer. Its employees will also feel that their rights and interests are respected. This will help to boost their morale, and reduce absence or turnover of staff, thereby leading to a win-win situation for employers and</p>

<b>Role</b>	<b>Script</b>
	employees ... <i>(Student may express more views freely)</i> I call upon Members to support my motion. Thank you, Honourable Members. <i>(Sits down)</i>

**PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL** : I now put the question to you and that is:  
That the motion moved by Member A be passed.

Will those in favour please raise their hands?<sup>1</sup>  
*(The Clerk counts the votes)*

Those against please raise their hands.  
*(The Clerk counts the votes)*

(If over half of the Members present  
vote in favour of the motion)

(If half or less than half of the Members  
present vote  
in favour of the motion)

**PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL** : I think the question is agreed by a majority of the Members present.  
I declare the motion passed.

**PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL** : I think the question is not agreed by a majority of the Members present.  
I declare the motion negated.

- End -

<sup>1</sup> To simplify the proceedings of the role-play, the passage of motions shall require a majority vote of the Members present. The voting procedure for real Council meetings is as follows:

- (a) the passage of motions or amendments introduced by the Government requires a majority vote of the Members present;
- (b) the passage of motions or amendments introduced by individual Members requires a majority vote of each of the two groups of Members present:
  - Members returned by the Election Committee; and
  - Members returned by functional constituencies and by geographical constituencies through direct elections.