

Flexible Work Procedure

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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to assist staff who wish to request a flexible working arrangement and to assist managers and supervisors at Federation University ('us', 'our' or 'we') to manage and respond to those requests.

Scope

This procedure applies to continuing and fixed-term staff at Federation University Australia. Staff are collectively referred to as 'you' for the purpose of this procedure.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Approved home work location	The area designated within your home, or another approved remote work location, in which you will carry out home-based work in accordance with the Flexible Work Agreement
Union Enterprise agreement	The Union Enterprise Agreement means the Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement (Academic and General Staff) 2019-2021

Term	Definition
	Clause 24 – overtime (academic and general staff) Clause 29 – workplace flexibility (academic and general staff) Clause 31 – annualised hours (general staff)
Family members	A member of your household or immediate family, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ã. spouse (including a former spouse, a de facto spouse, a former de facto spouse, or same sex partner) Ã. child (including an adopted child, permanent care child, foster child, or grandchild) Ã. sibling (of the employee or the employee’s spouse) Ã. parent (including a foster parent, legal guardian or grandparent) Ã. a relative who has taken the place of a parent, or a relative residing with the employee, or Ã. a person whom the employee has caring responsibilities arising from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kinship relationship or equivalent.
Flexible working arrangement	A change to a staff member’s usual work arrangements that balances their need for flexibility and the University’s operational requirements. Flexible working arrangements may include, but are not limited to, part-time employment arrangements, job-sharing, non-standard start and finish times, or working from home. Refer also to the Flexible Work Procedure.
Flexible working hours	A change to a staff member’s usual working hours, such as non-standard start and finish times.
Dean/Director	Means the Dean/Director of a School or Directorate.
HR Business Partner	A key member of the HR Business Partnering team who provides strategic advice, guidance and solutions to a particular client group that underpin organisational vision, key client goals and HR strategy.
Manager/supervisor	The person who is responsible for the supervision of staff member(s), generally the line manager.
Substantive position	The position a staff member would normally occupy.
Work area	The work area under the responsibility of your usual line manager/supervisor.

Overview

The University recognises the factors contributing to work/life integration may change over time. To support you, the University is committed to providing flexibility options to accommodate various priorities.

The operational needs of the University must remain the priority to ensure services to students can be delivered in meeting their requirements. Some roles are generally not suitable to be undertaken from home and need to be performed on campus.

These roles include:

- a requirement for face-to-face interaction with customers and students;
- close supervision of a staff member;
- cannot be performed effectively without accessing information, facilities and/or systems that can only be accessed on campus; and/or
- servicing or maintaining University equipment and/or buildings.

If you are in a supervisory or management role, you need to consider the balance of your personal flexibility with supporting your team and attending key meetings/events.

Your manager/supervisor may consider and approve up to two days per week (full-time staff) or one day per week (part-time staff) working from an approved home work location.

If your time fraction is 0.4 or less, you may be able to request to work up to 40% of your contracted hours from an approved home work location.

You are required to submit a request in accordance with this procedure and may be required to provide relevant documentary evidence to support your request.

If you are requesting to work from a location that is interstate or overseas for a limited period of time, your request will be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Director, Human Resources. Please discuss your circumstances with your HR Business Partner in the first instance prior to making an application.

Staff member-initiated changes to hours of work, fraction and leave

If you are employed under the *Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement (Academic and General Staff) 2019-2021*, you may apply for the following flexible working arrangement(s) in accordance with clause 29 - Workplace flexibility, clause 30 - Purchased Leave for full-time continuing and fixed-term staff and clause 31 - Annualised Hours generally for part-time continuing and fixed-term staff, as follows:

- a change to start and finish times to suit personal and/or family circumstances;
- a reduction in time fraction;
- purchase of additional leave with a reduction in pay (e.g. under a voluntary reduced working year arrangement); and/or
- annualised hours where a staff member is employed for a specific number of ordinary hours within any given year.

Applications can be made by completing the relevant form(s) on the Human Resources [Forms and templates web page](#). Your manager/supervisor will consider and approve or refuse your written request. Additional information or a discussion to determine your request may be required, however, requests will not be unreasonably refused.

Eligibility under the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

Under the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*, you are eligible to request a Flexible Working Arrangement if you have completed at least 12-months continuous service with us, immediately prior to making the request and:

- have a disability;
- are a parent, or have the responsibility for the care of a child who is of school age or younger;

- are a carer for someone with a disability, medical condition or mental health condition or who is aged and frail in accordance with the *Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth)*;
- are 55 or older;
- are experiencing violence from a family member; or
- are providing care and support to a family member who requires care or support because they are experiencing violence from their family.

We will consider all requests but may refuse them on reasonable operational requirements.

Review guidelines and explore options

Review the [Flexible Work Arrangements Toolkit and Case Studies](#) when considering what flexible work option(s) suits your circumstances. Options may include (but are not limited to):

Options	Summary
Part-time hours	Reduce the number of hours you work per week.
Voluntary reduced working year (purchased leave for academic and general staff)	Reduce your current working year by multiples of two weeks (up to a maximum of eight weeks), with salary proportionally reduced to fund the additional paid leave over a 52-week period. These options incur their own application and approval processes which can be found on the Workplace flexibility web page.
Annualised hours (academic and general staff)	This form of employment allows for flexible part-time working hours generally for part-time staff by negotiation with your manager/supervisor. To calculate the total number of hours to be worked over a 12-month period refer to the Hours calculator - for general staff on annualised hours . The flexibility of annualised hours means that you and your manager/supervisor have the flexibility to manage how annual hours are worked incorporating leave entitlements and public holidays.
Non-standard start and finish times	Vary your start and finish times within the ordinary hours of duty (or outside your ordinary hours of duty) – for further details refer to clause 29 of the Federation University Australia Union Enterprise Agreement (Academic and General Staff) 2019–2021.
Job share	Job share is where no more than two staff members share a single full-time or part-time position by dividing the work, each working part-time. Each job share partner will have the same position title and position description.
Working from home	Work up to two days from your approved home work location.
Transition to retirement	If you are in a continuing position and within three-years of eligibility to receive a retirement benefit from your superannuation scheme, your work fraction can be reduced to part-time under a pre-retirement contract.

Discuss options with your manager/supervisor

Discuss your requirements with your supervisor and be prepared to consider other options that will meet both your needs and the work area's requirements.

Prepare and submit your flexible work request

Submit a Flexible Work Agreement Request Form to your HR Business Partner at least 14 days before the arrangement is proposed to start.

You may also need to submit additional forms to support your request. If your flexible work request is for the purpose of working from an approved home work location, you must also complete the *Building Blocks for Working Virtually* in the ELMO learning management system.

You can request a Flexible Working Agreement for a term of up to 31 December each calendar year (continuing staff) or the end date of your fixed-term contract (whichever is sooner).

The term will include a trial period (usually three months), wherein you and your supervisor must review the arrangement to determine if it meets the needs of both parties and/or if any changes are required. If the arrangement is meeting the needs of your work area, it is recommended that reviews occur at least every three months.

Technology, facilities and equipment

You will be provided with a University-enabled electronic device (either desktop or laptop) to be used when working at home or on campus. The University will not provide devices for both home and office locations.

Where a request for specialist equipment relates to reasonable workplace adjustment, please contact the University's Injury Management and Wellbeing Consultant.

If you are utilising personal devices at home, all University documents, data, and/or information must be stored on University approved storage devices (i.e. SharePoint). Storage on a USB is not permitted. Any service of supplied equipment must be facilitated through the University's ITS Directorate.

You are responsible for the maintenance and care of University equipment and will report faults as and when they occur.

You are responsible for ensuring you have an appropriate internet connection at home, and for all internet costs.

The cost of any additional equipment such as personal IT equipment or home office furniture, required to set up a working space at home are personal expenses. The University will not provide reimbursement for these items.

You are encouraged to review the [ATO website](#) for information regarding working from home items you can claim on your tax return.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- electricity expenses in the area from which you are working and running items you are using for work;
- phone and internet expenses;
- computer consumables (for example, printer paper and ink) and stationery; and
- home office equipment, including computers, monitors, printers, phones, furniture and furnishings.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and Wellbeing

Work location safety

Before your Flexible Work Agreement can commence, completion of the *Building Blocks for Working Virtually* module in ELMO must be recorded. A refresher must also be completed every two years thereafter.

Generally, you are responsible for covering any costs to ensure your approved home work location is safe.

If your approved home work location permanently changes you must advise us as soon as possible by notifying your manager/supervisor and updating your home address in Employee Self-Service (ESS).

You must take all reasonable steps to ensure your approved home work location is safe and you may also be required to demonstrate this to us. Your agreement should only continue if/when your approved home work location is safe.

Wellbeing

When working from an approved home work location, it is important to look after yourself and stay connected to your team. We recommend you work through the [Creating a mentally healthier workplace checklist](#) and ensure you are familiar with University resources and support for:

- setting up a safe and dedicated workspace;
- developing a schedule, including periods of focused work and sufficient breaks (i.e. 5 minutes every 25 minutes); and
- staying connected to your team by participating in regular meetings by phone or MS Teams.

The [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) is a free, professional, confidential counselling service available to you to access should you need short-term support for work-related or personal reasons that may be affecting you.

There is also additional support provided on the [Health and wellbeing web page](#), Wellness Wednesday publication and 'lunch and learn' development sessions.

Consideration of requests

We will consider and respond to your request within 14 days of it being received.

Your supervisor and HR Business Partner will consider whether your request can be accommodated, considering the impact on service delivery, business continuity, and on the overall staffing profile of the area.

A Flexible Work Agreement request must be approved by your Dean/Director.

Outcome of your request

Occupational Health and Safety

As part of your submission for a Flexible Work Agreement, a self-assessment checklist must be signed by you and your manager/supervisor. It may be deemed necessary that you provide evidence of your working space or an inspection, if deemed necessary by the Manager, Risk, Health and Safety.

Should an inspection be required, two working days' notice will be provided to you. Following an inspection, a report will be issued and provided to you and your manager/supervisor within five working days.

You must notify your manager/supervisor as soon as practicable and in accordance with section 4 of the University's *Incident and Emergency Management Procedure – Investigating Incidents and Emergencies* for any work-related accident, injury, illness or disease which occurs as a result of the Flexible Work Agreement by means of a completed Injury Report or Hazard/Near-Miss Report (as appropriate).

The Flexible Work Agreement may be suspended where:

- an accepted worker's compensation claim is active; and/or
- a Return to Work process is in place; or
- where medical evidence indicates you are unfit to return to work.

Approval

Where approved, Human Resources will provide both you and your supervisor with a copy of the approved request.

Refusal

Human Resources will provide written advice of the reasons for refusal of your request and the decision will be communicated to you by your manager/supervisor. Further advice will be available from the relevant HR Business Partner and/or Diversity and Inclusion Partner. A meeting may be arranged to explain the refusal to you and to other discuss options.

Monitoring and review

You and your manager/supervisor should meet every three months to discuss the agreement to ensure it continues to meet the needs of both parties.

A Flexible Work Agreement will be formally reviewed and may cease if:

- the arrangement is no longer workable and discussions have not been able to rectify the issues, your manager/supervisor must seek advice from your HR Business Partner for further options; or
- there are changes to your approved home work location that make it unsafe.

Changing the agreement

Flexible Work Agreement can be changed at any time at the University's discretion by providing you two weeks' notice.

If you need a change to the agreement, such as changes to working days or times, you may request those changes by notifying your manager/supervisor, who will then determine if your request can be accommodated. Changes that would negatively impact service delivery, your team, your teams' workload, and/or performance, will usually not be agreed to.

Transfer of the agreement

A Flexible Work Agreement is not transferable from one position to another. If you apply for and secure a new position, you must re-apply for a new Flexible Work Agreement with your new manager/supervisor.

Cancelling the agreement

The University may terminate the arrangement at any time during the agreed time period where the operational needs of the area change and working remotely is no longer a viable option; or where issues related to performance are unable to be rectified, following consultation with the staff member and the HR Business Partner.

The agreement may also be ended at your initiative, by mutual agreement with your manager/supervisor. Where mutually agreed, you must notify Human Resources of the notice of cancellation by email to hr@federation.edu.au.

Supporting Documents

All University policies and procedures

Forms

Forms.

- [Flexible Work Agreement request and checklist](#) (DOCX 167.2kb)
- [Injury Report](#) (PDF 178.0kb)

Responsibility

The Vice-Chancellor is ultimately responsible for the implementation of this Policy and Procedure.

The Director, Human Resources is responsible for overseeing the provision of support and advice on this Policy and Procedure.

All University staff are responsible for complying with this Procedure.

Promulgation

This procedure will be communicated throughout the University community via:

1. A FedNews announcement and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the University's Policy Central website.
2. Distribution of emails to Deans / Directors / Managers / University staff.
3. Documentation distribution, e.g. posters, brochures.
4. Notification to Schools.

Implementation

This procedure will be implemented throughout the University via

1. An Announcement Notice under 'FedNews' on the 'FedUni' website and through the University Policy - 'Recently Approved Documents' webpage to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure; and
2. Inclusion on the University's online Policy Library.
3. Information and training sessions advertised via FedNews and provided by Human Resources to Deans, Directors and Managers.