



FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT PROCEDURE

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1. OVERVIEW

This Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) Procedure sets out the suite of flexible work arrangements available to eligible staff at the University of Adelaide (UoA).

It is important to recognise the University is committed to providing an excellent learning environment for students which incorporates a face-to-face experience. To support this, staff members and their supervisors need to consider the balance between the University's business needs and the needs of staff members so the UoA can continue to provide an environment that supports excellence, collaboration, diversity, and a vibrant campus experience. The needs of individual staff members also must be balanced with those of other staff members in the workplace.

The procedure aims to facilitate a contemporary working environment by enabling staff members across professional and academic staff cohorts to request to work flexibly in a variety of ways. Flexible working arrangements are just one of many ways that the University is creating a diverse, inclusive, and equitable work and study environment.

This procedure operates in conjunction with the relevant provisions of [The University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement \(Enterprise Agreement\) 2023-2025](#) and of the [Fair Work Act 2009 \(Cth\) \(Fair Work Act\)](#).

2. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all eligible staff members as outlined in the Fair Work Act and the Enterprise Agreement under the 'right to request' criteria. It further extends the option for all fixed-term and continuing academic and professional staff to make a request for a flexible work arrangement regardless of the length of service, and beyond the eligibility criteria outlined in the Fair Work Act.

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This procedure also reflects the full suite of flexible work arrangement opportunities available at UoA which extends beyond those categories prescribed in the [Enterprise Agreement](#) clauses 4.15 and 4.16.

In line with the [Fair Work Act and the Enterprise Agreement \(clause 4.15.1\(b\)\)](#), casual staff members are eligible to request a flexible work arrangement if they have been working for UoA regularly and systematically for at least 12 months and there is a reasonable expectation of continuing work with UoA on a regular and systematic basis.

This procedure does not apply to:

- casual staff beyond the above criteria
- ad-hoc and/or short-term arrangements of less than two weeks which are to be made via email, phone call, or text to the supervisor, who will confirm in writing and notify any relevant staff or stakeholders of the short-term arrangement
- [flexi-time arrangements](#) which are separate to flexible work arrangements.

Any existing flexible work arrangement will cease where a staff member is appointed to a new position, though the staff member may request a flexible work arrangement in their new role with their new supervisor.

3. PRINCIPLES

These principles outline UoA’s philosophy and provide guidance to staff and supervisors in carrying out their respective responsibilities and to ensure high levels of performance, stakeholder engagement, and effective delivery are at the forefront when considering how staff work.

- Staff members and supervisors acknowledge the importance of in-person connection and that attendance on campus is necessary for many reasons including, but not limited to:
 - organisational and team culture and relationship building
 - collaboration and connection
 - efficiency of communication
 - face-to-face interactions with students, colleagues, and stakeholders
 - new staff member onboarding, training, and support
 - learning and development
 - contributing to a vibrant campus experience.
- The University acknowledges the benefits of flexible work to facilitate staff work/life balance and will endeavour to support such arrangements where compatible with the University’s business needs.
- Whilst all eligible staff may request a flexible working arrangement, certain staff members have a legal entitlement to request flexible working arrangements under the Fair Work Act.
- If staff members do not meet the criteria in the Fair Work Act, they may make a request for workplace flexibility that will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this procedure.
- There is a shared responsibility to make flexible work arrangements a success for everyone. This includes living the University’s values of integrity, respect, discovery, collegiality, and excellence at all times.

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- Both parties need to consider and ensure that flexible work arrangements reflect the needs of the University, the team, and the individual, whilst weighing up:
 - the staff member’s role, responsibilities, and day-to-day duties
 - University requirements including quality of service delivery, efficiency, productivity, and engagement
 - internal and external stakeholder requirements, especially student needs and the student experience
 - the impact on the team, including other team member arrangements and overall team performance
 - the ability of staff to work productively without onsite supervision and support where that is proposed
 - the consequences for a staff member where requests are declined.
- Flexible work arrangements are best applied on an individual basis between staff members and supervisors and ‘blanket’ flexible work arrangements applying to teams or work units are not appropriate on the basis that they are not optimal for every staff member or the University.
- UoA trusts staff members will work in the best interests of the University, its students, staff, and other stakeholders at all times.
- Communication between a staff member and their supervisor is crucial when discussing and reviewing flexible work arrangements. Communication about agreed arrangements with team members, colleagues and students is also important.
- Flexible work arrangements vary depending on circumstance. Not all types of flexibility will be available for every role and every individual, and they can change, pause, or cease over time for many reasons, including operational ones.
- Staff members and supervisors prioritise performance based on productivity and quality of outcomes. This requires performance expectations to be clear and for attention to be paid to the quality and quantity of work delivered rather than to when, where, or how work is completed.
- Staff members are transparent to internal and external stakeholders about when, where, and how they work.
- The following flexible work arrangements commence with an initial three-month review period to ensure the arrangement suitable to continue for the full duration:
 - Hybrid work
 - Reduced employment fraction
 - Compressed weeks
 - Variable start/finish times
 - Job share
 - Other flexible work arrangement options not listed in the procedure, as appropriate.
- Flexible work arrangements are in place for no longer than 12 months unless otherwise specified in the [Enterprise Agreement](#).
- For flexible work arrangements continuing beyond the 12-month period, they are to be reviewed at least annually from the effective date, or at any time if work requirements, performance, or the staff member’s personal circumstances change.

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- Where a flexible work arrangement is varied or ceased to accommodate business and/or individual needs, reasonable notice must be provided.
- Prior to the conclusion of the 12 month period, staff may reapply for a similar arrangement for a further 12 months unless otherwise specified in the [Enterprise Agreement](#), at which point the arrangement is to be reviewed to ensure it continues to be suitable for both the University and the staff member.
- Both UoA and all staff members are committed to safe work practices irrespective of when and where staff are working.

3.1 Types of flexible work

There are a range of flexible work arrangements available at UoA. These options may be considered on their own, or, where feasible and on approval, multiple options may apply at the same time.

When considering requesting a flexible work arrangement, staff members should consider the financial impacts of the change and seek their own financial advice prior to submitting the request.

Professional staff should note that the span of hours for all positions is set out in the [Enterprise Agreement](#), and hours must fall within those requirements.

Clauses 4.15 and 4.16 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#) set out the following types of voluntary flexible work arrangement opportunities available:

- reduced employment fraction
- purchased leave
- compressed weeks

UoA recognises that there are other types of flexible work arrangements that should be considered by staff when looking to request a flexible work arrangement or by supervisors when considering a staff member's request.

The full suite of flexible working arrangements available at the UoA are as follows:

Hybrid work location

Depending on the nature of their role, staff can request to work from home or at an alternative work location other than their usual place of work on campus that is both safe and productive for a portion of their working week. Such an arrangement will generally mean a staff member is required to spend more time on campus than working remotely. Other than in exceptional circumstances, fully remote work will not ordinarily be considered as an option.

Where hybrid work arrangements have been agreed this will include the supervisor considering desk allocation during the staff member's off-campus hours/days.

Reduced employment fraction

A staff member can temporarily request to reduce their work fraction either from full-time to part-time, or to reduce their part-time hours of employment for an agreed period of time as per clauses 4.16.2 and 4.16.3 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

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A staff member wanting to request a permanent change to their employment fraction should contact their supervisor and HR Advisor. Such a request is not considered a flexible work arrangement and is outside of the scope of this procedure.

Return to full-time work or extension of period of reduced hours

A staff member who is working reduced hours can request to return to full-time work or to extend the period of reduced hours as prescribed in clause 4.16.4 in the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

Compressed weeks

A compressed week enables staff members to work fewer days per fortnight while working the same total number of hours per fortnight. For example, a full-time staff member would work the same total amount of hours over a nine-day fortnight as per clause 4.16.6 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

Variable start / finish times

For some staff members, requesting to change their start and/or finishing times on their normal days of work whilst still working their full hours can help with work/life balance, for example, working from 8:30am – 4:30pm rather than 9:00am – 5:00pm.

Job share

Job sharing can provide opportunities to develop skills, experience and capability and can enable a reduction in a staff member's hours whilst ensuring continuity of the role for example reception or help desk. Job sharing can include arrangements where two part-time staff members with appropriate skills and experience share the hours of a role.

Purchased Leave

Staff members can apply to purchase additional leave with a commensurate reduction in salary across the year in accordance with clause 4.16.5 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#). This includes the opportunity to purchase a minimum of one week of leave per year to be taken at a mutually convenient time and must be taken within a 12-month period. It must be purchased and booked in one-week blocks.

Outside of a flexible work arrangement, staff members can access a range of [leave options](#) including long service leave at full or half pay where they are eligible as per the [Leave Entitlement Procedure](#).

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4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Applying for flexible work arrangements

Staff and supervisors should familiarise themselves with clauses 4.15 and 4.16 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

An eligible staff member and their supervisor must meet to discuss the staff member's flexible work arrangement request and the circumstances for which the request is being made prior to the request being submitted in writing by the staff member.

If the initial request is not able to be accommodated on reasonable business grounds as outlined in section 4.2 below, both the supervisor and staff member must make a genuine attempt to reach an agreement on the flexible work arrangement, which includes considering other flexible work options. Each request will be reviewed and considered against the flexible work principles outlined above. Approvals cannot be unreasonably withheld in line with the conditions of the [Enterprise Agreement](#) and the [Fair Work Act](#).

If a verbal agreement is reached with their supervisor, full-time and part-time staff members will submit their flexible work arrangement request via the flexible work arrangement tile in Staff Services Online (SSO) system, whilst casual staff members will submit their request in writing via email to their supervisor. As part of their request, staff will be required to detail the arrangement start and end date, the nature of the arrangement, and outline any likely impacts resulting from the arrangement and how negative impacts will be addressed.

For Flex Location arrangements, staff members must complete the ergonomic [self-assessment](#) form for the proposed alternate work location/s and attach this form to their request. Supervisors are to review the completed form as part of their application assessment.

4.2 Supervisor flexible work arrangement application assessment

When assessing an application for a flexible working arrangement, supervisors are required to consider the overall feasibility of the request and any impact on:

- the achievement of operational outcomes
- cost and quality of service delivery
- productivity
- stakeholder, customer, and/or student service requirements
- other team members including the staff member's direct reports
- the staff member requesting the arrangement
- work, health, and safety considerations, including the receipt of a completed ergonomic self-assessment as part of the written request, as well as the supervision of PhD students in laboratories or other hazardous areas
- the supervisor's ability to supervise the staff member
- the staff member's attendance at key meetings or events

During assessment, review, or when changing a flexible work arrangement, the supervisor will also consider the principles outlined in section 3 of this procedure. Where a request for a flexible work arrangement is declined, it must be on reasonable business grounds, which under the Fair Work Act include that:

- the requested arrangements are too costly
- other staff members' working arrangements cannot be changed to accommodate the request
- it is impractical to change other staff members' working arrangements or hire new staff members to accommodate the request

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- the request would result in a significant loss of productivity or have a significant negative impact on customer service.

The supervisor must seek the support of their [HR Advisor](#) prior to recommending the request be declined or an alternate option be considered to ensure Fair Work Act legislative requirements are met. The supervisor will then recommend or not recommend the flexible work arrangement request in Staff Services Online.

The Branch Head, Head of School, or Institute Director will then approve or decline the request, taking into consideration the supervisor’s recommendation. If the Branch Head, Head of School, or Institute Director decides to decline a request that the supervisor has recommended, they must discuss with the supervisor and [HR Advisor](#) and provide the reason/s for refusing the request prior to refusing in Staff Services Online.

As indicated above, the supervisor must review the effectiveness of all flexible work arrangements within the first three months of operation and, in conjunction with the staff member may change or cease the arrangement as outlined in section 4.5 of this procedure.

4.3 Response to a flexible work arrangement application

An appropriate written response by the supervisor must be provided to the staff member within 21 days of receipt of the written request.

If the request is approved the response must clearly state:

- the start date of the arrangement
- the initial review date three (3) months from commencement
- the annual review date not more than twelve (12) months after commencement for ongoing flexible work arrangements.

If an agreement has been reached on an alternative flexible work arrangement that is different to the initial request, the written response must describe the agreed changes and the start date of the arrangement.

If a request is declined, the response must include:

- any change to the request that would accommodate the staff member’s circumstances and that the supervisor is willing to make, or that no such changes can be made
- the reasonable business grounds for the decision to be declined as listed in section 4.2 of this procedure
- the staff member’s right to refer the matter to the Fair Work Commission for conciliation and arbitration.

The supervisor will then recommend or not recommend the flexible work arrangement request in Staff Services Online for full-time and part-time staff members, or via email for casual staff members. The Branch Head, Head of School, or Institute Director will then approve or decline the request taking into account the supervisor’s recommendation. For casual staff members where this is done via email, the supervisor will ensure the outcome is emailed to the staff member.

4.4 Dispute resolution

If a flexible work arrangement is not approved, staff members can seek resolution through the [Staff Complaint Resolution Procedure](#) or the Dispute Settlement Procedure contained within the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute through discussion at the workplace level, either party has a right to refer the dispute to the Fair Work Commission for conciliation and/or arbitration.

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4.5 Changing or ceasing a flexible work arrangement

A staff member may request an end to a flexible work arrangement as prescribed in clause 4.15.9 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#). This will need to be discussed and agreed with their supervisor before any changes are made to the work arrangement.

If a supervisor decides the flexible working arrangement needs to change or cease, they should read clause 4.15.9 of the Enterprise Agreement as well as section 4.2 of this procedure. Any change will need to be discussed and agreed with the staff member with reasonable notice so the staff member can make appropriate arrangements.

4.6 Health, safety, and wellbeing

The University is self-insured for workers' compensation, as managed by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) team. Staff members approved to work at an alternate location within South Australia continue to be covered by workers' compensation while performing work at the agreed location, and staff must comply with their usual obligations to work safely and responsibly.

UoA's policies and procedures including Health, Safety and Wellbeing policies, procedures, responsibilities, and duties continue to apply where staff members are approved to work from an alternate location. Staff members and supervisors are responsible for ensuring staff health and safety when working from another location and the location must comply with HSW requirements.

Staff should report any safety issues or incidents as soon as possible using [UniSafe](#).

4.7 IT, workspace, and equipment

Except where a staff member is entitled to a reasonable adjustment in line with UoA's Disability Inclusion Action Plan and legislative obligations relating to disability and discrimination as well as HSW policies and procedures, costs associated with setting up a flexible, safe, and productive workspace away from campus are the responsibility of the staff member. This includes, but is not limited to, a desk, office chair, and internet connection. IT equipment including access to a laptop and software is to be discussed between the supervisor, staff member and ITDS.

4.8 Support and advice

Flexible Work Arrangement resources are available for all staff and supervisors to provide guidance and advice about responding to flexible work arrangement requests and setting up arrangements where approved.

Staff should initially discuss any concerns regarding flexible work arrangements or requests for flexible work with their supervisor or contact their [HR Advisor](#).

5. DEFINITIONS

Campus

Campus refers to all land and premises which are owned or leased by the University of Adelaide.

Staff Services Online (SSO)

The online self-service tool which allows staff to apply for and manage leave, view payslips, manage banking details, and update personal information.

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UniSafe

UniSafe is the online reporting system used to manage information related to University of Adelaide safety issues.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND POLICIES

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Ergonomic self-assessment form](#)

[Fair Work Act 2009 \(Cth\)](#)

[Fair Work Commission \(FWC\)](#)

[Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)

[Leave Entitlement Procedure](#)

[Manual Handling and Ergonomics](#)

[Staff Complaint Resolution Procedure](#)

[The University of Adelaide Enterprise Agreement](#)

[Workforce Management Policy](#)

7. WEBLINKS

[HR Advisory team](#)

[Workstation ergonomic guidelines](#)

[ITDS- Working from home with technology](#)

[Office supplies for staff home offices](#)

[Online portal for personal IT purchases](#)

[Flexible Work Arrangements \(FWA\) HR page](#)

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