

# Hybrid Working and Alternative Work Location Procedure

## Section 1 - Key Information

<b>Policy Type and Approval Body</b>	Administrative – Vice-Chancellor
<b>Accountable Executive – Policy</b>	Chief Operating Officer
<b>Responsible Manager – Policy</b>	Chief People Officer
<b>Review Date</b>	28 May 2028

## Section 2 - Purpose

- (1) The University is committed to providing a diverse, inclusive and respectful working environment for all staff.
- (2) As part of this commitment, the University aims to provide, whenever practicable, the ability for staff to work from Alternative Work Locations to assist staff manage their work and personal commitments. This can be at any stage of their life and employment lifecycle, while still taking into account business and service delivery needs.
- (3) This Policy establishes a number of different working arrangements that are available to staff and the Procedures under which these can be accessed.

## Section 3 - Scope

- (4) This Procedure applies to all continuing, fixed term and casual staff of the University.
- (5) Professional staff are eligible to request ad hoc, short term or regular Hybrid Working Arrangements in accordance with clause 53 of the [La Trobe University Enterprise Agreement 2023](#) ([Enterprise Agreement](#)).
- (6) Separate to Flexible Working Arrangements and Hybrid Working Arrangements, staff may request to temporarily work from an interstate or overseas location due to changes in personal circumstances, which will be assessed on a case- by-case basis.
- (7) This Procedure does not apply to:
- requests for Flexible Working Arrangements by eligible staff in accordance with the [Enterprise Agreement](#) and [Fair Work Act 2009](#) ([Fair Work Act](#)). Staff seeking a Flexible Working Arrangement should refer to the [Flexible Working Policy](#);
  - requests to work from an alternative location as part of an approved Outside Studies Program; or
  - requests for ad-hoc/temporary flexibility, for example, where a staff member needs to work remotely on a one-off basis. Such arrangements can be agreed verbally in advance between the staff member and their supervisor at the local level.

(8) The University has a number of dedicated policies for staff seeking Flexible Working Arrangements, Alternative Work Locations or seeking flexibility/support for other personal circumstances, see the table below.

Type of request	Relevant Policy and Procedure
Requests for Flexible Working Arrangements made under the <a href="#">Fair Work Act</a> and <a href="#">Enterprise Agreement</a> .	<a href="#">Flexible Working Policy</a>
Have a disability or caring for a person with a disability*	<a href="#">Workplace Adjustment (Staff) Policy</a> *The <a href="#">Flexible Working Policy</a> outlines University's statutory obligations in responding to a request for a Flexible Working Arrangement. However, requests should be made in accordance with the <a href="#">Workplace Adjustment (Staff) Policy</a> as it provides additional support.
Are experiencing family and domestic violence or providing care and support to an immediate family or householder member who requires care or support because they are experiencing family and domestic violence*	<a href="#">Family and Domestic Violence Support Policy</a> *The <a href="#">Flexible Working Policy</a> outlines University's statutory obligations in responding to a request for a Flexible Working Arrangement. However, Staff should refer to the <a href="#">Family and Domestic Violence Support Policy</a> as it provides additional support and sets out confidentiality requirements.

## Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Approve Ways of Working Model for work area and review annually	Executive Director/Dean level or equivalent
Facilitate staff hybrid working within the Ways of Working Model	Supervisor
Approve Hybrid Working Arrangement requests (outside of the Ways of Working Model) and review annually	Executive Director/Dean level or equivalent
Approve requests for Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangements up to 2 months per calendar year (subject to compliance with this policy)	Supervisor
Approve requests for Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangements greater than 2 months per calendar year (subject to compliance with this Policy)	Executive Director/Dean level or equivalent and Chief People Officer

## Section 5 - Policy Statement

(9) The University is committed to:

- attracting and retaining staff by offering Hybrid Working Arrangements, whenever operationally possible;
- providing a work environment which promotes staff health and wellbeing;
- providing staff with a consultative process when requesting Hybrid Working Arrangements;
- giving careful consideration to requests for Hybrid Working Arrangements, requested under this Policy and the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

(10) The University is a campus-based institution and needs staff to attend on campus as required – including for ad hoc business requirements. These requirements need to be managed in accordance with the University's obligations to ensure the safety of all staff.

(11) The University operates a Hybrid Work model (Ways of Working). The [Ways of Working](#) model allows for all staff to work remotely for up to two (2) days per week (pro-rata for part-time staff), dependent upon business and service needs. Supervisors will determine how the Ways of Working model will operate in their teams. For further information refer to section 6, Part A.

(12) All staff have the ability to request Hybrid Working Arrangements in addition to Ways of Working model to manage their personal and work commitments, subject to business and service delivery needs.

(13) Staff should be aware that not all work options are suited to every role.

(14) All work from an Alternative Work Location must align with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of our staff.

## Section 6 - Procedures

### Part A - Ways of Working

(15) All staff seeking a Hybrid Working Arrangement, in excess of their work area's Ways of Working model, are required to complete request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement.

(16) The University's Ways of Working model prescribes that staff work a minimum of three (3) days on campus per week, noting that some University positions are required to be on campus for four (4) or five (5) days per week. Some business unit Ways of Working Statements may refer to different arrangements.

(17) Each work area will establish and maintain a local Ways of Working model that will prescribe the relevant requirement for each work area. Staff can access hybrid work in accordance with their local Ways of Working model.

(18) Ways of Working models will be reviewed annually by the business unit to ensure the arrangements meets business and work area requirements.

(19) Further information in relation the annual process for preparing work area's Ways of Working Statements and Hybrid Work Arrangements can be found on the University's [Ways of Working Statement and Resources page](#).

### Part B - General

(20) This Procedure sets out the process for staff who wish to make a request for Hybrid Working Arrangements and for supervisors to consider and respond to such requests.

(21) The University will consider all requests for Hybrid Working Arrangements, however, no request will be automatically granted. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis and determined based on the individual circumstances, position requirements and the business and service delivery requirements at the time of the request.

(22) Where the proposed working arrangement will involve an interstate or overseas work location, staff and supervisors must refer to Part J for the requirements that apply to requests for an Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangement.

### Part C - Eligibility to Request a Hybrid Working Arrangement

(23) Professional Staff are eligible to request ad hoc, short term or regular Hybrid Working Arrangements in accordance with clause 53 of the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

(24) Depending on the circumstance for the request, Professional and Academic staff may be eligible to make a request for a Flexible Working Arrangement in accordance with the [Flexible Working Policy](#). Staff should review the eligibility criteria within the [Flexible Working Policy](#) before making a request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement.

(25) For a Hybrid Working Arrangement to be approved, the following must be able to be demonstrated:

- a. the staff member will be able to satisfactorily complete the requirements of their role split across the periods in which they are working remotely and in attendance at campus;
- b. where there are certain functions, activities or duties that can only be performed on campus, the staff member attends on campus to perform those functions, activities or duties;
- c. where there are specific events or activities that the University requires the staff member to attend for on campus, they will be required to be on campus for those times. Events or activities will not be created for the purpose of making it difficult for staff to work remotely;
- d. workplace health and safety requirements are able to be met; and
- e. the needs of the local work unit are able to be met and the arrangement does not unreasonably impact upon other staff.

## **Part D - Discuss Potential Options with Supervisor**

(26) Prior to submitting a Hybrid Working Arrangement written request, staff should discuss with their supervisor what options would be suited to their circumstances, their role and the business needs.

(27) To prepare for the discussion with their supervisor, staff should consider whether the proposed Hybrid Working Arrangement would meet the requirements specified in clause 24 above.

(28) For an Academic staff member, a supervisor can determine during the discussion that the Hybrid Working Arrangement is not suitable for the role and business needs.

## **Part E - Provide Written Request to Supervisor**

(29) The staff member must submit a written request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement, (that is outside of to the Ways of Working model) to their supervisor by email at least four (4) weeks before the arrangement is proposed to commence. The staff member's email must:

- a. detail the reason for their request; and
- b. demonstrate that it complies with clause 24 above, with consideration for the following:
  - i. productivity gains or losses;
  - ii. ability to attend on campus where required by their role;
  - iii. the potential impact on their team and other relevant staff;
  - iv. that workplace health and safety requirements will be met; and
  - v. impact on operational requirements and the needs to the local work unit.

## **Part F - Assessment of Request**

(30) In considering a request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement, the University will take into account the requirements of the staff member's role, the needs of the work area and any other stakeholders and any impact of the arrangement of the productivity of the staff member, their team or their work area.

(31) Supervisors should support the request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement, where it meets the criteria outlined in clause 24 above.

(32) If the request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement cannot be agreed in its current form, the supervisor will discuss with the staff member alternative (where possible) proposed working arrangements. The staff member must be provided at least three (3) working days to consider the alternative proposals.

## **Part G - Outcome of Request**

(33) The staff member's supervisor will seek approval from their supervisor and the Executive Director/Dean equivalent as to whether to grant or refuse the request.

(34) If the request is refused, the supervisor will provide the response in writing and endeavour to meet with the staff member before providing the written response.

(35) The written response will be completed by reply email to the staff member's request.

## **Part H - Documenting the Arrangement**

(36) If the request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement is approved, the supervisor and staff member will complete any relevant forms and store them locally, including attaching the email chain that reflects the staff member's request and supervisor's response.

## **Part I - Monitoring, Reviewing and Ending the Arrangement**

(37) Approved Hybrid Working Arrangements will generally operate for a maximum of 12 months or if the staff member is on a fixed term contract, the end date of the fixed term contract (if a lesser period than 12 months); or if the staff member is a casual staff member the end of the casual engagement.

(38) Approved Hybrid Working Arrangements will be subject to a trial period (usually 3 months) to determine if the arrangements work for both the staff member and the University. If the supervisor determines that the Hybrid Working Arrangement is not working, they may end the arrangement in accordance with this Procedure.

(39) Following the trial period, all Hybrid Working Arrangements will be reviewed periodically (recommended to be quarterly) to ensure ongoing suitability.

(40) Hybrid Working Arrangements will cease at the end of the agreed period. Should the staff member wish to continue the same Hybrid Working Arrangement at the end of the period, they will need to submit a request, in writing, to their supervisor to renew the current Hybrid Working Arrangement, at least two (2) weeks before it is due to end. If the staff member requires a different Hybrid Working Arrangement, they will need to submit a new request. The request will be assessed on the staff member's circumstances and the business and service requirements at that time.

(41) The University may, at its discretion, terminate the Hybrid Working Arrangement by:

- a. giving 28 days' written notice to the staff member; or
- b. at any time, if the staff member and the University agree.

(42) Termination of Hybrid Working Arrangements may be sought by the staff member at any stage. The staff member in this circumstance would be, if practicable re-assigned to the conventional workplace in accordance with the business unit's Ways of Working. To facilitate the transition from the Hybrid Working Arrangement, the staff member should give at least ten (10) working days' notice to their supervisor.

## **Part J - Requests for Working from an Interstate or Overseas Location**

(43) There may be occasions when a staff member's personal circumstances change or there is a strategic need, and the staff member may need to apply to for an Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangement to temporarily relocate to work remotely interstate or overseas.

(44) Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests for Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangements need to be submitted in writing by the staff member to their supervisor:

- a. Interstate - at least four (4) weeks in advance of undertaking work interstate.
- b. Overseas - at least four (4) months in advance of the strategic University work requiring to be performed or the request will be refused.

(45) The staff member's email must:

- a. detail the reason for their request;
- b. expected timeframe for the Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangement; and
- c. consideration of the following:
  - i. productivity gains or losses;
  - ii. ability to attend on campus where required by their role;
  - iii. the potential impact on their team and other relevant staff;
  - iv. that workplace health and safety requirements will be met; and
  - v. impact on operational requirements and the needs to the local work unit.

## Approval for Interstate Work Arrangement Requests

(46) Approval for Interstate Work Arrangements will be applied as per the table below

Period	Approval	Additional consideration
Up to 2 months per calendar year	Supervisor of the staff member	Deemed by the supervisor to be appropriate for business and service delivery needs and for the team requirements.
Greater than 2 months per calendar year	Chief People Officer	Specific operational or strategic requirements, costs, insurance coverage and local laws.

(47) In confirming a request to work from another interstate location, the University may require the staff member to travel to a campus as various points of the year which will be documented in the agreement. The cost of any and all such travel (including any accommodation) will be borne by the staff member.

## Approval for Overseas Work Arrangement Requests

(48) The supervisor must consult with People & Culture for all requests involving overseas work locations.

(49) Approval for arrangements involving an overseas work location will only be given under extremely limited circumstances and as per the table below:

Period	Approval	Additional Consideration
Up to 2 months per calendar year	Supervisor of the staff in consultation with People & Culture	Must meet the legal, tax, and insurance requirements as well as local laws in overseas jurisdictions.
Greater than 2 months per calendar year	Not supported unless exemption by Chief People Officer	To be considered for approval, the request must demonstrate specific strategic requirements for the work to be performed in a foreign country and demonstrate the work can be undertaken (including considering operational and strategic requirements, costs, insurance coverage, security, safety and local laws and taxes). The business area will be responsible for the cost of any legal compliance with the overseas jurisdiction laws. Noting that there may be some circumstances where the University will be unable to meet the requirements of the local jurisdiction laws and in such circumstances the request will be refused. In making any determination University Policy's, cyber security requirements, domestic legislative requirements will also be taken into consideration.

## Part K - Health, Safety and Alternative Work Locations

(50) The University has duty to provide and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to the health of staff.

(51) Where a staff member is working from an Alternative Work Location, the University will provide necessary information, instruction, and training to staff to help them manage the setup of their workspaces.

(52) Regardless of their work location and arrangements, staff should pro-actively manage their workspaces setup.

(53) Where it is not possible to ensure the health and safety of staff while working from an Alternative Work Location, the University will require the staff to return to working solely on campus until the health and safety concern is addressed.

(54) Staff must complete a Working from Home Self-Assessment, prior to commencing an arrangement to work from home or an alternative location. If the request is to work overseas or interstate, the Working from Home Self-Assessment must be completed within a week of the arrangement beginning.

(55) Staff who wish to work from an Alternative Work Location will be responsible for the establishment of their workspace to meet the requirement outlined in their workplace assessment, including any associated costs.

## Part L - Other

(56) Staff working from an Alternative Work Location should pro-actively manage their workload and obligations under clause 24 and ensure that their performance is not negatively impacted by the arrangement.

(57) If staff members transfer to a different position within the University, the Hybrid Working Arrangement or Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangement will not automatically transfer from one position to another. The staff member will need to make another request to their new supervisor in accordance with this Procedure.

## Part M - Disputes

(58) In the first instance, staff and supervisors should attempt to resolve disputes informally at the local level with support from People & Culture, as needed.

(59) A staff member may seek a review of the outcome of a request for a Hybrid Working Arrangement or Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangement through the University's [Workplace Issue Resolution \(Staff\) Procedure](#).

## Section 7 - Definitions

(60) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Alternate Work Location/Workspaces: are all locations/workspaces outside of a staff member's regular on-campus workspaces which includes a home office.
- b. Flexible Working Arrangement: is an approved arrangement in accordance with the [Flexible Working Policy](#), which provides the process for requests made in accordance with the [Enterprise Agreement](#) and/or [Fair Work Act 2009](#). Professional and Academic staff with certain circumstances are eligible to make a request for a Flexible Working Arrangement.
- c. Hybrid Working Arrangement: is defined as an approved arrangement that is outside of the work area's Ways of Working Statement, as provided for in a work area's Ways of Working model, where staff divide their work time to be partly performed within their workplace, and at another location. For most people the alternate

location is their home.

- d. Interstate or Overseas Work Arrangements: involve a staff member temporarily working from an interstate or overseas location. Additional requirements apply for staff when making the request and for supervisors when assessing the request.
- e. Workplace Adjustment: is commonly referred to as a 'reasonable adjustment', is a modification to a work process, practice, procedure or setting that enables a staff member with a disability, or health condition to perform their job. It also applies for a recognised carer for a person with disability, within the meaning of the Carers Recognition Act 2012 (Vic).
- f. Ways of Working: is the University's model to enable Hybrid Work as core part of work and teaching practice.
- g. Ways of Working Statement: is the tool used by business areas capture and communicate a Business Unit's flexible work commitment. The statement articulates how Business Unit's structure the work pattern to meet the service delivery expectation of their stakeholders.

## Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(61) This Policy is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

(62) Associated information includes:

- a. [La Trobe University Enterprise Agreement 2023](#)
- b. [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- c. [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- d. [Health and Safety Procedure - Induction and Training](#)
- e. [People and Culture Intranet](#)
- f. [Staff Health and Wellbeing](#)



## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
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