

Flexible Work Arrangements Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) The University is committed to providing, whenever practicable, flexible work arrangements as requested by staff while still taking into account business requirements.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to all permanent staff of the University providing they have completed at least 12 months continuous service with the University immediately before making the request.

(3) Casual staff are entitled to make a request, in accordance with the [Fair Work Act 2009](#) provisions, if:

- a. they have been employed by the University on a regular and systematic basis for a sequence of periods of employment of at least 12 months immediately before making the request; and
- b. there is a reasonable expectation of continuing employment with the University on a regular and systematic basis.

(4) This Policy also covers Collective Agreement related matters which are detailed in the [La Trobe University Collective Agreement 2018](#), approved by the Fair Work Commission ('the Collective Agreement').

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) The University is committed to:

- a. attracting and retaining staff by offering flexible working arrangements where appropriate;
- b. providing a work environment which promotes a healthy work-life balance;
- c. providing staff with a consultative process for requesting flexible work arrangements;
- d. giving all requests reasonable consideration in relation to the facts and circumstances relating to the request and meeting legislative obligations;
- e. requests confined to the matters detailed in the Collective Agreement under 'Flexibility Arrangements' to be managed in accordance with the procedures detailed in the Collective Agreement.

(6) Any staff member of the University may make a request for flexible work arrangements.

Principles

(7) The University will try to facilitate flexible work arrangements when requested and will consider all requests carefully. The business case must be clear and measurable and the arrangement must be balanced with business need. Requests are not automatically granted; granting a request is entirely at the discretion of the University, but requests will not be unreasonably refused.

(8) Approved flexible work arrangements will be reviewed in accordance with the procedure however will generally operate for a maximum of 12 months.

(9) Not all roles are suited to flexible work as meeting business needs is paramount. Therefore, on some occasions it may be necessary to reject a request, or suggest an alternative arrangement.

Section 4 - Procedure

Preamble

(10) The University is committed to providing, whenever practicable, flexible work arrangements that support staff while considering business requirements.

General

(11) Any staff member of the University may make a request for flexible work arrangements.

Types of Arrangements

(12) Flexibility arrangement options will be managed in accordance with the [Collective Agreement](#) however are detailed below for ease of reference.

(13) Should the [Collective Agreement](#) clause be amended or changed, the new Collective Agreement clause will replace the below.

(14) Other options which may be available to staff include:

- a. a job share arrangement
- b. to work from a different location
- c. catering for child care arrangements
- d. caring arrangements for disabled children

(15) This Procedure does not cover ad-hoc situations where a staff member may need to work from home for a day, at short notice. Such arrangements can be agreed verbally with their immediate manager at the time.

Flexibility Arrangements

(16) Clause 51.2 of the [Collective Agreement](#) states that an employee and the University may agree to make an individual flexibility arrangement to vary the effect of terms of this Agreement, which will be confined to one or more of the following matters:

- a. Structuring a pattern of working hours to enable employees to work on a fulltime or fractional basis for a portion of a year receiving salary payments averaged across the whole year, including working a 48/52 (or other variant) arrangement (varying the effect of sub-clause 15.1);
- b. Being able to work a pattern of hours which may fluctuate on a weekly basis but have a reconciliation of leave entitlements either once a year or twice a year or quarterly Clause (varying the effect of sub-clauses 14.4(a) and 15.2);
- c. Additional unpaid parental/child rearing leave, or unpaid carer's flexibility leave (varying the effect of sub-clause 66.25 and Clause 61);
- d. Development of overseas exchange agreements between an employee of La Trobe University and an employee from an overseas University, in order to ensure no disadvantage to the employee as a consequence of the exchange (varying the effect of Clause 58);

- e. Allowing for the ordinary hours of work of the employee to fall outside the span of hours in sub-clause 47.2 provided that the flexibility arrangement must specify alternative ordinary hours of work for that employee and that Clause 49 (Overtime – Professional Staff) will apply provided that any reference to "ordinary hours" in Clause 49 shall be taken to be a reference to the "ordinary hours" specified in the Flexibility Agreement (varying the effect of sub-clause 47.2 and Clause 49).

Requests

The Staff Member

(17) It is recommended that staff discuss flexible work requirements with their manager initially. Thereafter the staff should complete the formal request via the Flexible Work Request form (the onus is on the staff member to detail the reasons why the University should approve their request).

(18) When completing the form, staff are asked to consider some of the following:

- a. what flexible working arrangement is being proposed and whether it is on a permanent, trial or temporary basis
- b. the impact on quality and quantity of work
- c. the impact on the team/colleagues
- d. the impact on internal and external clients/customers
- e. the impact on attendance at relevant work events such as team meetings, training, conferences
- f. the impact on the staff member's own remuneration and benefits
- g. the impact on the staff member's career/personal development
- h. additional costs or cost savings to the staff member's work area
- i. whether there any health and safety implications
- j. whether personal work goals/objectives need to be revised
- k. success criteria – what will demonstrate that the new arrangement is working?

The Manager

(19) The factors taken into account when a manager determines the suitability of flexible work arrangements should include, but are not limited to:

- a. the spirit of the University's approach to work/life balance in being open to accommodating these request?
- b. how might this impact on quality and quantity of work?
- c. the impact on the team/colleagues?
- d. the impact on internal and external customers?
- e. the impact on attendance at relevant work events such as team meetings, training, conferences?
- f. the impact on remuneration and benefits?
- g. additional costs or cost savings to the work area?
- h. health and safety implications?
- i. alternative options, if reasonable business grounds indicate that the application may need to be rejected
- j. whether the staff member's personal work goals/objectives will need to be realigned (ensuring clarity of work outputs)
- k. success criteria – what will demonstrate that the new arrangement is working?

(20) If there are concerns about the feasibility of arrangements, applications may be occasionally approved on a trial basis and be re-evaluated after a minimum period of 3 months.

Assessing Requests

(21) The University will respond to the staff member within the legislative timeframe of 21 days from receipt of the written request.

(22) Managers should complete the Manager Assessment section of the Application form to assist them in establishing grounds for approval/denial.

Response to Staff Member

(23) Acceptance or rejection of requests for flexible work arrangements will be in writing. If rejected, the letter will outline the reasons for the rejection.

(24) A request for flexible work arrangements may be rejected for business reasons which will be detailed in writing.

Monitoring and Evaluation

(25) All flexible working arrangements will be reviewed periodically (recommended to be quarterly) throughout the arrangement by the staff member and the manager to ensure on going suitability.

(26) The review is to ensure that the arrangement is working successfully and should be based around the success criteria specified in the agreed arrangement.

Termination of Arrangements

(27) Termination of flexible work arrangements will vary depending on the initial agreement and the actual arrangement agreed at the time noting that the University may, at its discretion, terminate the arrangement.

Responsibilities

(28) Staff and their managers should work together to find ways of working that achieve a better work-life balance while also ensuring the University achieves its goals.

Staff Responsibilities

(29) An understanding and recognition that not all flexible work options are suited to every role. Staff need to be flexible in their approach and implementation.

(30) Complete the flexible work arrangements request.

(31) Be open to genuine negotiation about the type of flexible work arrangements available.

(32) Work with their manager to ensure flexible work arrangements operate effectively in the workplace.

(33) Partake in regular reviews of the arrangement as set by their manager.

Manager Responsibilities

(34) Build a climate supportive of flexible work arrangements including communication of the business needs in which flexible work options may operate.

(35) Develop a strategic approach to flexible work and ensure that University objectives can still be met.

(36) Consider the impacts of flexible work arrangements on staff within the team and stakeholders and work to address these openly and transparently.

(37) Ensure there is capacity to implement the decision and that a regular review of the arrangement takes place with the staff.

(38) Incorporate flexible work options into team planning to ensure workloads are managed and the team remains supportive and cohesive while implementing these arrangements.

Process Flow

(39) Refer to the [Flexible Work Arrangements Process Flow Diagram](#).

Section 5 - Definitions

(40) Nil.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – Managers.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Managers.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	9th November 2016
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