

# Flexible Working Policy

## Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) La Trobe University is committed to providing a diverse, inclusive and respectful working environment for all staff, including parents.

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

## Section 2 - Scope

(3) 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.

(4) 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.

(5) 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

(6) La Trobe 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 when 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 'Agreement Flexibility' are to be managed in accordance with the procedures detailed in the [Collective Agreement](#).

### 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 procedures, however will generally operate for a maximum of 12 months.

(9) Not all roles are suited to all types of 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 - Procedures

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

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

### Part A - Types of Arrangements

(12) Flexibility arrangement options (Agreement Flexibility) 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 in advance and verbally with their immediate manager at the time.

### Part B - Agreement Flexibility

(16) Clause 6 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. allowing for the ordinary hours of work of the Employee to fall outside the span of hours in subclause 58.2 provided that the flexibility arrangement must specify alternative ordinary hours of work for that Employee and that Clause 60 (Overtime - Professional Staff) will apply provided that any reference to "ordinary hours" in Clause 60 shall be taken to be a reference to "ordinary hours" specified in the Flexibility Agreement;
- b. 48/52 (or other variant) arrangement;
- c. development of overseas exchange agreements between an Employee of the University and an Employee from an overseas university, in order to ensure no disadvantage to the Employee as a consequence of the exchange;
- d. allowances;
- e. additional unpaid parental/child rearing leave, or unpaid carer's flexibility leave;
- f. leave loading.

## Part C - Requests

### The Staff Member

(17) It is recommended that staff discuss flexible work requirements with their manager initially. Thereafter the staff should refer to the [Flexible Work Toolkit](#) in support of their formal application for flexible work. It is important for the staff member to detail the reasons why the University should approve their request.

(18) When completing the flexible working application, staff and managers are asked to consider some of the following:

- a. Can the role be best performed through the flexible working arrangement the staff member wishes to request?
- b. What impact will the arrangement have on the team?
- c. How will critical deadlines and on-campus requirements be met?
- d. What obstacles might managers or the team face with this arrangement, and how can this be mitigated?
- e. What impact will the arrangement have on customers?
- f. What tools and resources are required to ensure success in the arrangement?
- g. Will there be any changes in how work, performance and success is reviewed and evaluated?
- h. Are there any reasonable adjustments or OHS issues to consider?

(19) Consider a trial period for the proposed flexible work arrangement. A manager should schedule regular meetings with employees to assess how the new arrangement is working.

### Assessing Requests

(20) All requests will be responded to within 21 days in accordance with the [Fair Work Act 2009](#).

(21) Managers should formally record the reasons for approval/denial of the flexible work arrangement.

### Response to Staff Member

(22) Acceptance or rejection of requests for flexible work arrangements will be in writing. If rejected, it is good practice to meet with the employee and provide the business reasons.

(23) Keep a record of all discussions, as well as any other information that was used to come to the decision.

## Part D - Monitoring and Evaluation

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

(25) The review is to ensure that the arrangement is working successfully for both the employee and the business.

### Termination of Arrangements

(26) 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.

## Part E - Responsibilities

(27) Staff and their managers should work together to promote a better work-life balance, while also ensuring the University achieves its goals.

## Staff Responsibilities

(28) 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 and should:

- a. Refer to the [Flexible Working Toolkit](#) when requesting a flexible work arrangement.
- b. Be open to genuine negotiation about the type of flexible work arrangements available.
- c. Work with their manager to ensure flexible work arrangements operate effectively in the workplace.
- d. Partake in regular reviews of the arrangement as set by their manager.

## Manager Responsibilities

(29) Managers are responsible for building a climate that is supportive of flexible work arrangements including communication of the business needs in which flexible work options may operate.

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

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

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

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

## Section 5 - Definitions

(34) Nil.

## Status and Details

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