

# Flexible Work Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes the University's approach to flexible work, including flexible work options, eligibility and considerations for staff and their managers / supervisors to enable effective, equitable, transparent and mutually beneficial flexible work arrangements.

### Background

(2) Macquarie University recognises the importance of flexible work in maintaining a diverse, engaged and high-performing workforce, and is committed to creating a workplace where staff members are supported in managing their work and personal commitments.

(3) Through flexible work provisions, Macquarie University strives to:

- a. create a work environment based on performance, mutual achievement and trust;
- b. attract and retain a diverse and high-performing workforce;
- c. enable teams and individuals to work productively and deliver strong organisational outcomes;
- d. improve the ability to meet the needs of our clients and stakeholders; and
- e. enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction.

### Scope

(4) This Policy applies to continuing and fixed-term staff members employed by Macquarie University, including managers / supervisors responsible for approving requests for flexible work arrangements.

## Section 2 - Policy

### Eligibility

(5) Continuing and fixed-term staff members may request flexible work via application to their manager / supervisor.

### Reasons for Requesting Flexible Work

(6) There may be a range of reasons a staff member may request flexible work. Such reasons may range from caring for family members, contributing to the community, maintaining health and wellbeing, studying, transitioning to retirement or managing the amount of time spent commuting.

### Types of Flexible Work

(7) Macquarie University offers the following flexible work options:

- a. part-time work;
- b. job share;

- c. compressed fortnight;
- d. flexible start and finish times; and
- e. working from home / telecommuting.

(8) Flexible work options available to individual staff may differ depending on the terms and conditions of their employment and job requirements.

(9) A manager / supervisor and staff member may agree on one or a combination of these options as a part of a flexible work arrangement.

(10) These flexible work options may be considered in combination with other provisions available to staff to achieve greater flexibility, including Annual Leave, Personal Leave (Other), Parental Leave / Partner's Leave, Leave without Pay and Purchased Leave Scheme.

(11) For more information on each type of flexible work and further requirements see the Specific Requirements below.

### **Duration of Flexible Work**

(12) Depending on individual circumstances, flexible work can be requested on a short-term (e.g. less than six (6) months) or longer-term basis (e.g. six (6) months up to three (3) years).

(13) In general, the maximum period of a flexible work arrangement will be three (3) years. This may be renewed following review and renegotiation, subject to required approvals.

### **Formal and Informal Flexible Work Arrangements**

(14) Requests for part-time work, job share and compressed fortnight must follow the formal process specified in the [Flexible Work Procedure](#).

(15) Requests for flexible start and finish times and working from home on an ad hoc or short-term basis should be discussed with the staff member's manager / supervisor. An informal arrangement at a local level would be sufficient in most instances. If the request is for a longer-term period (e.g. over six (6) months), then a formal arrangement is recommended and should follow the [Flexible Work Procedure](#).

### **General Principles and Requirements**

(16) The success of flexible work requires a 'give and take' approach, open communication and a shared responsibility between staff members and their managers / supervisors.

(17) Participation in flexible work is voluntary and at the request of the staff member.

(18) The University is committed to ensuring that flexible work is not a barrier to career progression and promotion.

(19) The University will review each request for flexible work on a case-by-case basis. Decisions concerning flexible work arrangements will take into account:

- a. individual needs of the staff member;
- b. terms and conditions of the staff member's employment and job requirements; and
- c. the operational requirements of the work area.

(20) A manager / supervisor must genuinely consider a request for flexible work. The manager / supervisor and the staff member should discuss the request, including any alternative proposals, before the decision is made.

(21) Agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another staff member to be granted a similar change to their working arrangements.

(22) A flexible work request may only be refused on reasonable business grounds, which include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. the nature of the work is incompatible with the proposed flexible work arrangement;
- b. the new working arrangements requested by the staff member would be too costly for the University;
- c. accommodating the requested flexible work arrangement will have a disproportionate impact on other staff;
- d. it would be impractical to change the working arrangements of other staff, or recruit new staff, to accommodate the requested flexible work arrangement;
- e. the new working arrangements requested by the staff member would be likely to result in a significant loss of efficiency or productivity;
- f. the new working arrangements requested by the staff member would be likely to have a significant negative impact on customer service.

(23) Where flexible work is not appropriate, a staff member may consider various leave options available to them. Leave provisions are specified in the [Enterprise Agreements](#), and relevant leave policies.

## Specific Requirements

(24) Specific requirements and considerations for each type of flexible work are identified below.

### Part-time work

Description	An agreed work arrangement where a staff member chooses to reduce their employment fraction, commonly from full-time to part-time, on a temporary basis for personal reasons.
Approval authority	Head of Department / Head of Office
Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Salary, leave and other entitlements and benefits will apply on a pro rata basis.</li> <li>2. A notice period will apply if the staff member wants to return to full-time or increase their fraction before the agreed date, should the staff member's circumstances change. The recommended notice period is four (4) weeks and should be agreed on by the manager / supervisor and the staff member.</li> </ol>

### Job share

Description	An employment arrangement where two (or more) staff members, each working part-time, share all the duties and responsibilities of a full-time position.
Approval authority	Head of Department / Head of Office
Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Job share can be considered either during recruitment for a position or when a staff member requests to work part-time.</li> <li>2. Job sharers may work split days, split weeks or alternate weeks.</li> <li>3. Salary, leave and other entitlements and benefits will apply on a pro rata basis.</li> <li>4. A notice period will apply if the staff member wants to return to full-time or increase their fraction before the agreed date, should the staff member's circumstances change. The recommended notice period is four (4) weeks and should be agreed on by the manager / supervisor and the staff member.</li> </ol>

## Compressed Fortnight

Description	An agreed regular working pattern where a staff member works their ordinary fortnightly hours compressed into a shorter period. This can be achieved by working longer but fewer blocks of time.
Approval authority	Manager / Supervisor
Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Salary, leave and other entitlements and benefits will generally not change.</li><li>2. Staff who work a compressed fortnight should work to an agreed fortnightly schedule and should not accrue and carry forward hours to the next fortnightly period.</li><li>3. The maximum number of agreed hours worked on each day must not exceed 10 hours and there must be a minimum of 10 hours break before resuming duty.</li><li>4. Staff must ensure they take a minimum of 30 minutes unpaid break on any day of work longer than five (5) hours.</li><li>5. Where a scheduled work day falls on a public holiday or a University concessional day, a staff member will be paid for the number of hours scheduled for that day. For example, if a public holiday falls on a 10-hour-day, the staff member will be paid for 10 hours; if a public holiday falls on a 4-hour-day, the staff member will be paid for four (4) hours.</li><li>6. Where a scheduled day off falls on a public holiday or a University concessional day, a staff member will not be entitled to additional payment or additional time off.</li><li>7. Personal leave is not available on a scheduled day off.</li><li>8. Penalty rates do not apply if a staff member works outside the core business hours within the work area due to a flexible work arrangement.</li></ol>

## Flexible Start and Finish Times

Description	A regular work pattern where the staff member's start and finish times are different from core business hours within the work area.
Approval authority	Manager / Supervisor
Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Core business hours for a work area are determined by the relevant manager / supervisor. The number and times of the core business hours in a specific work area may vary during the year according to operational needs.</li><li>2. Flexible start and finish times are not generally available to staff working in roles that require attendance for fixed hours.</li><li>3. Penalty rates do not apply if a staff member works outside the core business hours within the work area due to a flexible work arrangement.</li><li>4. The maximum number of hours worked on each day must not exceed 10 hours and there must be a minimum of 10 hours break before resuming duty.</li></ol>

## Working from Home / Telecommuting

Description	An arrangement where a staff member performs some of their duties from home or another location off campus.
Approval authority	Manager / Supervisor

Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. If working from home involves access to University resources and computer networks, the manager / supervisor and the staff member must ensure that appropriate security arrangements are in place, and that the staff member complies with the <a href="#">Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy</a>.</li><li>2. All work health and safety policies and procedures that apply to staff members of the University will, as far as practicable, apply in carrying out work at a home-based site.</li><li>3. The University's Workers' Compensation scheme applies to staff undertaking approved home-based work in the same way as to staff working on campus.</li><li>4. Staff members are solely responsible for checking whether home-based work has any impact on any existing home insurance arrangements they may have, including public liability or equipment covered by their own home contents insurance, and any obligations they may have to notify their insurer that their home is to be used for work purposes.</li><li>5. Working from home must not be used as a substitute for childcare. Staff must make appropriate childcare arrangements for working from home days.</li><li>6. Where working from home / telecommuting is implemented on a regular basis (not as a 'one off') the manager / supervisor and the staff member should agree on the optimal time spent in the office. It is recommended to split the time between working from home / another location a few days a week with the rest of the time spent in the office.</li><li>7. Staff who work from home / telecommute are required to follow the same procedures for notifying of absences (e.g. sick leave) that apply to all staff.</li></ol>
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## Section 3 - Procedures

(25) Refer to the [Flexible Work Procedure](#).

## Section 4 - Guidelines

(26) Nil.

## Section 5 - Definitions

(27) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Flexible work: where the University and one or more of its staff members agree on changes to the standard working arrangements, including hours, patterns and location of work, to provide flexibility in meeting business needs and assist staff in managing their work and personal commitments.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	22nd February 2021
<b>Review Date</b>	19th February 2023
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-President, People and Services
<b>Approval Date</b>	4th July 2018
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Eric Knight Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People and Operations)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	David Ward Chief People Officer
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Emma Todd Executive Officer, Human Resources