Flexible Work and Working Arrangements Procedure

1 Purpose

To outline the processes for safe flexible and hybrid work and working arrangements.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all continuing, fixed-term, and contingent-funded Employees.

3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure details the options and application processes for hybrid work and working flexibly available to all Employees, as well as information about working hours.

4 Procedures

The University requires all Employees to be located on a campus, and attend campus as required by their position. Decisions around flexible and hybrid work need to consider, and balance:

- Organisational, task, and service delivery needs;
- Team needs; and
- Individual needs.

Hybrid work might meet an individual's need for choice, but if it does not support the organisation's need to offer face-to-face services to clients or students in certain settings, or fit the nature of the work, an arrangement to work remotely through a hybrid arrangement will likely not be suitable.

To have an individual and team working flexibly and successfully, supervisors should focus on establishing safe and connected arrangements that balances organisational, task, and service delivery needs, team needs, and individual needs.

Employees are still required to attend campus as per reasonable direction from their supervisor, even if they have entered into a flexible or hybrid work arrangement.

Failure to comply with this Policy or Policy Instrument may be considered as misconduct and the provisions of the relevant Policy or Procedure applied. A hard copy of this electronic document is uncontrolled and may not be current as UniSQ the University regularly reviews and updates its Policies and Policy Instruments. The latest controlled version can be found in the UniSQ's Policy and Procedure Library.

4.1 Hybrid Work Arrangements

While the University's campuses are the primary place of work, the University recognises hybrid work as a flexible work model that supports a combination of on-campus and remote work, such as working from home, within Australia. For information on what constitutes hybrid work refer to the table in section 4.3.

The University is supportive of remote work arrangements and, where operationally viable, Employees are able to work remotely for a portion of the working week.

Heads of Organisational Units and supervisors are responsible for working with their teams and individuals to successfully implement hybrid work arrangements where possible. This includes ensuring that new Employees are effectively onboarded, available digital technology is fully leveraged, and that teams with mixed working arrangements are high performing.

4.1.1 Eligibility

All Employees are eligible for hybrid work arrangements within Australia, subject to operational requirements.

The University is supportive of hybrid working and, where operationally viable, Employees are able to work remotely up to two days per week for full time equivalent, or forty percent for a part time fraction (rounded up to the nearest whole day, in consultation with their supervisor).

If an Employee and supervisor agree that the Employee is able to work remotely for a period up to the maximum two days or forty percent per week, no separate application is required outside of any agreement made by the supervisor and Employee.

However, if an Employee wishes to request additional days working remotely, above two (2) days per week or forty percent for a part time fraction, this can be submitted as per the flexible work arrangements application process in section 4.3.

The University acknowledges that not all positions can operationally support hybrid working and offers other modes of flexible work arrangements. Remote work will not be agreed when the request includes work performed internationally.

4.2 Flexible Work Arrangements

The University recognises the need to have a range of flexible work options available to Employees. These include, but are not limited to:

- Fractional employment;
- Job sharing;
- Flexible working hours;

- Purchased leave;
- Individual Flexibility Arrangements (under clause 9 of the UniSQ Enterprise Agreement which includes flexibility in hours of work and leave arrangements); and
- Working from another location, within Australia.

4.2.1 Eligibility

Under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) (Act), certain Employees have a legal entitlement to request flexible working arrangements. This includes continuing and fixed term Employees who have worked at least 12 months, and regular casual Employees who have worked regularly and systematically for at least 12 months and have a reasonable expectation of continuing doing so. The request must be because the Employee is:

- Pregnant;
- A parent of, or has responsibility for the care of, a child who is school age or younger;
- A carer (within the meaning of the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*);
- A person with disability;
- Aged 55 or older;
- Experiencing Family and Domestic Violence; or
- Providing care or support to an immediate family member, or someone they live with, because they are experiencing Family and Domestic Violence.

If an Employee has submitted a flexible work arrangement request because of the entitlements under the Act, the business must respond to the Employee within 21 days of receipt of the request by the Employee.

A response will:

- state that the Supervisor grants the request; or
- specify an agreed change to the Employee's work arrangements that differ from those set out in the request, following a discussion with the Employee; or
- state that the Supervisor refuses the request.

A refused flexible working arrangement response will:

- state there are no changes to current work arrangements and include details of the reasons for refusal, specifically the reasonable business grounds for refusing the request and explain how those grounds apply to the request; or
- set out the changes in the Employee's working arrangements that would accommodate, to any extent, the circumstances and that the employer would be willing to make, including the reasons for refusal of the original request.

4.2.2 Reasonable Business Grounds

Flexible work arrangements submitted in accordance with the Act are subject to the mutual agreement between the Employee and the Supervisor and may only be refused on Reasonable Business Grounds.

A request could be declined due to the flexible work arrangement:

- being too costly for the Employer;
- requiring a change to the working arrangements of other Employees, or requiring the Employer to recruit new Employees, to accommodate the request;
- resulting in a significant loss of efficiency or productivity;
- having a significant negative impact on the service provided to Students and University clients; or
- not being operationally possible for the Employer, subject to the provisions of the Act.

4.2.3 Other requests

For Employees who are not eligible to apply for a flexible working arrangement under the Act as outlined in Section 4.2.1 but request flexibility for other reasons, the supervisor will give reasonable thought to the request. This will include weighing the operational requirements of the University with the overall benefit for the Employee. The supervisor will respond to the request promptly and, if not approved, provide reasons for the Decision.

4.2.4 Outcomes

Should an Employee require more information about the reasons why a request for flexible work is not approved then they should contact the People Portfolio.

Failure to comply with this Policy or Policy Instrument may be considered as misconduct and the provisions of the relevant Policy or Procedure applied. A hard copy of this electronic document is uncontrolled and may not be current as UniSQ the University regularly reviews and updates its Policies and Policy Instruments. The latest controlled version can be found in the UniSQ's Policy and Procedure Library.

4.3 Application Process

Employees must discuss any flexible or hybrid work arrangements with their supervisor in the first instance.

Work Type	Definition	Approval Required
Hybrid Work	Hybrid working supports a combination of in office and remote work up to two (2) days per week for full time equivalent, or forty percent for a part time fraction (rounded up to the nearest whole day). For Employees requesting to work remotely more than two (2) days per week or forty percent for a part time fraction, a flexible working arrangement form will need to be submitted. Employees are required to complete a **SAFETY CHECKLIST** to ensure their remote set up is compliant from a Workplace Health and Safety perspective. Remote working arrangements are not to be used in circumstances where appropriate leave should be used instead. For example, Employees must apply for carer's leave to provide care and support to members of their household or immediate family when they are ill or injured. Alternatively, Employees with caring responsibilities may choose to reduce their employment fraction or vary their start and finish times (see below). A Category 2 Delegate, in collaboration with the Chief People Officer, may approve a vacant specialist position to be recruited to, and undertaken, as fully remote work.	Up to two (2) days per week for full time equivalent, or forty percent for a part time fraction (rounded up to the nearest whole day) requires supervisor approval only. Flexible Working Arrangement Form (for remote working over two days per week or forty percent for part time Employees) approved by Category 4 Delegate. Safety checklist for all Employees working remotely. Approve a vacant specialist position to be undertaken as fully remote.
Flexible work: Fractional (Part Time) employment	Fractional employment enables Employees to reduce their working hours in order to fulfil other responsibilities or interests outside of work hours. An Employee may be engaged for a fraction of full-time employment (sometimes referred to as part-time employment). This could be to support a return from parental leave, care for a member of their household or	Flexible Work Arrangement Hub Form approved by Category 4 Delegate

Failure to comply with this Policy or Policy Instrument may be considered as misconduct and the provisions of the relevant Policy or Procedure applied. A hard copy of this electronic document is uncontrolled and may not be current as UniSQ the University regularly reviews and updates its Policies and Policy Instruments. The latest controlled version can be found in the UniSQ's Policy and Procedure Library.

	immediate family in circumstances when they are not ill or injured, or a transition to retirement.	
Flexible work: Job sharing	Job sharing involves dividing one position among two or more people. It is a voluntary arrangement between the Employee/s involved and the cost centre manager and allows people to work less than full time, whilst ensuring that all the duties of the job are completed. Job sharing can also bring skills and experience and improved flexibility to a workplace as there are two people in a job instead of one.	Flexible Work Arrangement Hub Form approved by Category 4 Delegate
Flexible work: Flexible working hours	Employees may request to have flexibility in their work schedules including but not limited to varied start and finish times, or a compressed work week. A variation to a Professional Employee's work schedule must be in accordance with Clause 21, in the Enterprise Agreement.	Flexible Work Arrangement Hub Form approved by Category 4 Delegate
Purchased leave	An Employee can apply to take up to an additional four weeks of annual leave per year and receive a corresponding reduction in salary, which would be payable over the full 52 weeks of the year. Such arrangements, once approved, will commence at a mutually agreed time for a period of 12 months, which may be extended upon mutual agreement between the Employee and their supervisor, ensuring the needs of the work area continue to be met. The additional purchased annual leave will normally be taken within the 12-month period in which it accrues.	Purchased Leave Hub Form approved by Category 4 Delegate
Individual Flexibility Arrangement (IFA)	In accordance with Clause 9 of the Enterprise Agreement, an Employee may request to enter into an Individual Flexibility Arrangement (IFA) to vary the following terms of the Enterprise Agreement: a) Clause 18 (Salary Packaging)	Agreement between Employee and supervisor. Must be reviewed and approved by People Portfolio, Workplace Relations team.

	b) Clause 19 (Superannuation) c) Clause 21 (Hours of Work); and/or d) Clause 29 (Flexible Employment Arrangement).	

4.4 Workplace Health and Safety and Workstation Set Up

Employees entering into a hybrid work arrangement are responsible for acquiring and maintaining necessary equipment to ensure their remote workstation is compliant with health and safety requirements.

All University Policy Instruments including Workplace Health and Safety must be adhered to at all times when working from another location. Employees and supervisors are responsible for ensuring their health and safety when working from another location.

Costs associated with setting up a flexible, safe and productive workspace from another location are the responsibility of the Employee, except where this arrangement is implemented under the Workplace Adjustments Procedure. This may include a desk, chair and internet connection. ICT equipment should be discussed with the Employee, supervisor and ICT.

4.5 Working Hours

4.5.1 For All Employees

Employees have the right to disconnect outside of working hours and not engage with work-related contact unless doing so would be unreasonable. Refer to the relevant knowledge article for more information.

4.5.2 For Professional Employees

Hours of work and related matters for professional Employees are governed by the Enterprise Agreement. It is incumbent upon all Employees to be aware and operate in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement.

All professional Employees up to and including Level 10, must record their hours of attendance on the approved timesheet. These timesheets form part of the University's time and wage records and should be kept as official records in accordance with the University's Records and Information Management Policy.

All overtime to be worked must be authorised by the Category 3 Delegate prior to working the overtime.

Claims for the following payments should be made on the approved online form and approved

by the Category 4 Delegate:

- Overtime
- Meal allowance
- On-call allowance.

4.6 Delegations

Position	Delegation
Category 2 Delegate	Approve a vacant specialist position to be undertaken as fully remote.
Category 3 Delegate	Approve overtime.
Category 4 Delegate	Approve hybrid work arrangement for over forty percent per week. Approve flexible work arrangement. Approve purchased leave. Approve claims for overtime. Approve claims for meal allowance. Approve claims for on-call allowance.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief People Officer

Responsible Officer	Chief People Officer
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Flexible Work and Working Arrangements Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	6/12/2024
Effective Date	6/12/2024
Review Date	6/12/2029
Relevant Legislation	Enterprise Agreement *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth)
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Records and Information Management Policy
Related Procedures	Workplace Adjustments Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Service HUB Knowledge Centre - Right to Disconnect
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Decision A determination made by an Employee, contractor or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the University. Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Enterprise Agreement University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026. Family and Domestic Violence Family and Domestic Violence means violent, threatening or other

	abusive behaviour by certain individuals known to an Employee that both seeks to coerce or control the Employee, and causes them harm or fear. Policy Instrument A Policy Instrument refers to an instrument that is governed by the Policy framework. These include Policies, Procedures and Schedules. University The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.
	Definitions that relate to this procedure only
Keywords	
Record No	15/2897PL