Flexible Work Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The University of Canberra (University) is committed to providing a range of flexible working options aimed at assisting Employees to meet family and personal obligations and to support a healthy work–life balance.

(2) This Policy outlines some of the University's flexible work offerings and how Employees can access them. It covers:

a. Hybrid Working (for eligible professional Employees);
b. Academic Flexibility (for academic Employees);
c. Flexible Work Arrangements;
d. Flexible Work Benefits:
e. Purchased leave;
f. Ad hoc arrangements; and
g. Flextime.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all University Employees.

Section 3 - Principles

(4) As part of the University's commitment to a flexible workforce, professional Employees, including those working part-time, can request access to hybrid working.

(5) All academic Employees can access academic flexibility in accordance with the Academic Availability clause of the University of Canberra Enterprise Agreement.

(6) All Employees can formally apply for a Flexible Work Arrangement, which is an agreement between that Employee and the University for a change to their working arrangements.

(7) Eligible Employees can also apply to access the University's Flexible Work Benefits such as purchased leave, Ad hoc arrangements and flextime.

(8) The University encourages Employees and their Managers to adopt informal flexible work practices within their team, balancing busy periods with quiet periods and remaining flexible while ensuring the University's operational needs are met.

Hybrid working

(9) The University supports access to Hybrid Working flexible working for professional Employees. Conditions for hybrid working are provided by the Hybrid Working Procedure. Requests for access to Hybrid Working arrangements must be made in accordance with the Hybrid Working Procedure.

Academic Flexibility

(10) The University supports access to flexible working arrangements for academic Employees, conditions of which are provided through the Academic Availability clause of the University of Canberra Enterprise Agreement.

(11) Academic Employees are not required to apply to access these already established working conditions; however, such arrangements must be discussed with the Employee's Manager to ensure:

a. campus-based responsibilities are appropriately balanced with home/other location work arrangements;
b. appropriate contact and availability arrangements are in place; and
c. an understanding of Work Health and Safety requirements and responsibilities including ergonomic self-assessment, that must be undertaken for a working environment away from campus.

Flexible working arrangements

(12) The following are examples of Flexible Work Arrangements that Employees can request:

a. a change to the pattern of working hours;
b. a change to the hours of work (e.g., part-time hours);
c. job share arrangements; and
d. career breaks.

(13) The list of options above is not exhaustive and all requests for flexible work will be considered in line with legislative requirements and in accordance with this Policy.

(14) Employees requesting Flexible Work Arrangements must submit a written request to their Manager that clearly outlines the following:

a. details of the change sought;
b. the reasons for the change;
c. the duration the change will be effective;
d. the potential effect on the operation of their workplace;
e. the potential effect on colleagues; and
f. how the duties and responsibilities of their role will be achieves as a result of the change.

(15) If possible, within 14 calendar days of receiving the request, the Employee and their Manager will meet to discuss the request. Managers will discuss the request with the Employee and genuinely try to reach an agreement about making changes to the Employee's working arrangements to accommodate the Employee's circumstances.

(16) The Manager will respond to the Employee's flexible work request within 21 calendar days of receiving the request, either granting or refusing the request. Requests for Flexible Work Arrangements will be considered in accordance with governing legislation, the University of Canberra Enterprise Agreement, and relevant policies and procedures. The Manager should also consider the context of Employee needs, the provision of customer service and the operational requirements of the area.

Refusing a flexible work request

(17) Requests for Flexible Work Arrangements will only be refused on Reasonable Business Grounds which are consistent with statutory guidelines and have regard to the consequences of the refusal for the Employee.

(18) Managers considering declining a request, must contact their People & Culture Business Partner for advice.

Should the request be refused, the Manager will outline the decision in writing including the business grounds for refusing the request and how those grounds apply to the request. The Manager will also outline consideration given to any alterations they would be willing to accommodate to the request, where applicable.

(19) In the event the request is refused, and an appropriate alternative approach cannot be agreed, the Employee may access the grievance resolution procedure outlined in Schedule 5 of the University of Canberra Enterprise Agreement.

Granting a flexible work request

(20) If the Employee and their Manager agree to Flexible Work Arrangements, the agreement will be documented, attached to the Employee's Performance and Development Plan, and a copy placed on the Employee's personnel file.

(21) The agreement will normally contain a 12-monthly review to ensure that the arrangements remain consistent with the Employee's requirements, and/or the operational requirements of the University.

(22) People & Culture will assist the Manager and Employee to determine whether the arrangements require a written understanding, or an Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA) (see Definitions section below).

Flexible work benefits

(23) Part of the University's suite of Flexible Work Benefits includes the option for staff to purchase additional recreation leave, ad hoc arrangements and flextime.

Purchased leave

(24) Employees may purchase up to 8 weeks of additional recreation leave if they have used all their available recreation and long service leave entitlements. The Leave Guidelines provide detail on the application and process to purchase leave.

(25) Purchased leave will count as service for all purposes and Employees must use their purchased leave before accessing their accrued recreation leave.

Ad hoc arrangements

(26) The University recognises that infrequent and Ad hoc arrangements may be agreed between an Employee and their Manager at any time, subject to operational requirements.

(27) Ad hoc arrangements will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Manager.

Flextime

(28) Professional Employees from UC1 to UC7 may access flextime in accordance with the University of Canberra Enterprise Agreement and the Flextime, Overtime and Time Off In Lieu Guidelines associated with this Policy.

(29) Employees need to apply in writing to access flextime and have their application approved by their Manager before they can accrue flextime.

Flexible working examples

(30) Appendix A to this Policy contains some examples of flexible working arrangements that may occur at the University. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive, rather to give an indication of how some of the benefits outlined in this Policy may be put into practice.

Section 4 - Responsibilities

WHO	RESPONSIBILITIES
Employee	• Being familiar with this Policy, the Leave Guidelines and the Flextime, Overtime and Time Off in Lieu Guidelines, prior to applying to access these benefits. • Seek any request to access flexible work in writing. • Applying to purchase leave and/or access flextime, in accordance with the Leave Guidelines and Flextime, Overtime and Time Off in Lieu Guidelines.
Manager	• Being familiar with this Policy, the Leave Guidelines and the Flextime, Overtime and Time Off in Lieu Guidelines and contacting People and Diversity if they need clarification. • Responding to flexible work requests in accordance with this Policy, including meeting with the Employee within 14 days (where possible) and responding to the request with a decision in writing within 21 days. • If the Manager refuses the request, the written response must include details of the reasons for the refusal and address whether alternative suitable arrangements can be made. • Encouraging informal flexible work patterns within their team.
People & Culture	• Assisting Employees and Managers to formalise flexible working through a written understanding or IFA. • Advise Managers on responding to flexible work requests.
University	• Encouraging and supporting flexible working.

Section 5 - Definitions

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
Ad hoc arrangement	An informal, short-term flexible attendance arrangement, without requiring a formal Hybrid Working arrangement.
Employee	Means all persons who are employed by the University.
Flexible Work Arrangement	An agreement between that Employee and the University for a change to the Employees working arrangements in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Fair Work Act 2009.
Flexible Work Benefit	Flexible Work Benefits provide opportunities for Employees to request temporary adjustments to support work/life balance.
Individual Flexibility Agreement (IFA)	An IFA can be used to vary certain terms of an enterprise agreement as it applies to a particular Employee covered by the IFA. For more information, please contact your People & Culture Business Partner.
Manager	The direct supervisor of the Employee.
Reasonable Business Grounds	Consideration that the change would result in a loss of productivity, requires impacts to other Employees that cannot be changed to accommodate the request or have a negative impact on service provision. Reasonable business grounds for refusing a request for flexible working arrangements include but are not limited to: • there is no capacity to change the working arrangements of other Employees to accommodate the new working arrangements requested by the Employee; • it would be impractical to change the working arrangements of other Employees, or recruit new Employees, to accommodate the new working arrangements requested by the Employee; • the new working arrangements requested by the Employee would be likely to result in significant loss of efficiency or productivity; • the working arrangement would impact the ability of the Employee to conduct the duties of their position; • the new working arrangements requested by the Employee would be likely to have a significant negative impact on customer service; • the new working arrangements requested by the Employee would be too costly for the employer.

Section 6 - Appendices

Appendix A – Flexible Work Examples

Approval of flexible working should always be contextual, in consideration of the operational requirements of the university and the individual needs of the employee.

CATEGORY	OPTIONS	SUMMARY
Hybrid Working	(Refer to Hybrid Working Procedure)	A blended arrangement whereby an employee works from the University and another location, generally their home address. Work some of your days from your usual place of residence. For more information, see the Hybrid Working Procedure. For example: June has a disability and has a regular medical appointment on a Tuesday close to home. She requests to work from home on Tuesday to enable her to attend the appointment and also fulfil her work commitment. June and her manager agree to duties to be undertaken whilst she is at home on a Tuesday.
Academic Flexibility	(Refer to the Enterprise Agreement)	Full time academic staff are employed on the basis of a minimum commitment of 1700 hours per year. It is recognised that depending on the teaching, research and professional commitments, Academic Staff may reasonably determine how they undertake this work in consultation with their manager.
Flexible Work Arrangements	Part-time hours	Reduce the numbers of hours of work per week. Part time work requires a balance between the operational requirements of the role, the impact on the team and work and the employee's personal requirements. For example: Jen is returning from a period of parental leave and is the primary carer for her child. Her fraction before leave was full time. Jen requests to return to work 3 days per week to help her care for her child.
Flexible Work Arrangements	Pattern of hours	Vary your start and finish times within the ordinary hours (typically between the span of 7 am and 7 pm). For example: Peter has school aged children. He requests to start an hour earlier and finish an hour earlier to allow him to collect his children from school.
Flexible Work Arrangements	Job share arrangements	Job share refers to a job share or job split arrangement. Job share is where no more than two staff members share a single full-time or part-time position by dividing the work, each working part time. Each job share partner will have the same position title and position description. Job split is where the responsibilities of a position are quite distinct and easily separated, in which the roles and responsibilities are separated into two distinct part time positions. For example: Sally works part time and does the job on Monday and Tuesday and Terri does the same job, also working part time, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
Flexible Work Benefits	Purchased leave (Refer to the Leave Guidelines)	Where an employee requests to use part of their salary to purchase up to 8 weeks additional leave per year. For example: Zhao has been planning an 8 week trip across Australia with his family. He will have four weeks of leave available and would like to purchase an additional 4 weeks of leave.
Flexible Work Benefits	Ad hoc arrangements	An informal, short-term flexible arrangements to manage one-off or emergency situations. For example: Javi has received a call from his son's school that his son is unwell and will need to be taken home. Javi advises his manager and they agree he can work from home for the remainder of the day, to be able to care for his son.

CATEGORY	OPTIONS	SUMMARY
Flexible Work Benefits	Flextime (Refer to the Flextime, Overtime and Time Off in Lieu Guidelines)	Flextime occurs where an individual has decided to work additional hours and then seeks to reclaim those hours as time off in conversation with their line manager, this generally occurs through varying the time they start and/or finish work, provided that a total of agreed numbers of hours are spent at work. Professional staff UC1–7 are eligible to access flextime, on first request approval to accrue Flextime from their manager. For example: Billy has been working additional hours in the lead up to prepare for Orientation Week. Following the conclusion of Orientation Week, Billy and his manager agree that he will finish one hour earlier each day for the next week, to compensate for their additional time spent preparing for Orientation Week.

Status and Details

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