

Policy: Work and study flexibility

Purpose

To outline a set of overarching principles and the University's commitment to an approach of flexibility for staff and students.

Overview

The Australian National University supports flexible work and study arrangements to accommodate various caring responsibilities, priorities at work, home, relating to study commitments and in community.

In addition, the University has an obligation under the [Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#) and the [Discrimination Act 1991 \(ACT\)](#) not to discriminate in education and employment, directly or indirectly, against a person on the grounds of family and caring responsibilities, or status as a parent or carer.

The Work and Study Flexibility policy sets out the approach that is adopted and the matters that are considered in support of these principles.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students of the University.

Policy statement

1. The University supports a holistic approach to flexibility as part of balancing team and individual responsibilities, access to opportunities, personal and professional development and success at work and relating to study. Flexibility is key to fostering and developing an environment in which students and staff can excel, deliver outcomes for teams and as individuals through study and work as well as in our broader lives.
2. The University recognises that family and caring responsibilities can have a significant impact on employment and educational opportunities for students and staff. The University is committed to providing services, policies and guidance to assist staff and students balance family and caring responsibilities with their work and study.
3. Family and caring responsibilities are diverse and the University endorses a definition of family and caring responsibilities to be inclusive of a wide range of relationships and structures which include one or more of the following: blood, marriage,

same sex and de facto relationships, adoption and dependency. It can include elder care, caring for people with disabilities, children, partners as well as responsibilities associated with their extended families.

4. The University endeavours to accommodate the needs and preferences of the staff member where possible. All requests are considered by the [delegate](#) having regard to the work area's priorities. However, it should be noted that work and study flexibility, particularly home-based work, is not a substitute for childcare.

Matters to be considered by the University in respect of staff and students

5. The University considers the needs of staff and students with family and caring responsibilities and how flexibility can support these needs when:

- a. Reviewing timetabling of lecture attendance, which includes school holiday times;
- b. Developing and reviewing new accommodation or remodelling accommodation on campus for staff and students who have children;
- c. Developing and reviewing academic administrative policies and procedures for students;
- d. Developing and reviewing employment policies and procedures including [The Enterprise Agreement](#) and flexible work practices; and
- e. Reviewing resources which support staff and students with family and caring responsibilities such as childcare availability and parenting rooms.

Matters to be considered by academic staff in respect of students

6. Academic staff consider the needs of students with family and caring responsibilities and how to ensure options for flexibility are used to create a supportive study environment when:

- a. organising consultation times;
- b. scheduling meetings;
- c. determining work-loads and types of assessment;
- d. setting class and examination timetables;
- e. providing access to lecture notes which may include access to recording of lectures or providing class notes;
- f. providing flexible learning technology including on-line learning; and
- g. determining class attendance requirements and processes for consideration of family and caring responsibilities.

Matters to be considered by supervisors in respect of staff

7. Supervisors consider the needs of staff with family and caring responsibilities and how to ensure options for flexibility are used to create a supportive work environment when:

- a. advertising for and selecting staff;
- b. determining location of work;
- c. reviewing job design;
- d. organising meeting schedules;
- e. providing/allocating staff development opportunities;
- f. offering higher duties opportunities; and
- g. assessing staff requests for flexible work practices including leave, flextime, part-time work, working from home and telecommuting.

Grievances/complaints

Students

8. A student with a complaint or grievance is strongly encouraged to initially seek an informal resolution of any complaint or grievance that they decide to pursue.

9. For complaints about issues relating to family or carers' responsibilities and flexibility options by students, refer to the University [Student grievance and complaint resolution](#) and [procedure](#).

Staff

10. As a general principle, and wherever it is possible to do so, staff should attempt to reach an agreement on a [flexibility arrangement](#) that meets the needs of the staff member and the work area at the local level. This usually involves a staff member discussing the matter directly with their immediate supervisor. Staff may also seek advice from their local area Human Resources team or the Human Resources Division.

11. For complaints about issues relating to family or carers' responsibilities and flexibility options by staff, refer to the University [Staff grievance resolution policy](#) and [procedure](#).

Document information

Title	Work and study flexibility policy
Document Type	Policy
Document Number	ANUP_000482
Version	
Purpose	To assist staff and students combine their family responsibilities with their work and study commitments.
Audience	Staff, Students
Category	Administrative
Topic	Health, Safety & Environment
Subtopic	Occupational Health & Safety
Effective Date	27 Aug 2020
Review Date	30 Jun 2024
Responsible Officer	Chief People Officer
Approved By	Vice-Chancellor (eo.vc@anu.edu.au)
Contact Area	Human Resources Division (director.hr@anu.edu.au)
Authority	Australian National University Act 1991 Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 Work Health & Safety Act 2011 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Discrimination Act 1991
Printed On	23 Apr 2024

Please ensure you have the latest version of this document from the Policy Library website before referencing this.