Policy: Work, study and family responsibilities

Purpose
To assist staff and students to combine their family responsibilities with their work and study commitments.

Overview
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 responsibilities, or status as a parent or carer. The Work, study and family responsibility policy sets out the matters that must be considered to support staff and students with family and caring responsibilities.

Scope
This policy applies across the University.

Policy statement
1. 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 policies, practices and services to assist staff and students balance family and caring responsibilities with their work and study.

2. Family responsibilities are diverse and the University endorses a definition of family responsibilities to be inclusive of a wide range of relationships and structures which may 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.

Matters to be considered by the University in respect of staff and students
3. The University considers the needs of staff and students with family responsibilities 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 enterprise agreements and flexible work practices; and

e. reviewing resources which support staff and students with family responsibilities such as child care availability and parenting rooms.

Matters to be considered by academic staff in respect of students

4. Academic staff consider the needs of students with family responsibilities when:

   a. organising consultation times with staff;

   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 taping 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 responsibilities.

Matters to be considered by supervisors in respect of staff

5. Supervisors consider the needs of staff with family responsibilities when:

   a. advertising for and selecting staff;

   b. reviewing jobs design;

   c. organising meeting schedules;

   d. providing staff development programs;

   e. offering higher duties opportunities; and

   f. assessing staff requests for flexible work practices including leave, flexi-time, part-time work, working from home and telecommuting.

Grievances/complaints

6. For complaints about issues relating to family or carers’ responsibility by students, refer to the University Student complaint resolution policy and procedure. For complaints about issues relating to family or carers’ responsibility by staff, refer to the University Staff grievance resolution policy and procedure.
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<tr>
<td>Responsible Officer</td>
<td>Director, Human Resources (<a href="mailto:director.hr@anu.edu.au">director.hr@anu.edu.au</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved By</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor (<a href="mailto:vc@anu.edu.au">vc@anu.edu.au</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Area</td>
<td>Human Resources Division (<a href="mailto:director.hr@anu.edu.au">director.hr@anu.edu.au</a>)</td>
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