

Flexible work checklist

As a manager, how can I accommodate flexible work arrangements?



Things to consider

Flexible work arrangements can include a reduction from full-time to part-time hours, working from home, annualised hours, purchase of additional annual leave, end of career contracts, change of hours and deferred salary scheme. Arrangements may be requested and accommodated for short-term (i.e. part-time hours, working from home) or put in place over a longer term (i.e. end of career contract, deferred salary scheme).

Employees seeking a flexible working arrangement will each have their own individual reasons for making this request. ECU encourages managers and supervisors to consider requests on a case-by-case basis and understand that work-life balance is important for employees, a key to attraction and retention of staff, and can support career development.

When a request to change work arrangements is made your role is to consider how the change would impact your team, and the delivery of university outcomes. Denying a request for flexible work arrangements (particularly if the employee has a legal right to request) should be in writing and within 21 days of the official request.

The checklist below outlines some considerations you should take into account when one of your employees requests a flexible work arrangement.

Work requirements

- How appropriate is the flexible work arrangement that has been proposed?
- Has the employee made it clear what they are hoping to seek from this arrangement?
- How will the arrangement impact on the current work team and its priorities?
- How long is the arrangement for? (*Short term arrangements may need less process to put in place than longer term ones, longer term arrangements may not easily be reversed, or may need a separate consideration in the future.*)
- How will workload issues be covered – does this present an opportunity to develop other team members?
- Have I considered if the employee has a legal right to request the flexible working arrangement under the [Fair Work Act 2009](#)?

- Will the proposed flexible working arrangement adequately address the employee concerns, and reason for seeking a flexible work arrangement?
- Using the principles of work design consider whether the arrangement could provide opportunity for changing how work is organised, grouping of functions, or seeking advice from HR Account Managers if you are not clear what is involved.
- Does the employee have face-to-face client contact and if so, how can this arrangement be considered without disruption to the service provided?
- Can work objectives be met another way if the flexible work arrangement is put in place?
- Will the employee's arrangement impact their participation in important team events?
- Does the request require a level of resourcing that can be accommodated?
- Do you have suggestions for alternative arrangements that may suit the employee and the work team if you can't accommodate their original request?
- Do you have the delegated authority to approve the arrangement?
- Is there a policy or guideline for the arrangement?
- Is the arrangement provided for in the collective agreement?
- Will the arrangement require a contract variation, or can it be accommodated informally? It is in the interest of both parties to document any arrangements (formal or informal) that are agreed on.
- Is the employee considering home-based-work, if so use these [resources](#) to assist.
- All flexible work arrangements should include a point of review, so that you and your employee can discuss if the arrangement is working for all parties.

Next Steps

When your employee has met with you to discuss their proposal, take time to review and consider what they are seeking to achieve.

Work with your employee to come to an arrangement that will suit their needs and your team and business requirements.

Discuss the proposal with your [HR Account Manager](#) if you have concerns about meeting the employee's request, or need advice on how to implement the arrangement.

Remember

Successful flexible working arrangements, particularly those which reduce an employee's presence in the physical workplace, require both you and your employee to be satisfied that the arrangements can be accommodated without adversely impacting your work area and the university.

Be prepared to be open to alternative options – it may take time to work out which option assists you to balance personal and/or family responsibilities with work commitments.