



## Implementing the FWA Program in Your Department

### Information Session for Supervisors

#### April 2022



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## Agenda

What is the purpose of flexible work arrangements?

Why support flexible work arrangements?

How did we get here?

Culture shift

Vision and Guiding Principles

Equitable treatment versus fairness

Who can participate?

What flexible work options can staff request?

Approach to determining employee flexibility options at the departmental level

Overview of the request process and key questions/considerations

Suggested next steps

Overview of FWA Program Guidelines



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## What is the Purpose of Flexible Work Arrangements?

- To enable a flexible working environment to support the health and wellbeing of staff when possible given the operational needs of the unit and the essential duties of an employee's position.
- The success of flexible arrangements depends on effective communication, clear expectations, and trust between the employee and the supervisor.

**The Future of Work is Not a One Size Fits All – Operational Needs and the Work Staff Do Will Help Determine Flexibility**



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## Why Support Flexible Work Arrangements?

- Develop flexible approaches to work upon a return to in-person campus life and community
- Encourage agility and innovation in our teams
- Engage employees – increased morale and productivity
- Enhance service delivery with hybrid options
- Support mental health – reduce risk of burnouts, sick leaves, optimize work/life balance



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## How Did We Get Here?



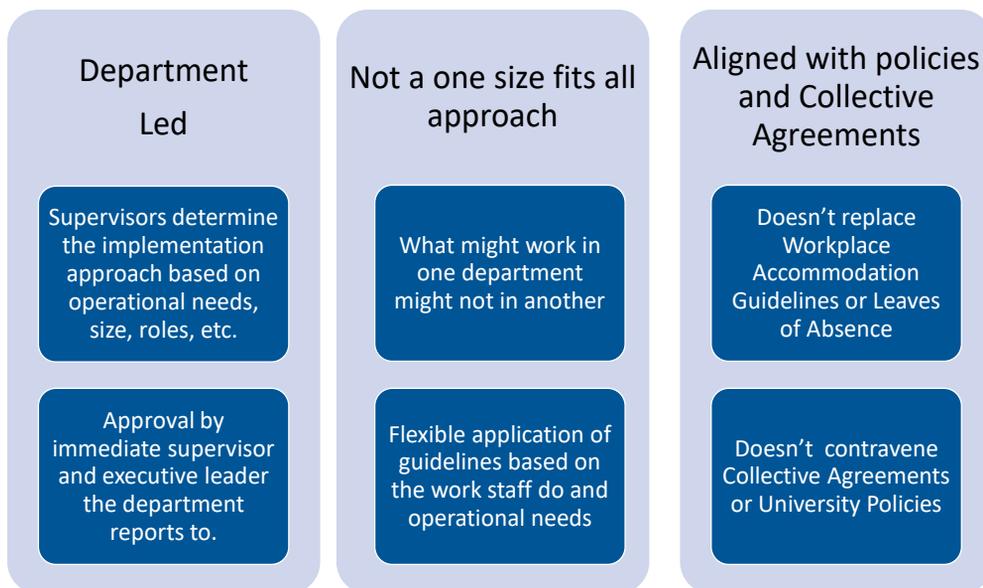
Regular updates at the Strategic Leadership Forum (SLF) and Manager’s Forum



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### Culture Shift



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## What the program hopes to achieve.... Vision

A flexible work environment that supports the overall wellbeing of employees, is aligned with the University's mission, and contributes to its success.

Part of the University's commitment to supporting the mental health and well-being of employees.  
Other initiatives will be introduced to support the wellbeing of those employees who may not be able to participate due to the essential duties of their position.



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## Guiding Principles

Guiding principles provide a consistent framework for decision-making.

Mission-Focused

Service & Position  
Driven

Equity, Diversity &  
Inclusion

On-campus  
Presence

Voluntary  
Participation and  
Transparent  
Decision Making



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## Focus - Equitable Treatment Rather Than Fairness

- The focus is **not on treating everyone identically** in an attempt to be fair.
- Supervisors need to :
  - Ensure **consistent rationale and/or approach** to decision-making grounded on the Guiding Principles.
  - Focus on **consistent application** of program Guiding Principles and Guidelines.
  - Focus on treating individuals within your team **equitably** (guided by the Guiding Principles, consistent application of guidelines)



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## Who Can Participate? Eligibility



Non-academic staff (part-time and full-time permanent staff)



Successfully completed probationary period



Position must be able to be carried out with the same parameters in a flexible work arrangement



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## What Flexible Work Options Can Staff Request?

Options to be sought by staff who are governed by the terms and conditions of a Collective Agreement must be consistent with the provisions of the applicable Collective Agreement.

- Departments determine the flexible work options implementation approach/level of flexibility.
- Employees could request more than 1 option.

Flexible  
Schedule

Remote Work  
(max 40%)

Ad-hoc  
Flexible  
Schedule

Ad-hoc  
Remote Work

Flexibility on how the 40% is applied to optimize flexibility (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly )



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## Same examples....

### Flexible Schedule

- Employee arrives at 8:00 am each day, takes 1h30 for lunch, and leaves at 4:30 pm.
- Employee works 8:30 am to 4:30 pm on set days (i.e. Monday, Wednesday, Friday) and 9:30 to 5:30 on the other days (i.e. Tuesday and Thursday).

### Remote Work

- Employee works from home every Tuesday and Thursday.
- Employee works from home 2 days per week on a schedule that varies each week. (i.e. week 1 Tuesday and Thursday, week 2 Monday and Friday)
- Employee works from home 1 week per month.



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## Approach to Determining Employee Flexibility Options at the Departmental Level

- Grounded on the Guiding Principles, decisions must be driven by operational needs, the work performed by employees, and then individual preferences.

### Operational Needs of the Department

1. Determine the operational needs of the department including the impact on the student/service experience.

### The Work Employees Do

2. Review the work employees do within the context of operational needs to determine how much flexibility can be offered.

### Individual Preferences

3. Determine how employee requests (employee preferences) can be incorporated within the operational needs and the work employees do



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## Request Process – Initiated by the Employee

Not to be completed for ad-hoc requests

### Flexible Work Arrangements Request Form (4 parts) PDF to start – ITS working on automation

1. Employee Information and Flexible Work Arrangements Request Details (To be completed by the employee)
2. Flexible Work Arrangement Decision (To be completed by the supervisor)
3. Decision Confirmation (To be completed by the executive leader the department reports to - i.e. Vice-President, Associate Vice-President, Dean, Executive Director)
4. Flexible Work Arrangements Agreement (To be completed by the supervisor and signed by the employee once the flexible work arrangement is approved)

### Health & Safety and Ergonomics Checklist and Privacy Module (for Remote Work Arrangements)



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## When can staff submit FWA requests?

Flexible Work Arrangement to start anytime during the:	Request submission deadline
Fall semester	July 1
Winter semester	November 1
Summer semester	April 1

Requests received outside these timelines require a 30-day notice.

Given that the launch date doesn't align with the schedule above:

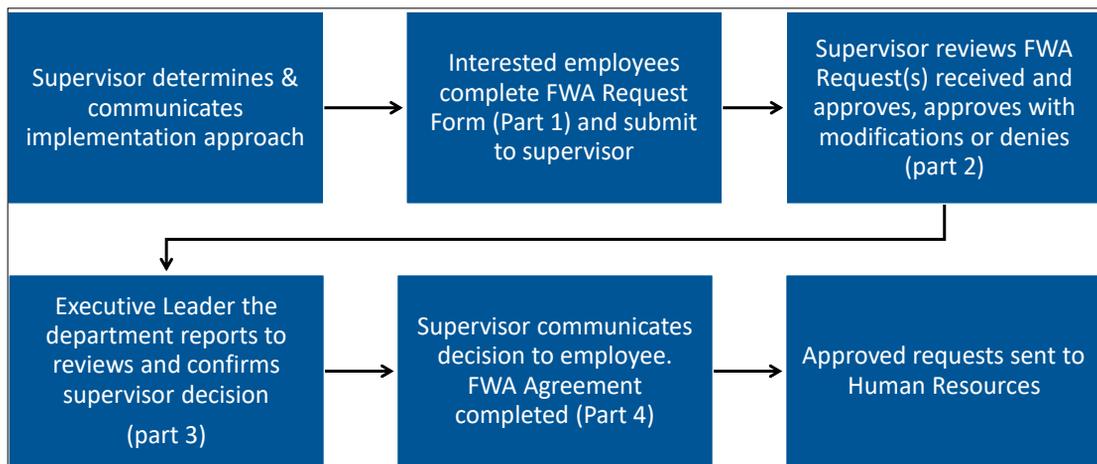
- Employees can start submitting FWA Request Forms to their supervisors as soon as the program is launched (May 2, 2022).
- Supervisors have **up to 30 days** to review and respond.
- FWA start date to be determined by the supervisor based on what is operationally feasible. **Goal – start as soon as it is feasible.**



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## Process Overview



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## Examples of Questions to Consider to Determine if a FWA Request is Feasible

- Are there specific peak or critical periods when a remote work or flexible schedule may not be viable? If so, can the FWA be managed differently during that period (i.e., over a month rather than week)?
- Is the employee able to meet the performance requirements and service standards of the position?
- Does the position require that all or most of the work be done on campus (i.e., front line client services, receptionists, lab employees)?
- Does the position require access to equipment/information/programs, etc. that are only available on campus?
- Does the employee have access to a UWindsor laptop/computing device?



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## Examples of Questions to Consider to Determine if a FWA Request is Feasible

- Are there tasks within the position that require employees to be on campus to be completed effectively and what tasks could be done remotely? (either at set times or varying times during the year)
- Will the FWA have a negative impact on the work of other employees or result in added responsibilities for other employees?
- Can the staff perform the work successfully with a degree of independence from their supervisor and colleagues?
- Is the FWA consistent with the relevant Collective Agreement/University policies?
- Does the employee have a suitable workspace, equipment, and reliable internet access to allow for needed connectivity?



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## Tips for Reviewing Requests

- Consider the big picture when evaluating and reviewing requests (overall team requests, stakeholder needs/expectations, operational requirements)
- Be objective and consider all options. Ensure equitable application of the Guiding Principles and that you are approving/denying for the right reasons.
- Consider the lessons learned over the last 2 years and what worked well and what didn't. Remember that because a service can be offered virtually, doesn't mean it should be.
- Challenge yourself to think about how you could maximize flexibility while still meeting operational needs and student/client expectations



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### Approved

Ensure that the employee understands the Terms and Conditions

Ensure employee understands that the FWA will be reviewed quarterly

### Denied

Document reasons grounded on Guiding Principles

Meet with the employee to discuss and if possible explore other options

Meet with employees to ensure that all employees understand how decisions were made and the rationale behind the level of flexibility (operational needs, the work, and then employee preference)



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## Suggested Next Steps

- Determine the best implementation approach/type of flexibility that will be available to staff-based operational needs, student/client expectations, size of the department, etc. For instance:
  - Can staff pick the days they can flex their schedule or work remotely or will there be a predetermined schedule staff could select from?
  - Will there be core hours when all staff members are expected to be working such as 10:00 am – 2:00 pm?
- Meet with your team to discuss the Flexible Work Arrangements Program Guidelines and the departmental implementation approach.
- Provide a deadline for submitting requests and a timeline for review/notification and start.



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## Suggested Next Steps

- Encourage staff to discuss their interest in applying for an FWA with you and to bring forward any questions/concerns.
- Review requests objectively, considering impacts and mitigation strategies.
- Seek guidance from Human Resources with any questions or concerns.
- For approved requests, clarify expectations: schedule, deliverables, availability when working remotely, monitoring progress, etc.



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## FWA Program Guidelines

- FWA Request Process (page 5)
- Key Considerations When Reviewing FWA Requests (page 6)
- Terms & Conditions (pages 7 – 9)
  - General
  - Hours of Work/Schedule
  - Workplace Accommodations & Leaves of Absence
  - Change/Termination of the Approved FWA
  - Health & Safety
  - Information Security and Privacy
  - Equipment & Expenses



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Questions?



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