

	Flexible Work Arrangement Policy
Classification	Human Resources
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Policy sponsor	Vice President, Administration
Policy owner	Director, Human Resources

When consistent with University operational needs, MSVU supports flexible work arrangements as stated in this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

The University is committed to fostering a workplace environment that is flexible and recognizes employees' ongoing navigation of career and life responsibilities. Flexibility in the workplace supports a variety of University initiatives related to employee well-being, recruitment, retention, sustainability and management of resources.

The University features work environments that vary widely and require specific staffing to function effectively. Flexible work arrangements are position and department specific. Some departments cannot achieve required service levels with altered work schedules or locations. Thus, flexible work arrangements are not available for all positions, at all times of year, or in all campus settings. Other relevant considerations may preclude a flexible work arrangement such as health and safety, privacy, security and technology limitations. All flexible work arrangements are at the discretion of the University and may be revoked with notice.

Flexible work arrangements, either on an ongoing basis or at a particular time, are based on the needs of the University and the ability of the individual employee to work effectively in a flexible work arrangement and meet the conditions outlined in the Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement.

An approved flexible work arrangement does not reduce the University's expectations regarding an employee's performance and does not serve as a precedent for a future arrangement within a department.

Flexible work arrangements must not materially change the duties of a position or impact the work of another department.

Approved by Senior Administration on April 4, 2022

Employees out on extended leave (e.g. compassionate leave, disability/sick or maternity leave) are not eligible to work, regardless of any flexible work arrangement that may be in place. It is important to note that flexible work arrangements do not override the formal accommodation process or plans. For instances where an employee requests a flexible work arrangement for medical, disability, or other reasons outside the parameters of the Flexible Work Arrangement Program, there is a separate process in place as these are considered accommodation related inquiries. In some circumstances a flexible work arrangement may help expedite an employee's return to work from a leave of absence.

Employees with flexible work arrangements remain subject to all applicable university policies and procedures, collective agreements, provincial and federal laws.

Nothing in this policy limits the University's ability to determine, based on all relevant considerations, that an employee may be required to alter their work hours or location. When such changes are necessary, the University will implement such changes in accordance with applicable policies, procedures, and collective agreements.

Eligibility

The approval of an Employee for participation in flexible work arrangements is at the discretion of the University. The University will consider the type of work to be performed by the Employee and whether or not the work can be approved under the conditions outlined in the Flexible Work Arrangement Policy in considering eligibility for flexible work arrangements. Participation in the program is at all times subject to operational requirements and at the discretion of the Employee's managing supervisor.

This Policy is designed to be only available to regular/permanent MSVU staff whose positions would qualify under this policy.

Employees who wish to participate in Flexible Working Arrangements should express their interest in writing to their direct supervisor. Participation in the program is initiated by the Employee.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT/GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In developing and implementing this policy, the university has developed the following guiding principles:

Excellent Service

The availability of flexible work arrangements will be subject to specific operational requirements which will vary based on the role and department. Flexible Work Arrangements have direct benefits to the university, including, responsible space utilization, sustainability impacts, and alignment with our commitment to supporting employee well-being as outlined in our strategic plan, “Strength through Community.” Flexible work arrangements must also ensure our continued focus on providing excellent service to students, faculty, staff and the broader Mount community.

Employee Experience

The Mount is committed to being an employer of choice in the region and continues to look for ways to improve employee experience. Supporting employees to effectively balance their professional and personal lives, including through flexible work arrangements, is a key means of ensuring a positive employment experience. Increasing levels of employee satisfaction will help measure the success of this policy/program.

Shared Responsibility

Employees share the responsibility of making flexible work arrangements successful. Both individual and departmental circumstances will be important considerations when assessing the opportunity for flexible work arrangements, including the employee’s access to the required work tools and adequate technology, and the ability to work in a flexible environment. The success of these flexible work arrangements requires mutual accountability and commitment to successful outcomes.

Space utilization

Each department’s managing supervisor will assign and manage employees’ on-campus working space for the duration of this agreement. To accommodate a department’s Flexible Work Arrangement schedule, employees may need to share work space with others utilizing the program.

EDIA Considerations

The University recognizes the unique circumstances and experiences affecting each employee and those will be considered when applications are received from employees. Specific individual concerns should be discussed with your managing supervisor, in consultation with Human Resources as required.

Campus Presence

All campus departments/functions are required to maintain a consistent presence on campus of at least fifty percent (50%) of their staff level. No departments or employees will be approved for

remote working 100% of the time. Employees, who apply for remote working, may be approved for up to a maximum of three (3) days per week or 60% of the time.

University Operating Hours

The University has defined its hours as such: Campus hours are from 6:00am to 11:00pm; business hours are from 8:30am to 4:30pm and core operational hours are from 10:00am to 3:00pm.

All Flexible Work Arrangement agreements must include employees working the university's core operational hours which have been determined to be from 10:00am to 3:00pm. Any modified hours or schedules will include this designated time frame, unless in the unusual event that alternate hours are required (as approved by the managing supervisor with Human Resources).

Integration of Practices

Our approach to flexible work arrangements will be designed to integrate with the University strategic plan, policies, and collective agreements. Flexible Work Arrangements will be jointly agreed to by employees and their managers in consultation with Human Resources, and will follow the provisions of appropriate collective agreements, handbooks and other relevant policies. When determining Flexible Work Arrangements, the University will review the employee/manager application to ensure it aligns with key priorities, including inclusion, accessibility, sustainability, and the needs of students.

DEFINITIONS

Flexible Work Arrangement

An agreement established between an employee with their managing supervisor where the time and place of work performed is different from the traditional schedule or location.

Flextime (Modified Schedule)

Flextime with a modified schedule is a work arrangement in which employees continue to work a full work week but with varied work hours outside of the typical workday. This can include working alternate hours (e.g. starting earlier or working later), but maintaining a seven (7) hour workday.

Remote Work Arrangement

Remote work refers to an arrangement that allows an employee to work at home or at an approved alternate location to a maximum of 3 days per week or 60% of the time.

Communication

The Employee and their managing supervisor must maintain open lines of communication and have regular one-on-one sessions and team meetings using virtual collaboration tools that support video interactions, where the camera is expected to be operational and used. Openness, honesty, clear and direct feedback are essential elements of a successful virtual relationship, and are key to the success of the Flexible Work Arrangement.

Equipment and Technology

Remote Work will only be approved for employees who have been provided dedicated technology from the University to support their work from home. Personal devices cannot be used for this program.

To effectively work remotely, employees must be able to supply, at their own cost, certain technology to complete their work. This would typically include:

- A stable broadband connection that can access a VPN connection to the MSVU network
- A dedicated office space with furnishings

In situations where University equipment is provided, it remains the property of the University and should be inventoried in the same way as equipment on campus. Employees will be responsible for returning the equipment in good working order as required or upon termination of employment, or when returning to a position designated to be on campus.

The University will not be supplying peripheral equipment, for example, additional monitors, docking stations or printers. Those requiring printing services are expected to utilize printers on campus.

Health and Safety

Flexible Work Arrangements present unique health and safety considerations which must be addressed for participation in Flexible Work Arrangements. An employee who is working remotely shall be solely responsible for work-related injuries that would not have occurred but for the remote working arrangement.

Employees approved under the Flexible Work Arrangement policy are responsible for the set-up and furnishing of their remote office. The University will not supply furnishings for remote locations, nor relocate campus furnishings. Having an appropriate ergonomic set-up is a key consideration for remote working. For information on setting up your home office, review the [Ergonomic Self-Assessment Guide \(PDF\)](#)

Wellness

Staying connected with your team is crucial during Flexible Work Arrangements to avoid feeling isolated. Regular virtual connections are recommended and will be required by your manager/supervisor/dean/chair on a regular basis. The University is using MS Teams for online and virtual meetings and employees must have this platform working in their remote office.

Although this flexible arrangement may be requested by the employee, all team members should be aware of the supports available to them, including our Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP). For more information on this program, please visit the HR site on THE MSVU intranet.

Income Tax

The Employee may qualify for programs under Canada Revenue Agency guidelines. Although the Mount may provide a T2200 form, it does not guarantee the Employee that their external office expenses will be deductible for income tax purposes. The University makes no representation in this regard. Canada Revenue Agency has established a number of tests which must be met and forms which must be completed in order for these expenses to be claimed. It is the responsibility of the Employee to ensure that these tests are met and that these forms are requested from payroll and submitted. The Employee is advised to seek professional guidance with respect to all matters pertaining to income taxes.