



PROPOSAL FOR HYBRID WORKING ARRANGEMENTS AIMED AT PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT STAFF

1. BACKGROUND

The Human Capital Management (HCM) Division was tasked to review Flexible Working Arrangements/Practices (FWAs) and more specifically, a Hybrid Working Arrangement (HWA), to be piloted within the support working domains. The University has a diverse workforce comprising academic, professional support and support divisions, providing various services ranging from the front line to the back office, including in-person contact services. For this reason, the MEC, during November 2021, commissioned an approach for consideration for Professional and academic support staff. This was also motivated by the COVID 19 staff survey. There are already FWAs and HWA's within the academic environment, however, the MEC requested that we explore possibilities of remote work given the performance by support staff during COVID 19.

Considering that the University of Johannesburg (UJ) is a vibrant, contact and residential university requiring intense collaboration and in-person interaction between students, staff, faculties and support divisions, any proposal must be considered in terms of this operational requirement.

2. UJ PROPOSED FWA PROPOSAL AND APPLICABLE PROCEDURE

2.1 Scope of proposal

The proposal and procedure apply to all full-time, fixed term and temporary staff members whose nature of work is applicable and relevant for HWA's. As such, for work categories or occupational groupings which required work performance to be 'On Campus', 5 days a week working arrangements will remain unchanged.

2.1 Definition of Terms

In this proposal:

"Hybrid Working Arrangements (HWA's)- Allows that an eligible employee may apply to perform work remotely one (1) day a week and no more than four (4) days per month.

'Employees'- means all permanent support, professional support and fixed-term employees who have been in the employ of the University for a continuous period of 12 months or longer and that:

a) are not regarded as an essential worker; and

- b) have duties and responsibilities that can be performed remotely without diminishing or disrupting the deliverables, quality of the work or productivity of the employee or a team.

'Remote work' – means an eligible employee that can apply via the Oracle system (to perform work remotely and who have demonstrated that they have:

- a) the ability to work independently;
- b) consistently high levels of productivity;
- c) strong problem-solving capabilities;
- d) strong organisational skills,
- e) effective communication skills;
- f) ability to work within timelines and meet deadlines;
- g) ability to work efficiently in an informal, non-office environment;
- h) ability to perform work remotely between the core hours; and
- i) 'Tools of the trade' to work remotely and who will not be reimbursed for home office equipment or services such as network and data requirements and suitable and free from interruptions.

'Injuries' means the University is not responsible for injuries incurred from working remotely, which is not in the course of employment as directed by The University and in line with this proposal.

'Off-campus' means a place that would ordinarily be an employee's residence and must be specified and confirmed during the application process.

3. PRINCIPLES

- b) a) The HWA is not an employee benefit; it is a management prerogative that provides an alternative means of fulfilling work requirements. HWA's can be revoked at the discretion of management
- c) Employees in HWA's will still be expected to work the required hours per their employment contract, whether 'On Campus' or 'Off Campus'.
- d) If an employee has a scheduled meeting/other commitment during their 'off campus' working day that requires the employee to be on campus, they would be required to attend such if needed.
- e) UJ will not support any related cost and/or equipment of HWA's.
- f) Some jobs are unsuitable for HWA's, which means that some employees, especially those delivering a direct service, due to the nature of their work or shift work, will not be considered for HWA's.
- g) Ensure there is no discrimination or prejudice/favoritism when applying this proposal.
- h) 'On-campus' means per the UJ's conditions of services, including individual employment contracts where work is ordinarily performed.
- i) Normal leave provisions will apply – for example, if an employee is sick when not on campus, sick leave must be submitted via Oracle Employee Self-Service.
- j) Consecutive HWA's will not be allowed from one week to the other. By means of an example, an employee will not be allowed to be perform remote work on a Friday and then again on the Monday of the following week.

k) HWA's cannot be accrued from one month to the other

l) At least 60% of employees are required to be on Campus at any given point in time, which could be changed as per the operational requirements of the unit

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Head of Department/Line Manager

The Head of Department or line manager is best positioned to understand the dynamics of their environment and the capacity of everyone to do their job. As such, they will need to consider HWA requests whilst considering the impact on the delivery of the job and the effect on their department. The Head of Department/line manager should:

- a) Ensure that approvals are per the principles outlined above.
- b) Ensure, as appropriate, structured supervision and visibility.
- c) Ensuring timeous reporting of non-compliance
- d) Determine, if appropriate, which categories of employees can qualify to work remotely or not.

4.2 The Employee

Employees must understand that HWA's are agreed to in the mutual interest of the employee and the Institution. As such, due consideration should be given to requirements of the organisation. Employees must ensure their remote workspace is secured to ensure the safety of all university assets.

- a) Employees must report workplace incidents, injuries or illnesses during remote work.
- b) Ensure diligent execution of duties and meet performance outcomes.
- c) Ensure that the necessary tools, equipment, time, and working space to perform are available and communicate requirements within a reasonable timeframe. For example, the employee must ensure UPS or other appropriate support for loadshedding.

4.3 Human Capital Management

- a) Provide guidance and advice on best practices regarding the subject topic and other procedures.
- b) Provide assistance when non-compliances are being reported for corrective action.

5. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND SECURITY

It should be noted that FWA's increase the risk of equipment loss and, more importantly, the information stored on that equipment. Employees agree they are the sole users of the equipment, software and data provided by working remotely. Please refer to the IT user

policy for detailed information on this. All UJ confidential information held on a laptop, PC or personal mobile device is the sole property of UJ and can only be used for UJ-related business. Any breach of security and IT policies will result in disciplinary action against the employee.

6. INCOME TAX

The University is not liable for any tax implications arising from working from home arrangements. The employee is responsible for determining any income tax implications for the maintenance of a home office and consulting tax consultants for advice on this matter.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The effectiveness and impact of the policy shall be continuously monitored and evaluated by the University's custodian, HCM Division.

8. GOVERNANCE

The HCM Division undertakes the governance regarding flexible working arrangements.

- a) This policy will be varied at the discretion of the Management Executive Committee (MEC) as, if and/or when required.
- b) For this proposal, the employee's off-campus workspace is considered an extension of the University's workspace. Caveats, as indicated, in this submission remain applicable.