

Assessing Job Suitability for Flexible Work Arrangements

In order to achieve success with flexibility, work arrangements should be approved based on job suitability and performance-based work results. Not all jobs will be suitable for all types of work options and work performance varies from person to person, thus flexibility is not a one-size fits all. This is referred to as taking a 'reasonneutral' approach. When taking a reason-neutral approach, the issue of equity dissipates, and less conflict arises.

Approval of flexible work arrangements (FWA) should be based on job suitability and work performance, thus viewed as "reason neutral." FWAs require an acceptable level of performance and the ability to work independently, with minimal supervision.

Considerations to think about as you evaluate job suitability:

- Does the job require physical presence?
- Does the job provide direct services to students, patients or research subjects?
- Does the job require immediate access to University resources?
- What percentage of time does the job do/require these things?

Additional questions to consider:

- Can the work be shifted to early/late hours or a shorter work week and still meet the objectives required of the job?
- Does the job entail independent focused work?
- Can the work be shared between two people and still meet the objectives required of the job?
- Can some or all of the tasks/job responsibilities be done from an offsite location and still meet the objectives required by the job?

While working flexibly may require that we think about work in new ways, customer service levels should remain the same or be better than they are when not working flexibly. Below are some factors to keep in mind:

- Flexible work arrangements should not increase workloads for other staff.
- Phones/voicemails/emails should be responded to in the same manner/speed regardless of work location.
- Using and keeping up with technology will ensure high productivity regardless of work location today.

Regarding work performance:

- Generally speaking, all employees with satisfactory work performance should be eligible to receive some form of flexibility.
- The greater the amount of flexibility approved, the stronger one's work performance should be. This means that there is a documented history of strong work performance, the ability to work independently with little to no supervision, with strong communication and accountability.
- Employees with less than satisfactory work performance require closer supervision and help from others.
- A flexible work culture requires honest and open communication about work expectations and job performance. This communication works both ways between managers and their staff.

Questions about job suitability and work performance as it relates to flexible work arrangements should be referred to local HR support or [Central HR](#).