

# Developing Criteria for Remote Work

An initial step for leaders is to develop the criteria and process by which departmental remote work decisions will be made in alignment with UVic's working remotely principles and framework. Larger departments may wish to consider discussing unit-based criteria at a leadership team meeting to ensure equity across the department. Seeking input from your team will also ensure diverse perspectives are considered. Use the questions listed below to help you consider and develop criteria and a process that works for your unit/department.

## The Work

- What type of work must be performed on campus (maintenance, client service, labs)?
- What work requires access to equipment or materials only available on campus (lab equipment, specialized computer equipment or confidential records)?
- What meetings or collaborative activities must be onsite and which could be done online? Does the work require prescribed onsite days or a "presence with purpose" approach?
- Are there aspects of the work that require focussed concentration? Which environment is most suited to supporting this expectation?

## Service Requirements

- Is there a minimum number of people that must be on site to meet service, coverage and/or safety needs?
- Are there remote work "blackout" periods where all staff would be expected to be on campus?
- Does the unit need core operating hours or can employees flex their start and finish times? Could an employee working remotely provide extended service hours?
- How might you assess preferred client/student modes of service? (eg. do they prefer face to face or online appointments?)

## The Person

- Is the request from an employee or applicant in a hard to fill or succession-risk role? How will you address the recruitment/retention issues in a fair and equitable way?
- Are there other ways of providing flexibility to your employees outside of Remote Work? (eg. alternate start and end times, part-time work, or, where collective agreements permit, flexible schedules)
- What is the employee's ability to be self-organized and motivated? [The Employee Self Assessment](#) form can be a good conversation starter to discuss personal suitability.
- Does the employee require coaching, support or a structured environment to effectively fulfill their responsibilities? Can these supports be provided remotely?
- Does the employee have an appropriate home office environment and adequate internet coverage to do the work? See the [Home Office Safety Checklist](#).

## Clarity on ending, suspending, or delaying RWAs

- Are there circumstances when you might postpone a RWA, for example new employee orientation and training periods, or until a large project or initiative is complete?
- Will you consider RWAs during probation or trial periods? If not, can you explain why?

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- When might you suspend or modify a RWA? Examples could include some medical/health issues that make working remotely difficult or a change to operational or service requirements. (please consult your Work Life Consultant), performance improvement plans that require observation, feedback and support (please consult your HR Consultant).
- What circumstances might cause you to end a RWA before the term is complete? Examples might include performance issues, productivity concerns, lack of sufficient internet speed or suitable workspace at home, reluctance to communicate and collaborate with the team or other operational challenges.

## Team Collaboration and Connections

- Do you have team norms established to ensure clarity on methods of communication, access to expertise and equitable workload? See the [Team Norms](#) document for ideas.
- Do you know how information and knowledge flows between team members and how to support the human connections needed? What tools/technologies will you use?
- Do you have ways to recognize and celebrate accomplishments in a remote/hybrid environment? See the [Recognition Toolkit](#) for ideas.

## Fairness and Equity

- How will you communicate your criteria, request process and decision-making process to the team and ensure new staff are aware of it?
- When declining a request, document your reasons and advise the employee as soon as possible, ideally in person, to ensure they understand the decision. Consider the “fairness triangle” in your decision-making process:
  - Relational Fairness – How was the employee treated?
  - Procedural Fairness – How was the decision made?
  - Substantive Fairness – What was the outcome?

## Leadership Self-Assessment

- How might your own attitudes and preferences regarding RWA bias your approach with your team?
- Do you unconsciously or consciously privilege on campus employees or remote employees by providing more attention, opportunities and support to one group over the other?
- Are you a leader who can manage by outcomes and trust employees to do the work?
- What are your processes for assessing productivity and quality of work? Are they the same for on campus as remote employees? Do you have measurable and objective standards for performance? See the [Performance and Development Cycle](#) tools for ideas.
- How do you make yourself available to your team? Do you have regular 1-1 meetings with employees? Do you have regular team meetings?
- How will you monitor employee workload and capacity to ensure work is evenly distributed between on campus and remote employees?