

Remote Work Arrangements

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Purpose

Remote work is defined as performing regular, recurring or scheduled work from a remote location that is not an employee's normal on-campus worksite. Remote Work Arrangements (RWAs) provide employees the opportunity to work remotely on a regular basis for a fixed duration of time. RWAs will be reviewed and renewed at regular intervals. Incidental remote work on an ad hoc basis will not normally require a formal RWA.

Approach

The University of Victoria has adopted a principle-based approach, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach to working remotely. Each unit or department leader will establish criteria for remote work based on the operational needs of their workplace and UVic's remote work principles and framework. Specific workplace agreements will be created for each request that address the needs of the department and individual and support the success of the RWA.

Eligibility

Any employee may request a RWA. The approval is at the discretion of the departmental supervisor or manager. Having experienced a variety of remote work scenarios at UVic, we know that in many cases working remotely can benefit both the employee and the university. We also learned that not all roles are appropriate for remote work. Some roles that were able to work remotely during the 2020-2021 campus closure do not lend themselves well to remote work when students, staff and faculty are on campus. Student and client-facing roles and roles that require access to facilities or equipment on campus may not be suitable for remote work.

Process

Referring to the department's established criteria for remote work, and the UVic RWA principles and framework, the employee and their supervisor or manager will meet to review the remote work request. Using the conversation guides provided, they will develop specific agreements that are relevant to the context of the department, role and individual. RWAs will be for a fixed duration, are reviewed regularly, and may be cancelled by either party with reasonable notice (normally 30 days). Decisions are at the sole discretion of the manager/supervisor and will not be made in a manner that is arbitrary, discriminatory or in bad faith. Disagreements related to remote work requests may be reviewed by the senior Management Excluded leader in the faculty, program or division (Dean, Director or higher).

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REMOTE WORK ARRANGMENT (RWA) PRINCIPLES

<p>RWAs support organizational effectiveness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and client service, team effectiveness and operational needs will be the primary considerations for establishing RWAs. • All RWAs will be considered temporary and have an end date that may be renewed based on regular review. • A RWA can be extended, amended, suspended or withdrawn by either party with appropriate notice (normally 30 days but may vary due to circumstances). • Staff participating in RWAs will be required to give up dedicated on-campus office space and be assigned to on-campus space that has been configured for part-time use.
<p>RWAs build engagement and satisfaction through trust and flexibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle-based RWAs require trust, sound judgement and flexibility to create arrangements that work in each circumstance. • RWAs require a supervisory approach that is outcome based, with performance expectations, conduct and understanding of work output, standards and communication clearly stated up front, allowing for less day-to-day oversight. • A formal RWA is only required for ongoing or regularly scheduled arrangements. Incidental or ad hoc remote work will be at the discretion of the supervisor.
<p>RWAs are voluntary, with shared responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWAs will normally be initiated by employees who can demonstrate their request is consistent with these principles and the remote work framework. Departments may initiate a call for volunteers for RWAs to address operational needs such as office space constraints. • Employees are responsible for setting up an appropriate and ergonomic workspace at home and for providing adequate internet connectivity. The employer may provide office furnishings if the employee does not retain a dedicated workspace on campus and the remote work location is considered the employee's primary work location (4 days a week or more). • The employer will provide computer equipment required for the work, some or all of which may need to be transferred to and from the remote work location. • Employees will commit to effectively utilizing UVic supported collaboration technology. • Employees are responsible for ensuring appropriate dependent care is in place, as RWAs are not a substitute for dependent care obligations.
<p>RWAs consider equity, but not necessarily equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all roles are appropriate for remote work. • Not all individuals (even those in the same role) may be equally suited to remote work. An objective assessment will assist individuals and supervisors to determine suitability. • Not all departments are equally able to support remote work, even with similar roles. • While every effort will be made to consider RWA requests in a fair and equitable manner across the institution, each decision must consider the unique circumstances of the role, individual, team and department context.
<p>RWAs maintain connection and collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UVic seeks to provide a vibrant on-campus experience and responsive suite of services for our students. Connections to campus, students, clients and colleagues are necessary to some degree in all roles and will be considered in RWA approval. • Employees engaged in RWAs are expected to attend campus as required and may need to adjust their RWA schedule to do so. Supervisors will provide as much notice as possible. • Long distance RWAs will only be considered exceptional circumstances on a temporary basis and are limited to Canadian locations. • Consideration of employee health, safety and well-being is important for all employees. Both supervisors and employees have a responsibility to stay connected, to identify issues and to access appropriate resources when needed.

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REMOTE WORK FRAMEWORK

While UVic's principle-based approach recognizes that decisions about the appropriateness of remote work and the specific agreements for each RWA are best determined at the departmental level, the following framework provides some scope and guidance for all RWAs at UVic:

Location of Work

- The remote work location will normally be the employee's home unless a different location is specified and agreed upon. Employees will maintain their [UVic employee profile](#) with their current home address and emergency contacts.
- Mileage, parking or transit fees will not be reimbursed when an employee is required to attend work at the university.
- Long distance remote work (locations that exceed commuting distance) will only be considered in exceptional and temporary circumstances.

Terms and Conditions, Policies and Guidelines

- RWAs do not alter the terms and conditions of employment. Job descriptions, hours of work, collective agreements and other employment terms and conditions continue to apply.
- Relevant workplace policies, guidelines and legislation continue to apply.

Hours of Work and Scheduling

- A RWA does not alter the assigned workload, and employees are accountable for fulfilling their normal hours of work per week. An alternate form of scheduling such as earned time off or compressed workweeks may be implemented as outlined in the appropriate collective agreement.
- RWAs may include non-standard work schedules but must consider the need for employee availability and accessibility during normal office hours.
- Employees working remotely must ensure they remain free from personal distractions or interruptions during their regular hours. Working remotely is not a substitute for dependent care or other personal obligations.

Performance

- A RWA should not impede an employee's ability to meet performance expectations and complete regular work functions and duties, including communicating with colleagues and supervisors, providing client/student service and remaining current on departmental and operational issues and updates.

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- The normal [Performance and Development Cycle](#) process continues during a RWA including setting goals, regular check-in conversations and a periodic review process.

Health and Safety

- Employees working remotely continue to have access to applicable sick leave provisions when they are unable to work due to illness.
- Employees with approved RWAs are covered for injuries that arise out of and in the course of employment, and compensation will be limited to the designated remote workspace within their home or other agreed upon work location. If an employee suffers an injury while in their designated remote workspace, they should immediately seek assistance, report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible and document the incident on the UVic report form available from [OHSE](#), including any [WorkSafeBC claim forms](#), if applicable.

Office Furniture, Computer Equipment and Expenses

- The employee will establish an appropriate, professional workspace free from personal distractions and interruptions. Workspaces should be ergonomically optimized with proper furnishings and adequate space that supports working efficiently and safely. UVic will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's remote workspace such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the space. UVic assumes no responsibility for any damage to, or loss of, an employee's personal property. When the employee does not retain a dedicated on-campus workspace and the remote location is considered the primary work location (4 days a week or more), UVic may provide office furnishings.
- Computer equipment used in remote locations will be UVic standard computers available through the [Technology Solutions Centre](#) that are managed by appropriate UVic personnel (e.g. University Systems Desktop Support Services) and utilize the UVic Virtual Private Network (VPN) service at all times. UVic-supplied computers will include all required peripherals, e.g. monitors, keyboard and mice. If an employee wishes to supply their own peripherals, the supervisor must approve the connection of personal peripherals to UVic computers based on advice from University Systems or their IT support personnel. Note that the university will not provide any support for personal peripherals.
- University Systems offers a software version of campus VoIP phones that can be used remotely. Individuals who have an existing campus VoIP phone and local can use this service at no additional charge. Request this service via the Buy Now link under the Cisco Jabber Softphone section of the following site: <https://www.uvic.ca/systems/support/computerssoftware/technologysolutions/phones.php> If you have University Systems Desktop Support Services, contact your DSS support person for assistance.

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- Equipment supplied by UVic will be maintained by the university and is subject to all applicable rules, policies and practices relating to use of equipment. Employees must take reasonable steps to protect any university property from theft, damage or misuse.
- While UVic's [Acceptable Use Policy \(IM7200\)](#) allows "incidental personal use" of university information resource, university computers supplied for remote work are not meant to replace personal computers.
- Employees working on a part-time or ad hoc arrangement must ensure they take the appropriate equipment to and from the office each day as necessary for their work.
- The employee must provide internet connectivity that functions consistently with sufficient bandwidth so that the employee can work effectively and meet the expectations of the role.
- Employees must comply with UVic's [Information Security](#) policies and procedures, guidelines and best practices, including without limitation software updates, anti-virus software and scanning, password protection, file sharing and downloads and locking the computer when not in use.
- The employer will continue to supply materials and supplies that are normally available in the workplace such as office supplies and basic supplies required to perform the work. Printers and toner will not be provided as any printing should be done on campus.
- The employee is responsible for obtaining and maintaining adequate home insurance and to consult with their insurer on any insurance implications due to their remote work arrangement.