Flexible Work Arrangements Guiding Principles

Policy Mission and Vision:
- The Flexible Work Arrangement Policy supports the University of Guelph's mission to Improve Life. This policy aims to balance providing a vibrant on campus presence and experience for students, staff and faculty, with an enriched work experience where team members collaborate both on campus and remotely.

Guiding Principles:
- **Supports organizational mission and operational requirements.** Uphold university priorities and long-range vision and aligns with university/business unit needs, meets or exceeds identified service standards, and staffing plans consider the potential impact on internal and external stakeholders.
- **Prioritize the student experience**. Student success and the quality of their experience, teaching, and research will be at the center of all flexible work decisions.
- **Diversity and culture.** Foster a diverse and inclusive culture that enables us to be agile, expand our talent pool, retain talent and further our position as a reputable and leading employer of choice.
- **Maintain connection and collaboration:** Regular on-campus presence, in-person collaboration, and community building will continue to be a central part of working at the University of Guelph. Units will implement creative and forward-thinking solutions to foster community and collaboration in a hybrid environment.
- **Creativity.** Commit to developing creative solutions/approaches that evolve over time to engage our distributed workforce and community.
- **Employee experience.** Address the unique needs and challenges of our workforce by providing a consistent framework for varied flexible work arrangements and employee preference, where possible.
- **Infrastructure.** Leverage University-wide technology, modes of communication, and new approaches to physical space that allow for flexibility, organizational alignment, efficiency, and safety.
- **Training and support.** Provide guidance and development opportunities to strengthen our ability to evolve, lead, and operate in a distributed environment.

The University environment thrives on collegial collaboration, which leads to innovation and creativity and provides an environment where relationships can be fostered. All stakeholders should experience the values that enable the vision through each service and program.

Implementation Process:
- Flexible Work Arrangements are driven by <u>employee request and manager/director approval</u> and are to be reviewed regularly (at least annually).
- When a request for a Flexible Work Arrangement is received the manager/director and employee discuss the number of days (not exceeding two (2) days per week) working remotely and determine the number of days based on what works best for the stakeholders, operational requirements, and employee preference, when possible, consistent with the principles foundational to this policy. Consideration will be given to requests from other employees within the work unit, with the goal of achieving fairness in decision making while meeting the need to have **all** units staffed during **all** working hours during the week (five (5)

days per week). Personal safety of employees/students/faculty is a priority in deciding upon these requests.

- All units/departments must *normally* be staffed at least 75% occupancy, with the exception of prime vacation periods, i.e., July & August.
- It is expected if a staff member is on a Flexible Work Arrangement, they are able to support the work of their team if/when members are sick or additional onsite presence is required from time to time.
- Staff members on a Flexible Work Arrangement must be available to participate in 'on site' meetings. The University will not be responsible for any costs (travel, parking, etc.) incurred as a result of these meetings.
- It is expected that staff on a Flexible Work Arrangement will take their regular breaks and remain in regular contact with their team members and manager/director.
- Employees working remotely will be expected to provide their own access to a satisfactory and secure internet connection as well as office setup.
- Once agreed to and implemented, regular assessment of the arrangement needs to be undertaken particularly against service standards of stakeholders/clients/students. If the manager/director determines the Flexible Work Arrangement is compromising operations or stakeholder expectations, then upon reasonable notice (no less than two (2) weeks) to the employee the arrangement will be changed or cancelled.
- Leaders are accountable for ensuring staff awareness of the applicable health & safety policies and duties and obligations outlined within the Flexible Work Arrangements policy [LINK] when assessing requests. Leaders need to ensure appropriate staffing (no less than 75%) in their respective units/departments, considering the student experience, safety, and operational needs.

The Flexible Work Arrangement Policy is Not:
- A right for all employees. Flexible Work Arrangements take into consideration an employee's request but are approved based on operational requirements and the nature of the employee's work.
- Not all positions are suitable for Flexible Work Arrangements. Decisions will be informed by the Guiding Principles above.