

Alternate Work Arrangement Guideline

1. Purpose

Lakehead University's commitment to support its employees and be an outstanding workplace which promotes wellness involves supporting the ability to pursue work-life balance and to envision employees being productive and contributing to Lakehead's success by utilizing Alternate Work Arrangements. Lakehead believes that the organizational and operational requirements to support its students, staff, and faculty, should be at the forefront of decisions regarding all work arrangements, ensuring equity and inclusivity amongst employees while considering employee choice and student experience. Lakehead is a dynamic environment with changing operational needs that requires the ongoing flexibility of our employees, which may result in a variety of Alternate Work Arrangements across all business units.

2. Scope

Alternate Work Arrangements may be established at the request of an Employee, where such an arrangement is appropriate and would not interfere with university operations.

This guideline applies to formalized Alternate Work Arrangements that are agreed to by an Employee and the University. Unless the collective agreement or employment contract specifies otherwise, Alternate Work Arrangements do not apply to Employees who are hired on short term employment contracts of less than one (1) year and members of union groups.

All unionized employees should note that their collective agreement supersedes this procedure.

Nothing in this guideline will prevent a Department Head, or their designate, from establishing a new Alternate Work Arrangement or withdrawing a previous arrangement when filling a vacancy, where there is an operational benefit to doing so. Where a Department Head establishes such a new arrangement, in consultation with the Associate Vice President Human Resources, the terms of this guideline will also apply.

3. Eligibility:

Applying the principles outlined in this Guideline, Supervisors will determine if an Alternate Work Arrangement is operationally feasible and suitable for the position.

4. Definitions

4.01 - General Definitions

- a. **Remote Work:** Work that is performed by an Employee from an Employee's place of residence, or a designated remote location, where the Employee is not physically present at the University at any time. This is a Regular, long term work arrangement which is determined by the duties and requirements of the position and normally identified when the position is created.
- b. **Alternate Work Arrangement:** Any work arrangement that can include In-Person,

- Work from Home, Compressed Work Week or Alternate Work Hours while delivering upon their required work responsibilities.
- c. **Ad-hoc:** When an Employee requests an Alternate Work Arrangement on a one-off or occasional basis, which does not form part of their regular work schedule and is based on a particular short-term circumstance or work requirement. For the purposes of this guideline, this is an arrangement of one (1) month or less.
 - d. **Regular:** When an Employee requests an Alternate Work Arrangement on a regular basis, for a set period, as part of their regular work schedule. Any arrangement that continues beyond one (1) month is considered Regular and is required to follow the request and approval process described in this guideline.
 - e. **In-Person Work:** Work that is performed by an Employee when the Employee is physically present at the University or such other physical locations as required by the University
 - f. **Employee:** A person who performs work for wages in any capacity for the University.
 - g. **Department Head:** The person who is responsible for the entire department/faculty in which the Employee and Supervisor work within.
 - h. **Supervisor:** The person to whom the Employee reports directly to, and who has the responsibility for directing their work and managing their performance.
 - i. **University Community:** Anyone that the work unit provides services to including but not limited to students, staff and faculty or external clientele.
 - j. **Remote Worker:** An employee who is either:
 - (i) permitted to work for Lakehead University from home regularly as a part of their regularly scheduled work week for a specific period of time, or
 - (ii) holds a Position that is deemed to be permanently remote.
 - k. **Designated Home Office:** The remote workspace that the Remote Worker establishes in accordance with the Alternate Work Arrangement Guidelines and in a mutually agreed upon location with the Remote Workers Supervisor

4.02 - Types of Alternate Work Arrangements

- a. **Alternate Work Hours:** An arrangement where Employees work the standard number of hours in a workday but vary their start and end times. This could be both an Ad-hoc or a Regular arrangement
- b. **Compressed Work Week:** An arrangement where Employees work longer shifts in exchange for a reduction in the number of working days in their work cycle, on a weekly or biweekly basis. (e.g., if an Employee's regular workweek is 35 hours over five (5) days, they could work four (4) 8.75-hour days OR work nine (9) 7.75-hour days bi-weekly). The duration of a Compressed Work Week is to be outlined on the Alternate Work Hours Arrangement Agreement form.
- c. **FTE Reduced Workload (Part-time):** Reducing the number of hours worked (with salary and benefits prorated). Specifically, an employee's request to work fewer than standard full-time hours, to work fewer hours in a day or fewer days in a week, or a combination of the two. These arrangements can only be a regular arrangement. This temporary arrangement will only be approved based on Employee request for up to the requested time period and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- d. **Work from Home Arrangement:** An arrangement where an Employee has approval to perform some or all their duties and responsibilities, electronically from their Designated Home Office for one or more agreed upon days per week, for a defined period of time. This could be both an Ad-hoc or a Regular arrangement.

5 Guiding Principles:

- a. There shall be no increased labour or operational costs because of an Alternate Work Arrangement. E.g., Overtime for one Employee because of another's Compressed Work Week.
- b. Peak or critical periods when Employees are required may mean that Alternate Work Arrangements are not suitable for the work or for specific times of the year and hence may be denied during those time periods.
- c. When discussing an Alternate Work Arrangement, the work-life balance of the Employee should be considered as part of the approval process.
- d. Alternate Work Arrangements may be approved for a maximum of one (1) year duration, which may be renewed.
- e. When deciding on Alternate Work Arrangements, Employees and Supervisors should fully evaluate the role and function of the position and maintain the required service delivery of the unit.
- f. Identification of key performance outcomes for the Employee should be purposeful and established by the Supervisor through regular, clear communication.
- g. Trust and empowerment through mutual accountability between Supervisors and Employees contribute to a successful Alternate Work Arrangement.
- h. Supervisors and Employees both have a role to ensure Alternate Work Arrangements contribute to the positive functioning of their teams where principles of collaboration, inclusion and equity are demonstrated.
- i. When deciding on Regular Alternate Work Arrangements for Employees, consideration should be the operational requirements/needs, health and safety obligations, costs, and impact on co-workers, personal circumstances of the Employee and the quality of service being provided.
- j. Alternate Work Arrangements should not be used as a replacement to a leave for personal reasons, for example, Family Care Giving.

6 Considerations

**These considerations will be relevant when providing feedback on this guideline's implementation before a Policy is developed.*

Employees and Supervisors should consider the following when determining if Alternate Work Arrangements will be beneficial for their work unit.

- What did we do well over the Pandemic that we want to keep doing or improve upon?
- How do we ensure a continued transformational experience for our students, staff, faculty, and external members of the University community?
- Does the Employee have the necessary technology to perform their duties?

- Can the Employee and Supervisor be available by telephone or other electronic means throughout their designated work hours if they are working in a Designated Home Office?
- The Employee will be responsible for the costs associated with adequate Internet Services in their Designated Home Office or any other remote setting they work from other than when performing In-Person Work.
- What services worked well when delivered remotely, in-person or hybrid throughout the pandemic?
- What should we continue to offer remotely, and why?
 - Remember, just because it can be offered remotely, does not mean that is necessarily the best approach if it negatively impacts the student experience or the service delivery.
 - Who does the Employee primarily provide service to, and how are their services advertised?
- What services are required on campus, and why?
 - Remember, just because a service was previously offered only on campus, does not mean it always needs to be.
- What impact do our decisions have on our internal processes and technology requirements?
 - How do Remote Work Arrangements impact the workload of the Technology Services Centre?
 - Do the health and safety personnel in the Office of Human Resources need to be informed?
- What impact does our decisions have on other Employees doing similar work?
- How do we ensure equity, diversity and inclusion remain central to our decision making on our service delivery model?
- Who do we need to communicate our future service delivery approach to (which members of the University Community) and through what channels?

7. Procedures

General

1. All Alternate Work Arrangements shall be in alignment with any applicable legislation, including the WSIB Insurance costs, referenced in 7.1 (2).
2. Employees are responsible for the costs and speeds associated with adequate internet services for their own Wi-Fi or Internet service.
3. Where an Employee's primary work location is not on university premises for three (3) or more days per week on a regular basis, the Employee may no longer have a designated workspace located at the University at the discretion of the Department Head or VP.
4. No purchases of additional equipment or furniture will be provided at the

University's expense to support a Designated Home Office.

5. Employees participating in an Alternate Work Arrangement are expected to use Lakehead University's information and collaboration platforms (e.g., computer, monitor, software etc.). Use of personal equipment is not permitted.
 - i. If a role requires the access to systems that require being attached to the Lakehead network, (LUD/Colleague/ Financial systems, etc.) a Lakehead approved device vetted and prepared by TSC must be used.
 - ii. All devices should have drive encryption (there is no procedure or policy around this yet)
 - iii. Lakehead devices shall not be shared or accessed by non-Lakehead personnel
 - iv. Employees will not be provided a University issued laptop to accommodate an Alternate Work Arrangement.
6. Employees participating in an Alternate Work Arrangement must complete the Health and Safety Checklist.
7. Alternate Work Arrangements are non-transferrable. Employees who move to other positions shall not automatically continue within their approved Alternate Work Arrangement. They would need to reapply and get approval.
8. Employees may be required, as part of their Alternate Work Arrangement, to attend and work on campus on an as needed basis. Travel time and any costs associated with travel will be agreed at the beginning of the arrangements as well.
9. An Employee's participation in an Alternate Work Arrangement will be reviewed regularly and may be ended by the Supervisor, with a minimum of one (1) months' notice, due to operational requirements or outcomes not being met.

7.1. Workplace Safety Insurance Board

1. The WSIB has reaffirmed that employees and employers have the same rights and responsibilities when working from home or offsite during the COVID-19 period. However, it remains uncertain whether the WSIB will continue to insure employees that work remotely outside of the province after the pandemic.
2. The WSIB's general policy on working abroad is that any employee who is an Ontario resident, and whose usual place of employment is in Ontario, is automatically covered under the WSIB for up to six months. If an employee works outside the province of Ontario for over six months, additional coverage is required. While Lakehead University may, in its sole discretion, choose to support an application for extension of WSIB insurance, an agreement for payment regarding any additional costs will be mutually agreed upon in the Remote Work Arrangement Approval Agreement.

7.2 Requests and Approvals

1. Employees must submit an Alternate Work Arrangement Proposal / Assessment Tool outlining their desired work arrangement to their Supervisor including the rationale for the request and outlining how it will support the operational needs of the work area.
2. Requests for an Alternate Work Arrangement will be reviewed and assessed by the Supervisor based on operational requirements with the decision being communicated in writing to the Employee.
 - a. Ad-Hoc requests or any requests lasting 1 month or less will be approved by the Supervisor
 - b. Arrangements that are requested to last longer than 1 month will require approval by the Supervisor, Department Head, Department Vice President, and the Associate Vice President - HR.
 - c. The agreed upon Alternate Work Arrangement will be implemented on a mutually agreeable date, taking into consideration the Employee's request and the operational needs of the work area.
3. Where approved, the Supervisor will coordinate the signing of the Alternate Work Arrangement Agreement for the Employee. Where the request is denied, the decision and rationale will be communicated in writing to the Employee.
4. Should the request for an Alternate Work Arrangement be denied by the direct Supervisor, the Employee may request, in writing, the decision be reviewed by the Vice President of the Department, whose decision will be final.
5. An Alternate Work Arrangement Agreement must be completed for all approved Alternate Work Arrangements and signed off by the Employee, Supervisor, Department Head, Vice President, and Human Resources. Employees are not permitted to work an Alternate Work Arrangement without a current written agreement in place unless it is an Ad-Hoc request.
6. It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to ensure a current written agreement is in place for any Employee working Alternate Work Arrangements that has been reviewed by Human Resources and a copy of the agreement is in the Employee's personnel file in HR.
7. It is important for Employees to have breaks throughout their workday; therefore, they should not forgo coffee or lunch breaks to accumulate time as part of an Alternate Work Arrangement. Employees may shorten their lunch break to accumulate time, however a minimum unpaid lunch break of thirty (30) minutes is required for Employees working shifts more than five (5) hours.
8. Scheduled hours in a day cannot be greater than twelve (12). Where unforeseen circumstances arise, ESA conditions will continue to apply.
9. Overtime for Employees participating in an Alternate Work Arrangement will be calculated and payable as outlined in the Alternate Work Arrangement agreement

and in accordance with the collective agreement or HR overtime procedure, whichever applies. All overtime needs to be pre-approved before being worked.

10. Either party to an individual Alternate Work Arrangement agreement may cancel the agreement with one (1) month' written notice.

7.3 Exceptions to the Procedure

Exceptions to this procedure must be documented and formally approved by the VP in consultation with the Associate Vice President HR. Procedure exceptions must include:

- The nature of the exception
- A reasonable explanation for why the procedure exception is required
- Confirmation that the exception aligns with the general principles
- Any risks created by the procedure exception and how they will be managed.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1. Role of Employee:

1. If the Employee wishes to participate in an Alternate Work Arrangement, they are to discuss the possibility of such an arrangement with their Supervisor. Guidance for both the Employee and Supervisor can be found in the Alternate Work Proposal / Assessment Tool. If the Alternate Work Arrangement is agreed upon, the Employee and Supervisor will document the agreement using the Alternate Work Arrangement Agreement available with HR.
2. Employees are responsible for ensuring their Designated Home Office is safe and are required to complete a Health and Safety checklist for their Designated Home Office.
3. Employees will notify their Supervisor if unable to perform their work due to illness or injury, technology failure or any other unforeseen circumstance. Normal attendance reporting and any applicable overtime provisions will continue to apply for Alternate Work Arrangements.
4. If a work-related incident occurs, resulting in an injury to the Employee, while performing work at their Designated Home Office as an approved component to an Alternate Work Arrangement, they will immediately inform their Supervisor and follow all Lakehead University Health and Safety procedures.
5. Employees must ensure they maintain confidentiality of Lakehead University information and abide by all Lakehead University IT policies and procedures. Employees working off campus must secure and protect Lakehead University information in electronic and physical formats and store documents in an appropriate location not accessible to family members or visitors.
6. Employees are responsible for any additional costs associated with an Alternate Work Arrangement, including the costs associated with adequate Internet Services.

8.2. Role of Supervisors

1. Supervisors should familiarise themselves with these guidelines and specifically understand the difference between Ad-Hoc and Regular arrangements. When required, they may seek guidance from Human Resources.
2. Requests from Employees for Alternate Work Arrangements will receive fair and reasonable consideration and may be approved initially on a temporary basis to allow for both the Employee and the Supervisor to determine if they are meeting operational requirements, while meeting the Employee's need for work-life balance.
3. Supervisors will evaluate the suitability of the position for an Alternate Work Arrangement based on the role and function of the work, including the collective outcomes that need to be achieved by their teams.
4. Supervisors will discuss with the VP responsible for the department and communicate their decision regarding the Alternate Work Arrangement to the Employee and where approved, work with the Employee to complete the Alternate Work Arrangement Agreement form.
5. Supervisors will review Alternate Work Arrangement Agreements with the Employee regularly to ensure outcomes are being met. Where they are not being met, the Supervisor will work with the Employee to determine whether modifications to the Alternate Work Arrangements need to be made.
6. Supervisors will evaluate the impacts and practical considerations of an Employee(s) engaged in an Alternate Work Arrangement and communicate any operational changes to the Employee and their other members of the Employees' team.

8.3. Role of Human Resources

Human Resources shall provide support and consultation to Supervisors so that Alternate Work Arrangements foster positive employee morale, employee engagement and workplace culture and are in alignment with Lakehead's core values.

1. Human Resources provides support to ensure Lakehead University remains compliant with applicable provisions of Unions' respective Collective Agreements and current Provincial, Federal laws and/or applicable Employment Standards.
2. Human Resources provides support to Employees and Supervisors regarding strategies and options to both request and approve Alternate Work Arrangements.
3. Human Resources will be involved in the approval process for each Alternate Work Arrangement proposal to determine if there are any operational implications within their unit and beyond that may come with each request.