

Working from Home - Due to Unprecedented Events

We are operating in often extraordinary and uncertain times such as extreme weather events, COVID 19 pandemic, that require flexibility and cooperation from all staff in order to uphold Otago Polytechnic Business Division values, retain as much of a normal work life as we can, and ensure we are meeting health and other obligations.

The following arrangements apply in relation to working from home, as approved or due to unprecedented local or nation-wide events.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with Otago Polytechnic Flexible Working Arrangements Policy.

Overall expectations Due to Unprecedented Events or if a Flexible Working Application has been approved.

Otago Polytechnic Business Division expects all staff who are working from home to be fully deployed during that time. That means that staff must have an agreed plan with their Formal Leader about what work will be undertaken while working from home. This includes regular work, training and development, projects, and non-routine work, and preparing for online learning delivery.

Any arrangements made for staff to work from home should be considered temporary (noting permanent working from home arrangements are not normally approved) and in no way should be assumed to form a permanent change in a staff member's working arrangements, nor a change in Otago Polytechnic's regular operating environment. OP will not be providing any allowances or paying any additional costs to staff members working from home.

When unprecedented circumstances such as COVID-19 are deemed to be over, and once instructed by Otago Polytechnic Business Division, all staff working from home are expected to return to working from their usual work location, at their contracted hours, on the next business day unless otherwise agreed with their Formal Leader.

If staff need to take leave for part or all of their normal hours this must be entered into ME@op under the appropriate leave type (see below).

Scenario 1 – Staff Member requests to work from home:

When considering a request from a staff member to work from home, the following considerations need to be made, noting that permanent requests are not normally approved:

1. The reasons for the request being made. For example, personal health circumstances or family circumstances.
2. The capacity and capability of the staff member to effectively work from home. For example, if needing to teach from home, is the staff member familiar with online delivery platforms or do they require training and support? Learning and Teaching

Department is available to provide support and training.

Staff members should discuss their request with their Formal Leader and negotiate the work plan for the period working from home. In addition to regular duties, alternative duties such as undertaking professional development and/or undertaking project or non-routine work must be considered. If after taking all of that into account, the staff member cannot work their full normal hours from home, then they will be required to take leave as follows:

- ≥70% of normal hours = paid full normal hours (no leave)
- 30% - 60% of normal hours = paid 60% of normal hours, balance paid as sick leave (log self-isolation ie COVID-19 (sick leave)).
- <30% of normal hours = not expected to work, will need to take leave (log self-isolation ie COVID-19 (sick leave)).

Staff shall continue to work their contracted hours if fit and well. If the staff member has been affected by illness (COVID-19 or otherwise), they are required to take sick leave and enter that leave into ME@OP.

Scenario 2 – Staff member is required to work from home (e.g., COVID-19 requiring self-isolation).

The staff member and their Formal Leader should negotiate a work plan for the period working from home. In addition to regular duties, alternative duties such as undertaking professional development and/or undertaking project or non-routine work must be considered.

If after taking all possible work tasks into account, the staff member cannot work their full normal hours from home, then they will be required to take leave as follows:

- ≥70% of normal hours = paid full normal hours (no leave)
- 30% - 60% of normal hours = paid 60% of normal hours, balance paid as sick leave (log Self-isolation (sick leave)).
- <30% of normal hours = not expected to work, will need to take leave (log self-isolation (sick leave)).

Staff shall continue to work their contracted hours if fit and well. If the staff member has been affected by illness (COVID-19 or otherwise), they are required to take sick leave and enter that leave into ME@OP

Scenario 3 – Staff member is required to work from home due to partial or full Otago Polytechnic Business Division closure (e.g., extreme weather event).

Unless advised otherwise, the expectation is that staff work from home. The staff member and their Formal Leader should negotiate a work plan for the period working from home. In addition to regular duties, alternative duties such as undertaking professional development and/or undertaking project or non-routine work must be considered.

If staff do not want to work, they are required to take annual leave.

Communication and Engagement Due to Unprecedented Events

1. Staff will use Teams, email or phone or other video communications where possible.
2. Staff working from home are encouraged to continue networking with other staff across the organisation during the working from home period, and Formal Leaders must consider how to ensure regular meetings can take place online.

3. Staff are expected to regularly monitor Tūhono and their email for updates, and to respond to any directive issued by their Formal Leader and the Executive Leadership Team/or equivalent.

IT and Office Equipment Due to Unprecedented Events

1. Staff should use their existing Otago Polytechnic issued technology while working from home. Staff who do not have an Otago Polytechnic -issued laptop, should utilise any personal laptop or desktop computer they have in their home. If this is not possible ISS have a small pool of laptops for staff use, where it is a priority. Your Formal Leader must make application to ISS to access this. If necessary, staff can take home their desktop computer; however, they will need to work with the Service Desk if remote access functionality has not been activated. For guidelines on how to access email, Teams, and other online tools from your personal laptop, refer to information on the COVID-19 page on the staff intranet, Tūhono.
2. Otago Polytechnic will maintain all equipment owned by Otago Polytechnic. This will include adequate antivirus protection and provision of equipment to continue working if repairs cannot be undertaken quickly. For staff using their own equipment these staff are responsible for maintenance of their own equipment and must ensure it is functional and serviceable to enable them to carry out their work.
3. Otago Polytechnic Business Division will not provide printers or other office supplies for staff who need to work from home or reimburse staff who purchase those items personally. Reasonable amounts of basic office stationery (notebooks, pens) may be taken home from Otago Polytechnic Business Division by staff who need to work from home.
4. Otago Polytechnic Business Division will not pay for, or reimburse, any costs associated with the provision of internet to staff member's homes. If staff members do not have internet at all at their homes, they should raise this with their Formal Leader.

Health and Safety Due to Unprecedented Events.

1. Staff working from home are required to ensure that hazards and risks are managed. Please review and follow the guidelines on Tūhono.
2. Any health and safety issues that arise while staff are working from home must be reported immediately using the normal process via Vault.
3. Staff members working remotely are responsible for ensuring that they are not working excessive hours and continue to take regular breaks.

Please contact People and Culture via PeopleandCulture@op.ac.nz if you have any questions.