

**Remote Work- Temporary Policy to Address COVID-19**

**Effective March 18, 2020 until Further Notice**

**POLICY STATEMENTS**

The University of New England’s leadership continues to monitor developments regarding the coronavirus and associated illness known as COVID-19. In an effort to continue operations and address the needs of our employees during the pandemic, UNE is instituting this temporary policy on remote work for eligible employees. This policy may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of UNE, and shall be discontinued when the acute pandemic risk is determined to have diminished. This policy is administered by the Office of Human Resources.

Yesterday, the federal government recommended that employees work from home when practicable. Remote work can be helpful in urgent situations, allowing for continuity of operations while helping employees balance their responsibilities to their families and the health of the community. Please keep in mind that working from home does not lend itself to certain positions. This guide outlines key considerations, best practices, and University guidance specific to COVID-19 remote work.

Please note that this plan will be effective beginning, March 18, 2020, until further notice.

**Remote Work Agreements and Expectations**: Due to the fast pace of evolving health regulations and the anticipated wide use of remote work, employees and managers requesting flexible or remote work arrangements are now required to complete the University’s updated Temporary COVID-19 Remote Work Plan. This will be necessary in outlining expectations and expected productivity in order to ensure work is still continuing to be completed while remote.

**Determining Eligibility:** Work with your direct manager/supervisor to evaluate the responsibilities and priorities of your position, keeping in mind the feasibility of completing some or all of your work remotely with or without adjustment. Any employee working from home is expected to work their typical workload. There will be employees who cannot adequately perform their full functions from home and/or who need to be physically at work for some critical function. Those employees are encouraged to come to work to support their department (see work spaces below). As per the HR Policy regarding Telework/Flexwork, employees who are required to physically be at work can still petition to work remotely under certain conditions as defined in existing HR policy and approval form. Those employees should work with their manager and Human Resources to determine the best approach possible to meet the needs of individual situations, if possible.

**Communication:** Discuss with your direct manager/supervisor how your time and performance will be managed and what tools will be needed to continue to keep the lines of communication open. Communicate regularly with your manager regarding your work priorities, deliverables, and timelines.

**Technology:** At minimum, employees will need a computer, internet, and phone access. If you have not done so already, please communicate with your manager regarding what type of access you will need while working remotely. If you do not have a University-issued laptop, but have a personally owned computer/laptop, you may use this for any general computing tasks, projects, or research opportunities that do not require you to access the University of New England’s business network through a VPN connection. Approved work includes working within, for example, locally installed and cloud-based Microsoft programs such as Outlook/email, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint or using online search functions (Google, Chrome, Safari, etc.) to browse and gather information. Accessing any of the available services or resources through the Okta portal are permitted except for direct connections to our Banner Administration System.

If it is determined that access to Banner, or any other internal facing system, is needed, a VPN Access Request form will need to be completed and submitted to ITS for approval. If there are questions regarding the form or your access, please contact the helpdesk at helpdesk@une.edu for assistance. Users are not permitted to install the UNE VPN client on any non-UNE issued devices.

You are responsible for following all University practices and acceptable use policies to maintain data security on your personal and University-issued devices. Speak to your internet/cell provider about your plan(s) to ensure that you will not experience any overage fees. University of New England does not cover the cost of home internet and phone and does not insure personal technology.

Information regarding available tools (Zoom, phone conference calls) and training on how to use the tools can be found on the UNE IT website <https://une1.sharepoint.com/sites/CTR>.

**Remote Work Environment and Work Spaces:** Consider whether your home environment is conducive to remote work. Factors to consider include demands of other household members, household construction, appropriate lighting, seating, and other basic conditions. Set expectations with others in your home regarding your interactions and availability. Remote work spaces should be ergonomically appropriate.

**Safety for Those Continuing to Work On-Campus:** For anyone who will continue to work on campus, the University will be working with Facilities to close off as many spaces as possible across both campuses from routine use. This will allow more efficient management of the spaces needed with regards to cleaning and maintenance with what will likely be limited professional staff in housekeeping, maintenance, and security. In general, classrooms and other communal spaces will be locked so as to reduce our active footprint since they are no longer needed for student activities.Faculty and professional staff should feel comfortable coming to work to perform their required tasks.Each unit will work with Facilities to spread employees out into nearby spaces to ensure social distancing for those faculty and professional staff who want or need to come to campus and who share office space or are in larger, open shared spaces. Please reach out to your direct manager/supervisor for more guidance if you will need to come to campus to perform work duties.

**Pay:** All non-exempt employees who work remotely when the University is open should be paid for hours worked at their regular hourly rate of pay. Overtime must be approved in advance by your direct manager/supervisor. Non-exempt employees should continue to track and submit bi-weekly timesheets per the normal Payroll guidelines. Exempt employees will receive their regular pay when working remotely. If remote responsibilities do not support full-time work then employees should use their accrued time-off. Exempt employees should indicate time-off used on their monthly leave time reports as per the normal Payroll guidelines.

**If you have any questions regarding this temporary policy or any other concerns about how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts your work life at UNE, please continue to send them to:** **HR-COVID19Questions@une.edu****.**