

# Draft Workplace Adjustments Procedure

Name of Procedure:  
Workplace Adjustments Procedure



Procedure Category:

Council       Academic       Management

## Purpose

The University of South Australia is committed to providing an accessible, inclusive work environment to enable people with disability to participate fully in all aspects of the University, including employment, free from discrimination. This Procedure outlines the process by which prospective and existing staff members with disability can request a workplace adjustment.

## 1. Scope

This Procedure applies to all prospective and existing staff members of the University of South Australia.

## 2. Definitions

2.1. **Disability** is defined in the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (DDA) in relation to a person as:

- a. total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
- b. total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- c. the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- d. the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- e. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
- f. a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- g. a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;

and includes a disability that:

- a. presently exists; or
- b. previously existed but no longer exists; or
- c. may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
- d. is imputed to a person.

2.2. [Employment Assistance Fund \(EAF\)](#) is an Australian Government initiative providing financial support to eligible people with disability who are about to start a job or who are currently working. EAF funding provides financial help to purchase work related modifications, equipment, Auslan services, and workplace assistance and support services.

2.3. **Inherent Requirements** are the tasks or activities that need to be completed to perform the requirements of a position to the required level.

- 2.4. **Staff Member** is a prospective or existing University of South Australia staff member employed by the University under its Enterprise Agreement or Collective Agreement (as amended or replaced), adjuncts, visiting academics and guest lecturers, and volunteers, whether paid or unpaid.
- 2.5. **Workplace Adjustment Request** is a form where staff members and supervisors document workplace adjustments required to reduce or eliminate barriers at work arising from disability.

### 3. Principles

The University:

- 3.1 recognises that staff members with disability are best placed to understand their individual requirements and commits to developing supports and removing barriers in partnership with staff members with disability.
- 3.2 will develop and apply workplace adjustments in circumstances where it is considered relevant, achievable, and reasonable to enable a staff member to perform the inherent requirements of their current or future position to the required level and to enable a staff member with disability to participate fully in all aspects of their employment with the University.
- 3.3 acknowledges that information regarding a staff member's disability or health status is personal and private and will respect the confidentiality of all such information in accordance with the University's [Privacy Policy](#).

### 4. Workplace Adjustments

- 4.1 Workplace adjustments are sometimes referred to as 'reasonable adjustments' and include supporting activities, assistance, or adjustments that remove or reduce barriers to enable staff members with disability to perform the inherent requirements of their position.
- 4.2 Workplace adjustments enable prospective and existing staff members to:
  - a. access equal opportunity in all areas of employment including application, selection, appointment, promotion, transfer, training and other opportunities.
  - b. effectively perform the inherent requirements of the position in which they are employed.
  - c. access equitable terms and conditions of employment.
  - d. participate in and benefit from work related facilities, programs, and events.
- 4.3 Workplace adjustments will be tailored in accordance with the requirements and circumstances of individual staff members to enable them to deliver the inherent requirements of their future or current position with the University.
- 4.4 Workplace adjustments may be temporary or permanent and are to be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and effective.
- 4.5 Workplace adjustments must be reviewed if the inherent requirements of a position change.

### 5. Types of Workplace Adjustments

- 5.1. Workplace adjustments can include, but are not limited to:
  - 5.1.1. **Physical adjustments:** modifying the workplace or workstation, and/or providing specific equipment/tools.
  - 5.1.2. **Work arrangements:** adjustments to work hours or duties such as part-time work, starting and finishing later, work location, assistance in managing workload. See [Flexible Working Arrangements procedure](#).

- 5.1.3. **Position adjustments:** modifying duties, adjusting work methods, providing additional training.
- 5.1.4. **Technological assistance:** providing new, or modifying existing, equipment and tools, for example, speech-recognition software and screen reading software.
- 5.1.5. **Providing training:** to the individual, supervisors, and coworkers, to enable the staff member to perform the requirements of the position with adjustments.
- 5.1.6. **Assessment:** relevant adjustments to assessment and selection in recruitment processes, professional development, and training.

## 6. Requesting a Workplace Adjustment

### Pre-employment

- 6.1. During the application process, applicants can self-identify that they have a disability that requires a workplace adjustment.
- 6.2. A UniSA Recruitment Central representative will contact the applicant to discuss the request for a workplace adjustment.
- 6.3. Requests for a workplace adjustment will not impact the selection panel's decision, although the panel will assess the candidate's ability to perform the inherent requirements of the position to identify the adjustments that may be required.
- 6.4. If an applicant with a disability is successfully appointed to a position, completion of a Workplace Adjustment Request will be required.

### During employment

- 6.5. Workplace adjustments can be requested at any time during the staff member's employment.
- 6.6. A request for a workplace adjustment can be made through the staff member's supervisor. Alternatively, the staff member may discuss their request for a workplace adjustment with a People, Talent and Culture team member.
- 6.7. Supervisors may seek advice from People, Talent and Culture on actioning workplace adjustment requests.
- 6.8. A [Workplace Adjustment Request](#) is completed to record relevant information and to provide a summary of what has been requested and agreed.
- 6.9. Information to be included in a request for a workplace adjustment:
  - 6.9.1. Nature of the disability.
  - 6.9.2. Proposed adjustment and/or request for a workplace assessment.
  - 6.9.3. How the requested adjustment would support the staff member.
- 6.10. Dependent on the nature of the request, evidence from a medical practitioner may be used to demonstrate to the approver that the request is reasonable.
- 6.11. If further information is required a workplace assessment may be conducted.

## 7. Decision

- 7.1. Supervisors will support the removal of barriers for staff members with disability in the workplace. The supervisor will promptly consider a request for a workplace adjustment to enable staff members with disability to work productively as soon as practicable. When responding to a request for an

adjustment, a supervisor may seek information relating to the reasonableness of the required adjustment, such as:

- 7.1.1. the benefit of the adjustment to the staff member
  - 7.1.2. any adverse impact for affected staff members
  - 7.1.3. the cost of the adjustment, or other relevant operational implications; and
  - 7.1.4. the availability of alternate sources of funding.
- 7.2. The supervisor will consider advice from People Talent and Culture in responding to a request for a workplace adjustment.
  - 7.3. The supervisor has a responsibility to consider the individual circumstances of the staff member making the request, taking account the team/work environment context of their position.
  - 7.4. Where a supervisor declines a request for a workplace adjustment, the staff member can ask to have the matter re-considered by the Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture.
  - 7.5. Supervisors will treat information relating to staff with a disability confidentially, adhering to the University's Privacy Policy.

## 8. Implementing a Workplace Adjustment

- 8.1. Once the [Workplace Adjustment Request](#) has been reviewed and approved by the supervisor, the supervisor will ensure that agreed adjustments are implemented in accordance with the approved Workplace Adjustment Request.
- 8.2. Consideration will be given as to whether there is a requirement to advise colleagues of the staff member of the adjustments to be implemented. This will be mutually agreed by staff member and supervisor before any communications progress.
- 8.3. Training requirements associated with the implementation of workplace adjustments will be considered and actioned as required.
- 8.4. Costs for workplace adjustments will be met by the prospective/existing staff member's cost centre manager.
- 8.5. Funding to implement workplace adjustments may be available through the Australian Government's **Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)**.

## 9. Review of Workplace Adjustments and Ongoing Support

- 9.1. The staff member and the supervisor will review the implementation of the workplace adjustment to ensure that the adjustment made is appropriate and effective as intended.
- 9.2. The frequency of review will depend on the nature of the adjustment, the reason for the adjustment i.e. permanent versus temporary disability, and the requirements of the position and the relevance of the work environment and context.
- 9.3. The staff member will discuss the requirement for any further workplace adjustment and/or any relevant medical information with their supervisor or a People, Talent and Culture contact in a timely manner to enable the University to respond appropriately.
- 9.4. The University's Staff member Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential, professional counselling service available to all staff. This service offers confidential, support for work-related and non-work-related matters.

## 10. Appeals

- 10.1 Where a supervisor declines a request for a workplace adjustment, the staff member can ask to have the matter re-considered by the Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture.
- 10.2 Staff are able to notify a grievance under clause 56.1 in the event they consider any outcome of a review of a decision is unfair or unreasonable.

## 11. Roles and Responsibilities

### 11.1 Staff members will:

- 11.1.1. provide relevant information relating to their disability.
- 11.1.2. work with supervisors and/or People, Talent and Culture to identify potential actions the University could consider implementing to provide a safe and inclusive workplace.
- 11.1.3. actively participate in the development and implementation of a Workplace Adjustment Request.
- 11.1.4. comply with any approved adjustments in place.
- 11.1.5. participate in a workplace assessment, if required.
- 11.1.6. notify their supervisor and/or People, Talent and Culture of any concern associated with the performance of the inherent requirements and duties of their position as soon as practicable.

### 11.2. Supervisors will:

- 11.2.1. actively seek to prevent discrimination on the grounds of disability through their actions.
- 11.2.2. discuss with staff members relevant support or assistance required to perform the inherent requirements of their position.
- 11.2.3. work with staff members to complete the Workplace Adjustment Request.
- 11.2.4. consult with People, Talent and Culture as required in the facilitation of workplace adjustments.
- 11.2.5. oversee the appropriate implementation of any approved workplace adjustments.
- 11.2.6. review and monitor the effectiveness of implemented workplace adjustments with the staff member.
- 11.2.7. maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times.

### 11.3. People, Talent and Culture will:

- 11.3.1. assist staff and supervisors to respond to and review Workplace Adjustment Requests.
- 11.3.2. provide guidance on workplace adjustments and the provision of workplace support.
- 11.3.3. work with staff members to obtain medical information, if required.

## 12. Legislation

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

*The Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)*

## 13. Related Documentation

### Parent Policy

[Staff with Disability Policy](#)

### Related Policies

[Equal Opportunity Policy \(C-2.4\)](#)

[Health Safety and Injury Management Policy](#)

[UniSA Privacy Policy](#)

### Related Procedures

[Flexible Work Arrangements Procedure](#)

### Related Forms

[Workplace Adjustment Request](#)

[Authority to Exchange Information](#)

### Supporting Resources

[Commonwealth Government Employee Assistance Fund](#)

[Employee Assistance Program](#)

[UniSA Staff Disability Support Webpage](#)

[Non-Work Related Illness/Injury \(NWRI\) Frequently Asked Questions](#)

### External Resources

[Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[Equal Opportunity Commission of SA: Training & Resources](#)

## Document history

This is a new Procedure

## Responsible Officer:

Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture

Approval and Review	Approved by	Approval Date	Review
	<i>Approval Authority</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Date for review</i>