

# Frequent Asked Questions (FAQs)

## Work Location Policy

These are Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to guide and support the Work Location Policy and completing a Work Location Request (via Staff Portal, My Staff Page).

Questions related to working from a residential worksite (such as your home)

Questions related to completing a Work Location request

Questions related to the limited work from home options within certain roles, such as client-facing roles.

Questions relating to ill-health and other needs to stay home.

Questions related specifically to academic contracts.

Questions related to National Employment Standards.

### Questions related to working from a residential worksite (eg. your home)

**QUESTION: What is the expected balance of days for working on and off campus?**

**ANSWER:** Under this policy, it is preferred that you work the majority of your days on campus and up to 40% from an alternative location, such as your home. For example, if you work full-time, this may be three days on campus and two from home. Working on campus supports a sense of teamwork and camaraderie with your colleagues as well as high-quality learning, teaching and research outcomes. This information can be recorded in the Work Location Request tile, located on the **My Staff Page (via the Staff Portal)**.



**QUESTION: Do I need to provide a reason to work from home?**

**ANSWER:** If you are requesting to work from a residential worksite, such as your home, for up to 40% of your working week you are not required to provide a reason unless the responsibilities within your position require you to work on campus, such as accepting the delivery of goods delivered to on campus stores or working in one of the laboratories.

However, your manager may ask for some information to help them balance the on and off campus arrangements of the wider team.

No medical certificate or other documented proof is required if you are requesting the standard arrangements as laid out in the Work Location Policy.

Staff need to agree that they have completed the Health and Safety assessment and training tasks as part of the [Acknowledgment](#) section within the Work Location Request tile located on the My Staff Page (includes reference to relevant training and Computer Workstation Ergonomic Checklist). Further information on how to request to work from a residential worksite is available on the Work Location website [Working from a Residential Worksite \(griffith.edu.au\)](http://griffith.edu.au).

**QUESTION: If only part of my job requires me to be on campus, can I work from home for the other responsibilities/tasks?**

**ANSWER:** If part of your job requires you to be on campus, but the rest can be completed online/remotely, you need to discuss with your manager how the Work Location Policy may apply to you. Being able to complete some tasks remotely does not always mean you can work from home, it depends upon many other factors that you and your manager need to discuss to come to an arrangement that best meets your needs and responsibilities, the needs of your team and the requirements of the organisation.

**QUESTION: How often is a work location agreement reviewed?**

**ANSWER:** Once agreed with your manager, your work location agreement should be reviewed after one year, or sooner if required or your circumstance changes at home.

You or your manager can review your existing arrangement at any time, such as if your work requirements change or productivity issues arise.

Staff need to complete the online Work Location Request annually under this Policy or if you need to adjust the current request arrangement a new request can be submitted to record any changes to the agreement. Further information on how to request to work from a residential worksite is available on the Work Location website [Working from a Residential Worksite \(griffith.edu.au\)](http://griffith.edu.au).

**QUESTION: Can I take equipment home when I work from home?**

**ANSWER:** Under this policy, staff can take home a work laptop when they request to work from an alternative location, such as their home. Staff are expected to provide any additional equipment they may need to work from their chosen alternative location successfully and safely. You will be prompted to record all University equipment within the Work Location Request (tile).

**QUESTION: Can I vary my arrangements on a week-by-week basis?**

**ANSWER:** Possibly, but this will vary across work groups. Your arrangements will need to be balanced with others' arrangements within and across teams. Consult with your manager, providing as much notice as you can to help alternative arrangements to be explored. When recording this on the Work Location request tile use the Percentage to indicate how many days per week e.g. 40% and for Remote day use the Average days per week e.g. 2 rather than choose specific days.

**QUESTION: Will I have to share my on-campus office or workspace if I work from home some days?**

**ANSWER:** So that Griffith may optimise its use of space, there may be situations where offices and workspaces need to be shared.

**QUESTION: Why do some staff have different work from home arrangements to me?**

**ANSWER:** Decisions on working from a residential worksite will be based on a diversity of considerations including the inherent requirements of the job, availability and portability of digital resources and the needs of the organisation, teams (within and across teams) and staff member. This will mean that there will be a diversity of arrangements amongst staff.

**QUESTION: What if my manager refuses my work from home request?**

**ANSWER:** The manager should discuss the reason why this cannot be accommodated and this should also be documented as part of the approval process in the “Comments” section of the Work Location Request when considering the request. If a staff member is unhappy with a decision made in respect to a request to work from a residential worksite, a genuine effort should be made to resolve the matter between the staff member and their manager. In circumstances where it is unable to be resolved, the staff member may request a review of the decision by their Head of Element.

**QUESTION: Can my manager direct me to work from home?**

**ANSWER:** The University or your manager may direct staff to work from home in response to Queensland Government public health directions or for other health and safety reasons.

Supervisors and managers should discuss and decide on appropriate alternative work arrangements for their teams with their Head of Element as per the principles outlined in the Work Location Policy.

**QUESTION: Can my manager ask me to change the days that I had organised to work from a residential worksite?**

**ANSWER:** Working remotely is a flexibility measure that may support your personal circumstances, but there may be times where the University’s circumstances may change, and in order to ensure operational requirements continue to be met, a manager may request that you change the days that you work from a residential worksite. For example you may be asked to adjust your days on a particular week/s to accommodate a planning or team development day, to support operational needs due to leave arrangements, to attend training held on campus.

**QUESTION: What happens if a staff member with a flexible arrangement transfers to another department or had an arrangement in place with their previous manager/supervisor?**

**ANSWER:** The staff member and the staff member's new manager should discuss the situation and determine if the staff member's current flexible arrangement is appropriate for the new position and work area(s). Staff need to complete a new Work Location Request located on your My Staff Page (includes reference to relevant training and Computer Workstation Ergonomic Checklist). Further information on how to request to work from a residential worksite is available on the Work Location website [Working from a Residential Worksite \(griffith.edu.au\)](http://griffith.edu.au).

**QUESTION: What if a preferred candidate would like to work from a residential worksite for some days?**

**ANSWER:** This may be negotiated by the hiring manager (in consultation with the head of organisational unit) informed by the Work Location Policy.

Staff need to complete a Work Location Request located on the My Staff Page (includes reference to relevant training and Computer Workstation Ergonomic Checklist). Further information on how to request to work from a residential worksite is available on the Work Location website [Working from a Residential Worksite \(griffith.edu.au\)](http://griffith.edu.au).

**QUESTION: I'm a manager and a staff member has not appeared as professional when working from their residential worksite. What are the expectations?**

**ANSWER:** Staff working from a residential worksite are expected to uphold usual expectations about professionalism, for example, they are dressed appropriately, they respond to phone calls and emails and are typically working as if they were on campus. When working from a residential location, we recommend that it may be appropriate to put in place a Teams background.

## Questions related to completing a Work Location request

**QUESTION: What do I need to have completed before I complete a Work Location Request?**

**ANSWER:** Under the Acknowledgement section staff agree that they have completed relevant Health and Safety training and assessed their workspace in the off campus location. Task include:

- Watched the *Workstation Ergonomics* video ( located on the [Ergonomics website](#))
- Completed the *Computer Workstation Ergonomics Checklist* (\*digital word document located on the *Ergonomic website*) and Uploaded the completed checklist in the *Attachments* section
- Made any relevant adjustments to ensure a safe and ergonomic workstation
- Setup the workstation correctly and adequately for the work performed
- Confirmed the chair is stable and able to be adjusted to provide postural support
- Ensured the IT equipment setup meets ergonomic requirements

Staff will also be asked to confirm:

- Their workspace is free from hazards including trip hazards
- Lighting and noise are at an acceptable standard at the environment
- Room temperature is appropriate for the work performed
- They understand that they have accountabilities for their own health, safety and well-being and keeping their supervisor updated with any changes to their environment

- They have discussed emergency contacts and actions for their work location with their supervisor
- Their emergency contacts are up to date (Staff portal > My staff page > About Me > Personal Details > Emergency Contacts)

NOTE: If you have moved address, check your residential address is up to date as this will show on the request when you choose “Home” as your location. To update your address go to the *About Me tile on My Staff Page*.

**Griffith Equipment:** Staff will be asked to record any University equipment that will be taken to a residential worksite; (identify asset numbers for the likes of a laptop, monitor)  
In the case of no equipment used – add N/A

**QUESTION: What do I need to Attach in my request?**

**ANSWER:** Upload your completed Ergonomics checklist in addition to any relevant photographs of the main workspace for reference under the Attachment menu option in the Request using “Add Attachment”. Staff can also use the “Add Note” option to record the end date for example as part of a particular short-term request and to add other information needed to be captured as part of the request. Supervisors will be able to see any attachment or notes added to the request as part of the request approval process. Staff will also be able to see and access these references under the request on their Work Location Tile. The Supervisor can add any comments to note about the attachment in the Supervisor Comments box when considering the request.

**QUESTION: Why is there only a start date recorded?**

**ANSWER:** Once agreed with your manager, your work location agreement should be reviewed after one year, or sooner if required or your circumstance changes at home.

When adding a request, the Start Date will indicate when the agreement begins to take effect. The 12-month review period would be based on this start date. In the case where circumstances change, and a new agreement is made staff will add a new request with add the new start date for that arrangement.

Recording an end date as part of the request was removed due to technical limitations for any flexible requests or adjustments during the approved requested period.

**QUESTION: Can I adjust my start date when I am halfway through my request?**

**ANSWER:** Unfortunately, once you have commenced the request if you need to adjust your start date or remote work type you will need to exit and delete the draft request and start a new request.

**QUESTION: Can I request to Work from Home only?**

**ANSWER:** Under this policy, it is preferred that you work the majority of your days on campus and up to 40% from an alternative location, such as your home. Most staff will choose the Hybrid (Home and Campus) option as part of the Work Location Request. Work from Home only option has been added to cover any rare and special cases or circumstances that arise e.g. disabilities, return to work cases, illness or grief, would usually be for short


periods of time as agreed and documented with Supervisor. You may need medical or other certificates as part of this request.

### QUESTION: How do I record the days I am working from home?

**ANSWER:** There are a couple of ways you can choose to record the days you are working from home.

1. Percentage field: This is a free text option so for example if working from home 1 day a week record 20%, 2 days per week 40% or you can leave this blank
2. Average days per week: type 1 or 2 or
3. Specific days per week: highlight the relevant days eg. 2 days per week shown below

Remote Days  Specific Days Per Week

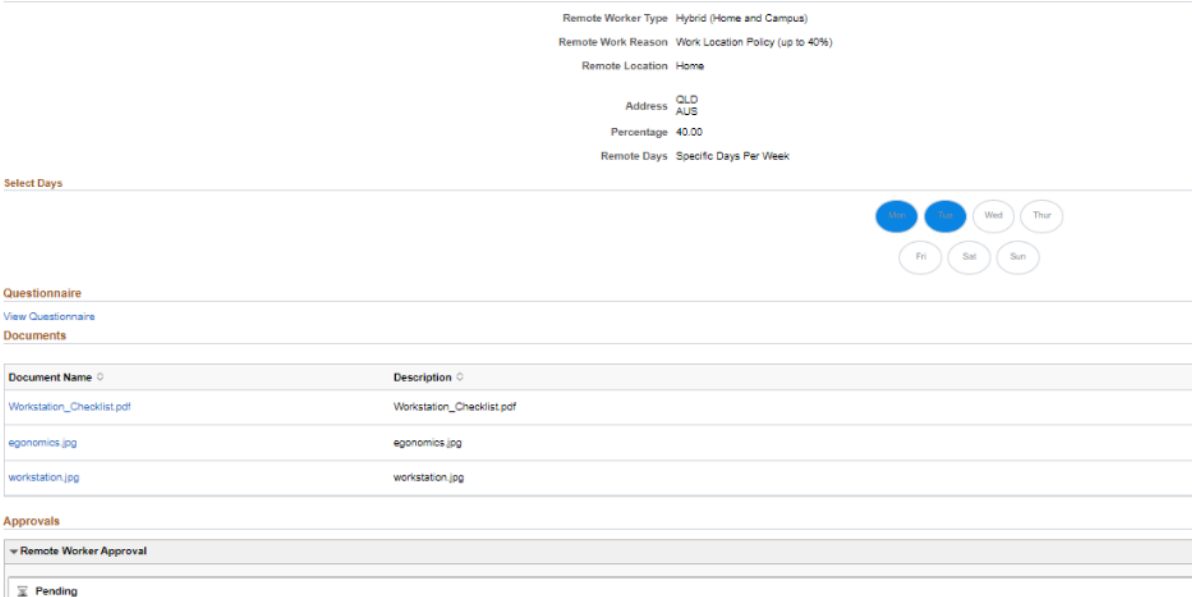


### QUESTION: Am I eligible to request Work from Home under the Fair Work Act?

**ANSWER:** Check the [Factsheet](#) to understand the specific groups who are entitled to make a request under the Act. See the [National Employment Standards](#) Questions and answers below.

### QUESTION: Where do I go to view the staff members request and attachments?

**ANSWER:** When a request is opened you can use the View Questionnaire to see the details of the request. Under the Documents areas you will be able to open up any attachment that have been added. See Screen shot below:



The screenshot displays a web interface for managing a request. It is divided into several sections:

- Details:** Shows fields for Remote Worker Type (Hybrid (Home and Campus)), Remote Work Reason (Work Location Policy (up to 40%)), Remote Location (Home), Address (QLD, AUS), Percentage (40.00), and Remote Days (Specific Days Per Week).
- Select Days:** A circular calendar interface where Wed and Thu are selected.
- Questionnaire:** A link to view the questionnaire.
- Documents:** A table listing attached documents.
- Approvals:** A section for tracking approvals, currently showing a 'Pending' status.

Document Name	Description
Workstation_Checklist.pdf	Workstation_Checklist.pdf
ergonomics.jpg	ergonomics.jpg
workstation.jpg	workstation.jpg

### QUESTION: What are the actions a supervisor can take in considering the request?

**ANSWER:** After viewing and considering the request, the supervisor can approve the request, deny a request with comments to the staff member to why the request has been

denied or pushback the request if for example a checklist was not uploaded or the staff member needed to adjust the application after submitting it (\*while still in pending state).

Questions related to the limited work from home options within certain roles, such as client-facing roles.

**QUESTION: If my role involves activities that are campus-based, such as engaging with colleagues and or students or equipment, am I unable to work from a residential worksite?**

**ANSWER:** Some roles, due to the nature of the work involved, are typically not suitable for working from a residential worksite.

However, if you have a specific need to work from a residential worksite, contact your manager to discuss if this may be accommodated.

Questions relating to ill-health and other needs to stay home.

**QUESTION: I need to stay home due to a dependent being unwell, can I work from home?**

**ANSWER:** Working from home is not suitable for the direct care of high-need dependents. Relevant staff may be eligible for family circumstances leave or sick leave in these instances. Where the care of the dependent is not high-need (for example, the staff member is still able to work) the staff member can discuss their situation with their manager. As a general principle, when working from a residential worksite you should be able to work as if you were on campus.

**QUESTION: I am receiving a trades person, or important delivery, can I work from home?**

**ANSWER:** Possibly, depending on your role. Any arrangements will need to be balanced with the needs of your role and that of others within the team (and in other teams). Consult with your manager.

**QUESTION: Where can I find more information on workplace flexibility (broader than working location) at Griffith?**

**ANSWER:** Our [workplace flexibility](#) site outlines information on:

- formal flexibility options within our Enterprise Agreements
- parenting rooms
- parking (for example, special permits—temporary mobility and pregnancy)
- childcare and School holiday care

- leave provisions including Parental Leave; Family, Cultural Obligations, Domestic and Family Violence and Other Special Circumstances Leave.

**QUESTION: I am unwell or have tested positive for COVID, can I work from home?**

**ANSWER:** Your health and wellbeing is our priority. If you are unwell, whether with COVID or any other illness, please use your sick leave so you can rest and recover.

If you feel you are well enough to work from home, or you are COVID-positive but have no symptoms, discuss working from an alternative location with your manager to determine if it is appropriate and practical for you to do so.

## Questions related specifically to academic contracts.

**QUESTION: As an academic I have always worked flexibly, have expectations changed?**

**ANSWER:** Academic roles have always required flexibility to support research and teaching activities. This includes flexibility of work location and teaching hours (for instance, due to evening and weekend classes), however, such flexibility has not necessarily been available for professional staff. While the University is not attempting to remove an academic's work flexibility, the Work Location Policy defines a set of principles to support safe working at residential worksites in line with staff and student needs. This includes the completion of the Work Location Request, 'tile' located on your My Staff Page.

**QUESTION: Do academics need permission to work from a residential worksite?**

**ANSWER:** If an academic wishes to work from a residential worksite, or from an alternative location, they should discuss with their line manager and other relevant individuals to make them aware of proposed arrangements. In cases where an academic wants to work from a residential worksite up to 40% of a week there needs to be:

- discussion with, and approval from their manager and
- completion of the Work Location Request (tile), located on your My Staff Page.

**QUESTION: If I am unable to deliver my class face-to-face can I move my lecture online?**

**ANSWER:** Ordinarily, academics should deliver their classes as per the course profile and agreed student timetable, however, in very exceptional circumstances (such as when an academic is awaiting a COVID test) this may be possible.

Considering the impact this will have on students, an academic should seek permission from their Head of School and discuss the proposed student communication plan.

**QUESTION: Another Griffith campus is closer to my home, can I have an office at that location?**



**ANSWER:** Over the next couple of years, the University will be conducting space master planning. During this process, we will consider how to better support flexible working. At present, it is not possible to formally provide accommodation for everyone wanting to work flexibly at a location other than their primary campus. Where some elements have staff working across campuses, location arrangements, such as the provision of hot desks may be possible.

## Questions related to National Employment Standards.

**QUESTION: The Work Location Policy refers to the National Employment Standards. What are they?**

**ANSWER:** The National Employment Standards (NES) are 11 minimum employment entitlements within the Fair Work Act 2009. One of the minimum requirements of the NES is Requests for flexible working arrangements and may include options broader than working remotely or from home under this policy.

Examples of flexible working arrangements include changes to:

- hours of work (e.g. changes to start and finish times)
- patterns of work (e.g. split shifts or job sharing)
- locations of work (e.g. working from home).

Employees (other than a casual employee) who have worked with the same employer for at least 12 months can request flexible working arrangements if they:

- are the parent, or have responsibility for the care, of a child who is school aged or younger
- are a carer (under the Carer Recognition Act 2010)
- have a disability
- are 55 or older
- are experiencing family or domestic violence, or
- provide care or support to a member of their household or immediate family who requires care and support because of family or domestic violence.

### **Requests for flexible working arrangements**

Requests for flexible working arrangements have to:

- be in writing or by completing the Work Location Request (tile) located on your My Staff Page.
- explain what changes are being asked for – use notes or attachments section in the Work Location Request (tile)
- explain the reasons for the requested change – use the notes or attachments section in the Work Location Request (tile).

## Written responses to requests

All managers/employers who receive a request written/email or via the Work Location Request (tile) must provide a written response (Under the “**Comment**” section in the Supervisor Approval screens) within 21 days which outlines whether the request is approved or refused. Employers can only refuse a request on reasonable business grounds.

If a request is refused the written response must include the reasons for the refusal.

### What are reasonable business grounds?

Reasonable business grounds can include:

- the requested arrangements are too costly
- other employees' working arrangements can't be changed to accommodate the request
- It is impractical to change other employees' working arrangements or hire new employees to accommodate the request
- the request would result in a significant loss of productivity or have a significant negative impact on customer service.

Supervisors need to document the reasons in the “Comments” section of a Work Location Request as part of the considerations and approval process.



(Source: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/flexibility-in-the-workplace/flexible-workingarrangements> ).