



Flex@X Frequently Asked Questions for Employees

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Flex@X Overview

What is Flex@X?

StFX is committed to providing a safe, inclusive workplace environment for all employees. Where appropriate, this can include opportunities for flexible scheduling and hybrid work arrangements. Flex@X and the Flexible Work Policy govern the University's flexible work arrangement programs.

Flex@X provides employees the opportunity to request a flexible work arrangement while maintaining the necessary level of productivity, engagement and performance required by the University.

Requests are formalized through a Flex@X Agreement and are subject to the Flexible Work Policy.

What are the most common reasons for opting for a Flex@X arrangement?

There are many reasons why Flex@X would work for departments and employees. Primarily, the program provides flexibility which benefits the employee. However, a department may want to extend hours to provide better service, allow employees to better manage personal responsibilities and schedules, reduce the number of days employees are in the office, match employee work hours to peak times and increase opportunities for cross-training.

What should employees consider before requesting a Flex@X arrangement?

Employees should:

1. Review the Flex@X frequently asked questions and guidelines which detail eligibility criteria, options and considerations to ensure they have an understanding of the program;
2. Discuss Flex@X with their manager/supervisor; and,
3. If applying for a Hybrid arrangement, review and complete the Flex@X Hybrid Work Self-Assessment.

Do I need a Flex@X arrangement if I'm travelling for work (e.g. site visits, conferences)?

Employees may be required to travel or work on behalf of the University at remote locations to attend conferences and other work-related events. These activities are not considered Remote Work Arrangements and are not covered by Flex@X.

Flex@X: Eligibility

My employee group is not listed on the Flex@X Application Form. Am I eligible to participate?

No, not at this time. Flex@X is only open to Administrative (NSGEU) and Managerial and Professional Employees. The Flex@X program may be extended to other employee groups in the future and announcements will be made.

Can I work from home once in a while without a formal Flex@X agreement?

Yes, Flex@X is intended to formalize longer term arrangements, not occasional or ad hoc situations. It is recommended that you address occasional work from home requests directly with your manager/supervisor.



Can I use a Flex@X arrangement in place of a medical accommodation?

No. Flex@X arrangements are not a replacement for a formal accommodation. Employees requiring medical accommodation should contact People and Culture.

Can I request a Flex@X arrangement because I am unable to secure childcare?

No. A Flex@X arrangement should not be used as a solution for personal needs including dependent care or other personal responsibilities. Employees will need to acknowledge that arrangements are in place for dependent care and other personal and family responsibilities during work hours.

Requests for accommodation related to family status or other protected grounds will be addressed through other processes. Employees who require family status accommodation should contact Human Rights and Equity.

Can a request for a Flex@X arrangement for the same position in different departments be handled differently? Can one be approved and the other denied?

Yes. Since every job, employee and situation are different, it cannot be assumed that the same decision is appropriate for two similar positions. Managers/supervisors know the operations of their department best and are responsible for final decisions on how work gets accomplished. Managers/supervisors have the authority to say “yes” or “no” to a Flex@X arrangement or to postpone consideration to another time. However, these requests cannot be unreasonably denied. This is intended to be a collaborative process while ensuring the University’s mission is still achieved.

Flex@X Agreement

My manager/supervisor has advised me that I need to work on campus and I want to work from home. Can I work from home?

No, if you are requested to work on campus by your manager/supervisor, you must do so unless you have been approved for a medical accommodation.

What should I do if my request is declined but I feel the reasons are not consistent with the Policy?

The first step is to have a discussion with your manager/supervisor to clearly understand the decision from their perspective. If you are not in agreement with the response, you can discuss it with your People and Culture Advisor to try and find a solution.

You can file a formal appeal of a denial to People and Culture within five (5) working days.

I have an approved Flex@X arrangement and it is not working for me. Can I end the arrangement?

Yes. The Flex@X arrangement may be terminated at any time. The specific provisions regarding termination are included in your Flex@X agreement.



I have an approved Flex@X arrangement and I am transferring to another job at the University. I have been told that I cannot continue the Flex@X arrangement in my new job. Why not?

Flex@X arrangements are not guaranteed to continue if an employee changes jobs or moves to a different department. A new Flex@X arrangement would need to be created for the new position and may differ from the prior agreement.

I have an existing flexible work arrangement approved before the Flexible Work Policy was effective. Can that continue?

All flexible work arrangements in place as of the effective date of the policy will automatically end as of March 31, 2025. You are required to reapply for the flexible work arrangement under the Flex@X program.

Flex@X Conditions

Does the process for requesting vacation, personal time or other leaves change on a Flex@X agreement?

No, you will still request leaves through the normal processes.

Employees on a modified schedule should refer to the question “I work a modified schedule. What happens to my vacation and other leave entitlements?” in the Flex Time (Modified Schedule) section below.

Does a Flex@X agreement mean I am not eligible for overtime?

Eligibility for overtime is not impacted by a Flex@X agreement. All overtime must be approved by the manager/supervisor in advance and tracked in the UKG Pro system.

What happens if a meeting, training session or important event is scheduled when outside of my modified schedule or when I’m working from home?

It is important to remember that the work of the university and the department must not suffer because of employees utilizing Flex@X arrangements. There will be meetings or events that cannot be scheduled around your alternative schedule. The employee and the manager/supervisor would need to discuss and determine how this will be handled.

Does a Flex@X arrangement change my other terms and conditions of employment?

No, the Flex@X arrangement only changes your work location and/or schedule as applicable. All other terms and conditions of your employment remain the same.

Although a Flex@X arrangement does not, in and of itself, amend the terms and conditions of employment, there are various changes that may need to be made for the Flex@X arrangement to be successful. Employees may need to be aware of employment terms and conditions that are more relevant or apply differently to them.



Does a Flex@X arrangement mean I am guaranteed ongoing employment?

A Flex@X agreement is not a guarantee of ongoing employment. The University retains its contractual rights, including the right to assign work, to reorganize the workplace and the work, and/or to terminate employment with or without cause pursuant to the applicable Collective Agreement, employment contract, policies and laws.

Flex@X Privacy and Confidentiality

Am I responsible for maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of information?

Yes. At the University, information that is not public must be treated as confidential. The University is subject to various requirements regarding privacy and confidentiality that arise out of legislation and policy. All such requirements must be met by the employee in respect of any electronic or hard-copy information or records outside secure University environments including those they access electronically from off campus.

Employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of information in their possession on and off campus.

Are certain types of information or materials not permitted to leave the University campus?

Yes. Employees are not permitted to take sensitive information such as medical, personnel or financial records off of University property. Electronic access to these records off campus must occur using a University-issued computer.

Cash is also not permitted to leave University property. Cash collected at an off-site activity must be returned to campus as soon as possible and should never be taken to an employee's home.

Hybrid Work: General

If I apply for a Hybrid Work Arrangement, does the schedule need to be consistent?

Yes. The application includes setting a mutually agreeable schedule outlining the days and hours that you will be working from home and on campus on a regular basis.

Am I able to set my own hours while I am working under a Hybrid Work Arrangement?

You can request a change to your hours (including requesting variable hours) when applying.

Do I have to work from home or can I work from an alternative location?

The Flex@X agreement will specify where you will normally work when not working on campus. Your manager/supervisor may agree to allow you to work temporarily at an alternative location.



Can my department implement a “standard” minimum number of in-person hours for those applying for a Hybrid Work Arrangement?

Yes. As noted, managers/supervisors can determine the minimum number of hours employees are required to be on campus. Hybrid Work Arrangements may not exceed 60% of your weekly work hours.

Do I have to be available to my manager/supervisor and colleagues while working from home?

Yes, you must be reachable by telephone, text or instant messaging, email or other agreed upon method of contact during the agreed upon hours of work to the extent you would be if you were working on campus.

What are my reporting obligations in the event of a disruption when I’m working from home?

Employees are responsible for notifying their manager/supervisor if there is a disruption (such as a power outage), equipment or connectivity malfunction. It is expected that reasonable efforts will be made by the employee to minimize work disruption.

Employees may be required to come to campus for work and are expected to report within a reasonable timeframe.

Do I have to live near campus if I have a Hybrid Work Arrangement?

All employees are expected to live within commuting distance of campus. The definition of commuting distance will vary based on the nature of the work performed and reasons for attending campus. For example, some roles are required to attend campus on short notice for emergencies or staff coverage. What determines a reasonable commuting distance will be decided on a case-by-case basis at the department level, based on the nature of the work and the time required to travel to campus.

Employees are responsible for all travel expenses related to commuting from home to campus.

Do I have to live in Nova Scotia?

All employees are required to live in Nova Scotia regardless of whether they are approved for a Flex@X arrangement. Approval to live outside Nova Scotia will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Employees may be approved to work outside of Nova Scotia for extended periods with the approval of People and Culture.

Hybrid Work Arrangements: Health and Safety

What if I am sick on a day I am working off campus?

If you are unable to report for work due to illness, you must advise your manager/supervisor prior to the start of your shift (per the normal process). Sick leave provisions apply whether you are working on campus or off campus.



If I injure myself while working from home and while undertaking work-related duties, am I covered by injury on duty leave? Do I need to complete an incident report?

You are not eligible for injury on duty leave while working from home. You are still required to report injuries and near misses to your supervisor.

Should I undertake a hazard assessment associated with my workstation at home?

Yes, a specific home office hazard assessment template has been developed for use. The assessment must be completed, and appropriate controls implemented. A copy must be provided to your manager/supervisor and People and Culture.

Hybrid Work Arrangements: Home Office

I do not have a private workspace available off campus. Am I eligible for a Hybrid Work Arrangement?

No, employees are required to have a private workspace in their home (or other approved alternate location) to be eligible for a Hybrid Work Arrangement.

Can I receive deliveries, meet with clients or business guests at my home office?

No. At no time are meetings to be conducted or business guests invited to your home for the business of the University. These meetings must occur virtually or on campus. This includes courier arrangements.

Am I required to use my university computer while working off campus?

Yes. Employees are not permitted to use their own personal computers for university business. Employees must comply with the Information Technology Remote Work Guidelines.

Can I borrow university computer equipment and/or office furniture so I have a proper workstation at home?

Employees who apply for a Hybrid Work Arrangement are responsible for the cost of office furniture that meets ergonomic standards and associated costs with working from home. As part of the normal employment process, the University will, subject to availability and budget, assign one computer and related accessories if required.

All equipment and furnishings purchased directly by the University (or through associated purchasing accounts) remain the property of the University and must be returned at the end of the Flex@X arrangement or earlier if requested.

What home office expenses can I claim as part of a Hybrid Work Arrangement?

Some employees may be eligible to claim home office expenses on their income tax if certain conditions are met. Employees are responsible for ensuring they understand CRA guidelines for the home workspace. The University is not responsible if home office expenses are claimed incorrectly.



Employees who have an approved Hybrid Work Arrangement in excess of 50% of their normal working hours may be eligible to receive a T2200 (Declaration of Conditions of Employment). A T2200 is a year-end tax reporting document that an employee uses to deduct employment expenses from their income.

Are employees financially responsible for loss or damage to university property while in-transit or off campus (including their home office)?

No, departments are financially responsible for university property on or off campus.

Does the university insure the personal property of employees (including property which may be leased by the employee) on or off campus including the approved home office?

No. At no time is the University responsible for the personal effects of employees. The employee is financially responsible for any loss, damage and/or financial expenses on or off campus (including their home office) related to their own personal property including insurance costs and deductibles.

Is the employee required to maintain continuous personal homeowner or tenant insurance during the Hybrid Work Arrangement?

Yes, all employees must maintain homeowner or tenant insurance to protect against financial loss to their personal property or liability.

Should employees notify their insurer of their Hybrid Work Arrangement?

Yes, it is important that your insurer is aware that you have a home office. This may or may not result in any extra insurance premium to you due to change in use or values insured (from additional personal office equipment).

Hybrid Work Arrangements: On Campus Work

Will I still have office space on campus?

Employees working more than 50% of the time off campus may not have a dedicated workspace on campus. The University will provide suitable workspace on campus for employees who do not have a dedicated workspace (though this may be shared).

As part of the Flex@X program, the University will be reviewing space usage and allocation. Changes may be made to space allocations because of the program. Impacted departments and employees will be notified.

Can I be required to come to campus on my designated work from home days?

Managers/supervisors may require employees to come to campus on days they are scheduled to work from home. Where possible, employees will be given advance notice. Managers/supervisors should make reasonable efforts to avoid employees having to come to campus on these days and provide an alternative work from home day where possible.



Is there a reduction in parking pass cost for employees on a Hybrid Work Arrangement?

No, the cost of a parking pass remains the same.

Can I expense travel or parking costs when I work on campus?

No, parking and travel expenses from the approved off-campus work location to campus are the responsibility of the employee.

Flex Time (Modified Schedule) and Flex Time (Earned Time Off)

What is a Flex Time (Earned Time Off) arrangement?

Under this arrangement, an employee's schedule is modified so they work longer shifts for a set period to take an additional day off. For example, an employee might work longer each day for 14 days and then take the 15th day off.

The schedule must be set in advance as part of the Flex@X arrangement and time banked under this plan must be used within three weeks.

What is the difference between Flex Time (Earned Time Off) and time in lieu of overtime?

A Flex Time (Earned Time Off) arrangement has an established, pre-set schedule and provides ongoing benefit. Lieu time is accrued on an ad-hoc basis when an employee works overtime and is scheduled at a mutually agreed time.

What types of Flex Time (Modified Schedule) arrangements are available?

Modified schedules will be either a **compressed work week** or **alternative working hours** (varied working hours). Alternate arrangements may be possible with approval from People and Culture.

Modified schedules can't include the accumulation of break times or lunch hours to reduce the number of hours worked. Breaks and/or lunch cannot be taken at the start or end of the daily work schedule.

Compressed Work Week

A compressed work week is where an employee works longer shifts over fewer days. For example, an employee working 40 hours per week who works four ten-hour shifts.

This type of arrangement is typically established on a long-term basis and is intended to respond to a specific departmental need.

Alternative Working Hours

Alternative working hours are where an employee works the same number of days per week but with different working hours than would be normal for their position.

A manager/supervisor can approve an alternative work hours arrangement for individual employees, a single function or entire department. The arrangement must still ensure that service levels are being maintained during regular operating hours.



For example, an employee who would normally work 8:00 – 4:30 could have a modified schedule allowing them to work 9:00 – 5:30. Alternatively, a department could establish core working hours where employees are expected to be at work but provide flexibility for the employee to determine their own schedule outside of those core hours.

Are there restrictions on what Flex Time arrangements can be approved?

Flex Time arrangements will vary but must:

1. Be suitable for the department and not negatively impact operational effectiveness.
2. Not result in a change to the workload of the employee or their colleagues.

I would like to change my hours of work or shift pattern for a short period. Do I need a Flex@X agreement?

No. Modified schedule arrangements are long term (more than ninety (90) calendar days). Requests for short-term changes should be discussed with the manager/supervisor and do not require approval through Flex@X.

How are schedules established in a Flex Time (Modified Schedule) arrangement?

Employees and managers/supervisors will come to an agreement on the specific work pattern. People and Culture will amend the employee's schedule in UKG Workforce Management to match the modified schedule if it is a compressed work week. Otherwise, the schedule in UKG does not need to change.

I work a Modified Schedule. What happens to my vacation and other leave entitlements?

Vacation, Medical/Sick Leave, Personal Days and Other Leaves

We often refer to days when talking about leaves. When we refer to days, we assume that an employee is working five days per week. That's why we track leave entitlements in hours instead of days in UKG. Regardless of their schedule, all employees receive the same number of hours of leave.

For example, a full-time employee working 40 hours a week who is entitled to fifteen days of vacation would have a vacation bank of 120 hours. If they work four 10-hour shifts, each day they take vacation they will use 10 hours from their vacation bank.

Bereavement, Domestic Violence and Maternity, Parental and Adoption Leaves

There are a few leaves that are handled differently. We also use days to refer to employee entitlements to bereavement, domestic violence and maternity, parental and adoption leaves. In these cases, employees are entitled to a specified number of days *regardless of the length of the shift on those days*.

How do holidays work for employees on Flex Time arrangements?

Except for employees with Alternative Work Hours arrangements, employees under a Flex Time arrangements will be subject to the following:



- If the employee's daily hours of work are extended, the employee will receive statutory holiday pay as if they were working five days per week. An employee will need to use accrued leave entitlements to make up the other hours on the holiday.
- If a holiday falls on a day the employee is not scheduled to work, they will be granted an alternative day off with pay.