

# Relocation to a Primary Work Location

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### 1.0 Purpose

The University recognises the need to be flexible in providing its courses, research and services at a number of work locations while being committed to maximising job security for employees.

In order to provide this flexibility the University may need to direct an employee to work at a workplace other than their primary workplace location as specified in their employment contract.

### 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all University staff, other than casual staff.

### 3.0 Procedure

The University will utilise the following principles where the issue of relocation arises:

- consultation regarding measures to avert or mitigate the adverse effects of organisational change;
- consideration of individual employee circumstances when considering alternate work locations; and
- appropriate compensation arising from the relocation.

In order to facilitate the movement of employees between workplaces the University will compensate employees according to this policy.

In circumstances which involve a University-initiated relocation the relocation to an alternate primary workplace location does not include relocation within a campus or between Mt Gravatt, Nathan and Southbank campuses.

#### 3.1 Identification of Positions

The University may relocate an existing position or positions to any other work location of the University in order to provide quality research, teaching or services. Reasons for a relocation of position/s may include:

- an expansion, realignment, or contraction of an Elements, Schools, Departments, Office, Divisions research, teaching or services;
- movement of part or all of an Element, School, Department, Office or Division to a new or existing physical work location.

Positions to be relocated will be identified by the relevant Senior Officer and consultation will occur with affected employees, and their representative/s, the Director, Human Resources (HR) and the relevant Head/s of Element, School, Department, Office or Division.

### **3.2 Consultation**

Consultation in either of the above cases will include all impacted employees and will be a minimum two-week period.

Consultation will include communication as to the rationale for the relocation, possible effects on employees, an assessment of whether the positions to be relocated could be filled from a range of academic or professional staff levels, the processes to be followed in implementing a relocation/s including proposed strategies for dealing with other than voluntary relocation/s.

Consultation is the responsibility of the relevant Executive Group Member, Pro Vice Chancellor or Head of Element.

### **3.3 Formal Submission**

Where the relevant Head during the consultation period identifies the position/s to be relocated, a formal submission will be provided to the relevant Senior Officer and Director, HR demonstrating the need for the position/s to be relocated. The submission will include the detailing of the positions to be relocated and possible relocation costs. The final submission will also be circulated to the impacted employees.

The impacted employees and their representatives may make representations about the submission to the relevant parties prior to a definite decision to relocate a position or positions.

Once the relevant Senior Officer makes a definite decision to relocate a position or positions, all affected staff in the Element, School, Department, Office or Division, the Director, HR and the employee/s and their representative/s will be informed of the positions affected, the relocation process and the time period over which the relocation/s will take place.

### **3.4 Voluntary Relocations**

In the case where all positions or selected positions in an Element, School, Department, Office or Division are being relocated, employees within the same Element, School, Department, Office or Division will be invited to volunteer for relocation, normally within fourteen days, to the relevant senior officer.

In the event that there are no volunteers or fewer volunteers than required to fill positions the relevant senior officer will consider a second, broader call for volunteers across the area or across the whole University normally within fourteen days. The decision to make a second call for volunteers will include budget considerations and the likelihood of receiving suitably qualified volunteers.

Volunteers will normally only be considered for relocations to positions at the same levels of classification. Only volunteers who satisfy the requirements of the relocated position or would with reasonable training will be appointed to the position.

If the number of volunteers is less than or equal to the relocated positions to be filled, then those volunteers will fill the position except where the University considers a volunteer to be unsuitable to fill a position.

In the event that there is more than one volunteer for a relocation to a particular position, the relevant senior officer in consultation with the relevant Head will make relocation decisions on the basis of merit and the staffing structure of the Element, School, Department, Office or Division with respect to skill mix and the location of positions.

All volunteers who are unsuccessful in being accepted will be provided with the reasons by the relevant Head and may seek a review of the decision.

### **3.5 Employees Directed to Relocate**

Employees who are directed to relocate will do so at the same salary. In the event that after the first or second call for volunteers there are no suitable volunteers for a single position with an employee, the employees will be directed by the University to take up the position at the new location.

Where there are a number of like positions at the same level to be relocated necessitating the relocation of one or more employees, there are no volunteers and there are two or more employees who could be relocated, the relevant Head will make a recommendation to the relevant senior officer as to which employee/s should be relocated. This recommendation will be on the basis of the match between the skills of the employee and the requirements of the position and the best judgment possible on likely disruption to family and personal life.

When choosing between two or more employees the relevant senior officer will ensure statements have been sought from the employee's concerned regarding this relocation decision and will make choices which take account of at least the following:

- the relocation will not cause unreasonable financial hardship to the employee;
- consideration of the employees personal and transport situations and the impact of relocation on journey times to work.

An employee who is directed to relocate to an alternate primary workplace location will be notified in writing of the need to take up duties at a different workplace. This advice will include the date that such relocation is to take effect, the reasons for the relocation, the assistance available under this policy and the options available to the employee.

Employees who are directed by the University to take up a position have the option, within 7 days of being directed to:

- accept relocation to the new area; or
- request a review of the decision.

### **3.6 Review of relocation decision**

An employee:

- who has been directed by the University to commence work in another workplace, or
- who volunteered for relocation and was not selected.

may, within 7 days of notification, seek a review of the decision by writing to the Vice Chancellor via the Director, HR. The relevant Head, as directed by the relevant Senior Officer will investigate the matter and advise the employee of the outcome of this review within 14 days of receipt of the request for review.

### 3.7 Commencement at the New Work Location

Once the employee confirms acceptance of the relocation, or the review confirms the direction to relocate, and unless otherwise agreed, employee/s will be given as much notice as possible, with a minimum notice as specified below, of the need to take-up duties at a different workplace:

Relocation	Involving a change of residence	All other relocations
> 30 km	12 weeks	6 weeks
< 30 km	N/A	6 weeks

### 3.8 Travelling Assistance

An employee who is directed to relocate to an alternate primary work location may be eligible for reasonable travel assistance for a period of twelve weeks from the date of taking up the position at the new location. This assistance will be provided when the employee can demonstrate:

- that they will incur additional costs in travelling to the new workplace; and
- that the relocation will cause financial hardship or strain

Applications for assistance demonstrating the above should be made to the relevant Head of Element.

Travel assistance will be provided via reimbursement of the additional transportation costs (e.g. petrol, public transport fares). Travel assistance will also include the application of flexible work arrangements to accommodate additional travel time (e.g. travel time included in work hours).

### 3.9 Relocation Support and Assistance

Relocation support and assistance will be provided to employees who are relocated when:

- the relocation is to a workplace more than 30 kilometres from the current primary workplace; and
- the relocation is initiated by the University e.g. an employee is directed to relocate to an alternate primary workplace location or is a volunteer as identified in the circumstances outlined in this policy or is on a redeployment program; and
- there is a demonstrated need for the employee to change residence.

Employees who are relocated to an alternate primary workplace location within 30 kilometres of the current primary workplace location will be ineligible for the assistance outlined in this section.

### 3.10 Financial Assistance

The employee will be eligible for the payment of reasonable costs incurred in moving themselves and their dependants, including reasonable costs for removal of furniture and personal effects.

#### 3.10.1 Boarding or rental allowance

The employee may be paid an allowance up to an amount agreed to by the relevant senior officer comprised of the expenses necessarily incurred by the employee in residing in short term or boarding accommodation while waiting to secure a place of residence in the new locality. This allowance will be paid for a maximum period of four weeks.

### **3.10.2 Expenses for furniture storage**

An employee who is eligible to receive a boarding or rental allowance may also be eligible to seek reimbursement of expenses necessarily incurred by them in respect of:

- the storage of their furniture and effects while waiting to secure a place of residence in the new locality; and
- the moving of the furniture and effects from the place of storage to the employee's place of residence in the new locality.

### **3.10.3 Incidentals allowance**

An employee who is eligible to receive relocation assistance is entitled to be paid an incidentals allowance to compensate the employee for:

- the value of the increased depreciation of, and the additional wear and tear on, the basic household furniture and effects resulting from the transfer; and
- incidental costs associated with establishing a new place of residence (e.g. telephone, gas, electricity, water, internet reconnection)

The depreciation allowance payable under this provision is an amount determined by Chief Financial Officer.

### **3.10.4 Expenses for sale and purchase of a dwelling-property**

For the purposes of this provision "expenses for selling or purchasing a dwelling-property" means:

- legal fees;
- agent's commission and related selling costs;
- stamp duty;
- fees associated with the transfer of title;
- expenses relating to the execution or discharge of a first mortgage; and
- any other reasonable related costs as determined by the Director, HR.

An employee who is eligible for relocation assistance is entitled to receive reimbursement of expenses incurred by them for a related sale and subsequent purchase of a dwelling-property. Entitlement for expenses for purchase of a property will only occur where the employee is eligible for expenses for the sale of a property at their original location.

In the case of the sale the dwelling-property must be:

- owned and occupied by them; or
- one which they were purchasing under a contract of sale providing for vacant possession and in which they intended to permanently reside; or
- which they were constructing for their own permanent occupation on completion of construction, at the date on which it became necessary to move to the new locality.

In the case of purchase, the dwelling-property at the new location must be:

- for their own permanent occupation in the new locality; or

- land for the purpose of erecting a house for their own permanent occupation.

The expenses for selling or purchasing a dwelling-property payable is an amount which is equal to the actual expenses incurred except that the reimbursement of expenses on purchase will be limited to an amount equivalent to those for the purchase of a property of similar type and style of the dwelling property sold, as determined by the Chief Operating Officer.

An application by an employee for expenses for selling or purchasing a dwelling-property or an incidentals allowance shall be accompanied by evidence of payment.

### **3.10.5 Exceptions to the payment of expenses for selling or purchase of a dwelling-property**

Except on the decision of the Chief Operating Officer, an employee is not entitled to the reimbursement of expenses in respect of a sale and/or purchase which occurs:

- more than 2 years after the date on which the employee takes up duty in an alternate primary workplace location more than 30 kilometres from the current primary workplace location; or
- after the date on which the employee receives notification that they are being transferred back to the previous primary workplace location.

Except that in both points above, expenses incurred in good faith in attempting to sell a property (e.g. advertising costs, auction fees) will be met.

### **3.10.6 Ownership of property**

For the purpose of this provision, it is immaterial that the dwelling-property or land is purchased, sold or owned jointly or in common with:

- the partner of that employee; or
- a dependant of that employee; or
- the partner and a dependant of that employee.

In all other cases the expenses for selling and/or purchasing a dwelling-property payable will be up to an amount which is equal to the proportion of the expenses for which the employee is responsible.

### **3.10.7 Other costs**

The University recognises that individual employees who are being relocated and are eligible to receive financial assistance may also face other related expenses associated with moving their family or renting a dwelling. In these cases employees make a submission for assistance with respect to other reasonable expenses associated with moving. Other reasonable expenses which may be considered include:

- rental, school and childcare bonds where the employee loses the bond or a portion of the bond because of the relocation;
- job search fees for an employed partner for a maximum of three months. The employee must use a University nominated job search firm in order to be eligible for this assistance.

The employee should discuss with the Head of Element the extent of support required and available. When requesting assistance, the employee should provide a submission to the Chief Operating Officer setting out the details of the claim supported by evidence in the form of letters, agreements, contracts, quotations, invoices and receipts.

The Chief Operating Officer will consider all applications taking into account the resources of the Element.

#### **3.10.8 Costs of relocation**

The relevant Head of Element's cost centre associated with the employee will meet all of the costs involved within this policy.

### **3.11 Grievances with respect to financial assistance**

In the event that a grievance arises with respect to the financial assistance paid under this policy, the parties will follow the relevant steps of the individual grievance procedure.

The establishment and application of this policy and the related procedures and conditions will not affect any right the University or employee/s, and their representative/s may have under the relevant industrial legislation.

## **4.0 Definitions**

The delegate is as listed in the [Delegations Register](#), as amended from time to time.

**For advice and support contact [policy@griffith.edu.au](mailto:policy@griffith.edu.au) for Governance and Operational policy documents.**

## 5.0 Information

Title	Relocation to a Primary Work Location Procedure
Document number	2023/0001120
Purpose	This procedure is to facilitate the relocation of employees as a consequence of University initiatives.
Audience	Staff
Category	Operational
Subcategory	Staff
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal/s: 4: Quality Education
Approval date	October 2023
Effective date	October 2023
Review date	2026
Policy advisor	Head of HR Business Partnering
Approving authority	Director, Human Resources

## 6.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	N/A
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Policy	Delegations Policy
Procedures	Delegations Procedure Delegations Register Individual Grievance Resolution Procedure
Agreements	Griffith University Academic Staff Enterprise Agreement Griffith University Professional and Support Staff Enterprise Agreement
Forms	N/A