

# Flexible Work Arrangements In Leadership Roles

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Education Office Wollongong has endorsed flexible work arrangements (including temporary, part-time and job sharing arrangements) as a key initiative in supporting employees to enhance work/life balance. Whilst many of the employees who take advantage of these arrangements do so for family reasons, increasingly we can expect that older employees may wish to take advantage of flexible work arrangements for purposes of care responsibilities or as part of a phased process to leave the workforce.

The adoption of such flexible work arrangements in Leadership Roles has not been widespread.

- 1.1 Leadership roles in our schools have an educational focus. This is the key, singular aspect that cannot be provided by an administrator. This means that all our leaders must be present for sufficient time each week to be present in the classroom and to coach teaching staff in methods of educational delivery and support.
- 1.2 Leadership roles in our schools have a relationship building focus that requires that they are sufficiently present to build relationships with the parent body, whether through availability to handle issues, discuss initiatives or to become familiar with student needs.
- 1.3 Some leadership roles, such as pastoral care support require that a leader be present for access by students and colleagues.

## 2.0 FLEXIBILITY

However, general workplace trends are emerging that support a broader availability of flexibility. Particularly with the advances in communications technology, some roles may now lend themselves to being adapted in ways that can allow working from home arrangements. With the newer means of communication that enable staff to access them on a needs basis, this may allow leaders to have some of the allocated work time to be arranged for working from home. Changes in technology are enabling changes in the workplace. For instance:

- 2.1 Face to face decisions made when persons work at the same site will increasingly be replaced by e-mail conversations which occur when they do not. Cameras and videoconferencing located at workstations and in boardrooms will enable conversations ranging from the formal to the informal to allow parties to the decision making to be “present” in the same place.

- 2.2 The use of computerised coaching and electronic mentoring technology will increasingly assist in developing employee learning and decision making processes.
- 2.3 Access to mobile phones increasingly allows employees to be contacted without having to be physically tied to the one location.

### **3.0 MIDDLE LEADER ROLE**

The preferred position of the CEO is that a substantive middle leader role be filled to the equivalent of 1.0 FTE. Job sharing by two employees at 0.5 FTE is the preferred method of introducing flexible work arrangements in these leadership roles.

However, from time to time, the preferred candidate for a middle leader role is an individual who is working on a temporary or permanent part-time arrangement. Arrangements of less than 0.8 FTE require the Principal to consult with the Head of Service. Generally there will be a minimum requirement of 0.7 FTE for consideration in a “stand-alone” promotion position. Payment in these arrangements will be on the basis of pro-rata time and allowance. The Principal will need to consider whether some aspects of the role will need to be restructured commensurate with the reduced time and allowance.

A middle leader working part-time 0.8 FTE or above are generally required to perform all duties associated with the middle leader role. If the following criteria are applied and endorsed by the Principal and the applicant as being applicable to the staff member, then the full middle leader time release and allowance will be applied.

- 3.1 Availability to be contacted on days not scheduled to work, should the need arise.
- 3.2 The staff member must be able to carry out the full range of responsibilities of the role.
- 3.3 The staff member must be able to engage in professional dialogue with their own colleagues as well as the school leadership team.

### **4.0 PART-TIME**

Part-time leadership roles (that are not job sharing) will be contracted for an agreed period that will be determined through discussions with the applicant and the CEO. This arrangement will be reviewed annually to ensure the workload and delivery of outcomes is achieved satisfactorily. If outcomes cannot be achieved under the part time arrangement, the arrangement will not be extended. Please note that an arrangement should not be less than a twelve month period.

## **5.0 ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL ROLE**

Job-share of two employees at 0.5 FTE is the preferred method of introducing flexible work arrangements in this role. This could occur in situations where two employees apply for a vacant Assistant Principal role and are selected as the “preferred candidate”. Candidates presenting for selection on this basis would be required to present detailed plans of how they would work together, communicate and ensure consistency of approach in this important leadership role. Such an arrangement would need to have the support, in the case of primary schools, of the Parish Priest. As with all leadership position appointments, the appointment is made by the Director and arrangements would be scrutinized to ensure that they are effective.

Alternatively an existing Assistant Principal may indicate a desire to reduce from a full time load to a part time role. This could occur for example due to illness, family circumstance or the approach of retirement. Any request from an existing Assistant Principal would be considered, and discussion would take account of the duration of the request and the extent to which the principal and parish priest support the arrangement. In the event of receiving a preliminary approval, a job sharing role would be advertised and final acceptance of the flexible work arrangement would be contingent upon the work plan being acceptable to the Director.

- 6.0 Refer also to the Catholic Education Office *Flexible Work Arrangements to Enhance Work/Life Balance* policy statement for further details in relation to making application for a flexible work arrangement. This is available from the CEO Inforpoint site under Human Resource Services.**