

UCI’s Brilliant Future of Work Staff Workforce Planning Guidelines

Purpose of this Document

Use these guidelines in conjunction with the Staff Workforce Planning Template. The term “unit” indicates the highest level of school or division.

These guidelines are to assist leaders with long-term, post-pandemic staff workforce model planning. This document gives leaders a structured approach to develop a long-term workforce model with regards to staff working **onsite, remote, or a blend of both**. Fostering a collaborative, successful flexible work environment requires intentional effort by both employees and managers. Plans should be developed thoughtfully, carefully and with flexibility to ensure school/division goals are achieved while adopting new practices, if appropriate, and remaining nimble to adjust the plan quickly as needed.

Overview

COVID-19 caused many staff to begin working from home abruptly, significantly increasing the number of remote staff. This shift from a traditional onsite model to an alternate model has proven that some positions can be performed effectively partially or fully remotely. Leaders now face some important long term organizational and workforce decisions:

- 1) Given a unit’s mission, objectives, services, work culture and service hours, which positions should return to fully onsite?**
- 2) Which positions could be eligible for partial or fully remote work?**
- 3) How will these workforce decisions impact workspace, technology needs, and team/unit culture?**
- 4) How will equity and fairness be ensured in making these decisions?**
- 5) How and when will these decisions be communicated?**

Leaders will need to think through the benefits and challenges for the organization and their teams when deciding what is the best model for their unit, and devise strategies to address those challenges.

Benefits and Challenges of Remote Work

Benefits to the Organization	Benefits to the Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate cost savings • Amplified talent access • Increased engagement • Increased agility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced flexibility • Greater productivity • Increased wellbeing (e.g., work/life balance)
Challenges for the Organization	Challenges for the Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading in a virtual world • Rethinking productivity management • Equipment costs • Ensuring equity • Culture change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking and relationships with coworkers • Wellbeing challenges (e.g., longer hours, feelings of isolation) • Space and equipment needs

How to use this document

Leaders should follow the four steps below to determine their department's appropriate workforce model. Each step builds upon the previous to provide leaders with an opportunity to clarify and specify the best workforce model that will accommodate unit needs as well as enable staff to be the most successful. The steps are:

Step 1: Determine if and how work done onsite, remotely, or a blend of both aligns with your unit's mission, objectives, services, and service hours; forecast an appropriate workforce model.

Step 2: Rethink staff work schedules and the use of onsite workspace and technology.

Step 3: Reimagine the staff experience and new approaches to leadership needed.

Step 4: Coordinate with your unit leadership to plan communications to staff, clients and stakeholders regarding any changes in workforce composition, schedules, or workspace.

Your organization has identified a core team to lead this future workforce planning process and includes a Project Manager. As you begin completing a workforce plan, coordinate with your designated Project Manager to align on decisions, timing, and senior level approvals.

Step 1

a) Determine if and how work done onsite, remote or a blend of both aligns with your unit's mission, objectives, services, and service hours.

Questions to consider:

- What are your unit's mission, objectives, services, work culture, and service hours? Are there any student experience considerations? What services do your key stakeholders (e.g., faculty, clients, students, colleagues) need and when?
- How does work done onsite, remote, or a blend of both support unit goals and services provided, and the hours your unit is available to your clients?
- Have you considered the impact that remote, or hybrid work may have on other units with which you work most closely?
- Does achievement of work outcomes depend on real-time face-to-face collaboration and/or review by clients or colleagues?
- Do managers have a clearly defined way to measure performance of employees against the desired outcomes?
- Do staff understand the defined outcomes for task completion?

b) Forecast a long-term workforce model that meets your unit's mission, services, and objectives.

Questions to consider:

- Based on your unit's mission, objectives, services, and service hours, what workforce composition (onsite, remote or a blend of both) is ideal?

- What roles, if any, would meet a mission-driven or strategic goal, if done work partially or fully remotely in the new future state?

Step 2: Rethink staff work schedules and use of office space and technology.

If your future state workforce model includes staff working partially or fully remote, identify whether there is an opportunity to stagger staff work schedules to leverage the use of workspace. Staff and leaders will need to sign a remote work agreement for all partially or fully remote employees. Refer to [Remote Work Guidelines](#) for detailed information.

Questions to consider:

- How will you determine work location (onsite or remote) and schedule preferences for remote-work-eligible staff?
- What criteria will be used to determine onsite versus remote work schedules? Are there some positions or team members who cannot or should not work remotely?
- What expectations should you set for your staff working onsite?
- How can you maximize the use of your current office space?
- How will the office space need to be reconfigured to be safe for staff working onsite and agile enough to respond quickly to any future requirements?
- What new or different technologies might be needed to effectively support a hybrid workforce?
- Will you have access to smart conference rooms to accommodate a hybrid workforce?

Step 3: Reimagine the staff experience and how to adapt as a leader.

Having a remote workforce can complicate team dynamics. Leaders need to be intentional about how to build and maintain a collaborative and inclusive work environment regardless of where staff are working. This may include anticipating a shift in the culture and establishing new rituals and norms for the future of work.

Questions to consider:

- How will your staff collaborate and communicate effectively when staff may not physically be together?
- Are team meetings expected to be conducted in person? How will effective communications be maintained when some meeting participants are onsite, and others are remote?
- How will you ensure staff in the hybrid model feel connected and included?
- What intentional and deliberate steps can you take as a leader to improve the overall staff experience?
- How would you ensure equitable distribution of workload for staff?
- How will you ensure equity and address concerns?

Step 4: Plan logistics and communications approach to bringing staff onsite.

If your workforce model includes both onsite and remote work for your staff, consider your approach to bringing staff back onsite. Plan detailed communications to staff and others to ensure that messaging is consistent and clear. Coordinate plans with your workforce planning Project Manager.

Questions to consider:

- Can you implement all aspects of a hybrid workforce model immediately when approved to return to onsite work?
- Do you need to phase in onsite staff due to a continued need for social distancing, limit on office space or other constraints?
- Do you need to have staff come onsite in advance to prepare the office for others?
- Has your school/unit created a change management/communications plan to prepare for this change?
- How will you communicate any operational changes to your key stakeholders (e.g., faculty, clients, students, colleagues)?

Steps to Execution

1. Using this document as a guide, complete the Staff Workforce Plan Template to articulate the business reasons and plans for your future state workforce model.
2. Consult with your local HR professional for guidance.
3. Discuss your plans with your direct manager and seek approval from your unit leadership.
4. Upon receiving any required internal approvals and unit leadership approval, consult with the designated Hybrid Planning Project Manager to plan and coordinate appropriate change management communications for your staff and implement your new workforce model.
5. Once implemented, continuously monitor for ongoing effectiveness.
 - a. Solicit and consider feedback from leaders and staff.
 - b. Observe and measure outcomes and culture.
6. Make applicable adjustments, when needed.
 - a. Update your plan accordingly.
 - b. Update communications with your team on changes.
 - c. Recognize that this will likely be an evolving workforce plan.