



FAQs for the Blended Work Arrangements – Applied Learning pilot program

Royal Roads University is committed to providing our employees with a safe, inclusive and supportive work environment that maintains a vibrant and engaging campus and ensures we continue to deliver exceptional services. Currently, the Blended Work Arrangement Pilot is scheduled to conclude at the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2022); however, this timeline is under review. These FAQs, organized by the following categories, have been developed to answer specific questions we anticipate you may have when participating in the Blended Work Arrangements pilot:

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General

What is meant by “Blended Work Arrangements”?

‘Blended Work Arrangements’ involve employees spending some of their time working physically on- campus and some of their time working from home, remotely. Arrangements can vary in terms of the days and frequency of physical presence on campus versus working from home and may be structured or flexible to best meet the needs of the position, department and individual. Blended Work Arrangements at RRU do not contemplate 100% remote work or work outside of the province or country and all positions do not meet the eligibility requirements.

After working remotely for over a year, why do I need to return to campus?

While many of us were able to operate effectively in a virtual environment, there is undoubtedly huge value in working together in person — it fosters creativity, collaboration and helps build a vibrant organizational culture. A blended model provides the flexibility and benefits of both working environments.

Is a flex day the same as a work from home day in a blended work arrangement?

A flex schedule is a flexible work arrangement separate from participation in the BWA pilot program. Employees working with additional flexible arrangements are covered by the [Flexible Work Arrangements policy](#). If an employee is working from home as part of their blended schedule through the BWA pilot, this is considered a regular workday. Flex days (whether bi-weekly or tri-weekly) are a day off work entirely, where the employee has worked a compressed work schedule, allowing an employee to work longer but fewer days during a given employment period. Any

employee required to work on their scheduled flex day will bank the time and take it as soon as possible when mutually convenient. As a reminder, blended workdays cannot be banked for later use.

Who should I contact if I have questions or concerns about Blended Work Arrangements?

Staff with any questions or concerns about the BWA pilot program should reach out to their manager or their [human resources consultant](#).

Participation

What do I do if I want to change the number of days I work on campus from my original BWA application? What is the process to get my blended work arrangement approved?

The BWA pilot is based on a model of working on campus for a minimum of three days per week. If an employee would like to amend their original application, they should seek approval from their manager to ensure it meets operational requirements. If the adjusted days are approved and within the framework of the pilot program, the form should be forwarded to the human resources department to be added to the employee personnel file.

Why aren't all employees eligible to participate in the BWA pilot program?

Working remotely is not a right of employment. Suitability for blended work arrangements will not be one size fits all and will vary by position and department depending on a variety of considerations. Participation in the BWA must be mutually agreed upon by the employee and their respective manager, not to be interpreted as a right of employment. Decision making regarding blended work arrangements for a department/school lies with the senior leadership of the Associate Vice-President, Dean or Director. The senior leader will ensure they inform their divisional Vice-President of their decision to apply or deny a BWA request. The [BWA framework](#) and the [Toolkit for Leaders](#) provide further considerations.

Can I work remotely occasionally a Blended Work Arrangement?

Yes. An occasional remote workday may be approved by the supervisor to address situations such as working at home when experiencing mild symptoms that prevent attendance on campus but don't interfere with work, or to focus on a specific deadline. However, regularly occurring work from home is subject to a Blended Work Arrangement. Prior to working from home on any occasion, employees and their managers must complete the [Home Work Environment Checklist](#).

Health and Safety

How do I set up my workstation ergonomically?

Extended hours in the same body position or repeated motions can lead to various musculoskeletal injuries. Employees should take regular breaks for stretching and movement, whether they are working at home or on campus. For remote work, the employees chair or workstation must be adjusted properly:

- The external keyboard is at the right height (wrists are in a neutral position); and
- The external mouse is placed nearby (reachable without arm or wrist strain).

For additional ergonomic safety support refer to [RRU guide](#) and [WorkSafeBC's ergonomic tips](#) on setting up a workstation.

What is the correct procedure to follow if I injure myself at home?

Employees are required to report any injuries or accidents that occur in the course of their employment to their manager as soon as reasonably possible, but no later than 24 hours after such injury/accident. The [Incident Report Form](#) for Employees should be used to make such reports. The employee working remotely from home agrees that a university representative may visit their remote workspace to investigate an injury or accident report as required by [WorkSafeBC](#) and agrees to facilitate such a visit as soon as reasonably possible after the injury or accident.

Why do I have to complete the BWA Home Work Environment checklist?

An employer's duty to maintain a safe working environment does not cease to exist just because their employees are now working from home. Managers and supervisors [have a duty to ensure the health and safety of employees](#). At minimum, the employer should require employees to conduct an assessment of their workplace and report any hazards to their manager.

IT Systems and Security

Will I have access to mobile technology to use during the duration of the BWA pilot?

The [IT Knowledgebase](#) provides information for employees on accessing equipment, services and Remote Desktop while working off campus.

Will the University pay for my personal highspeed internet cost?

No. When working remotely, it is expected that an employee has access to internet connectivity for their remote work site. The university will not typically subsidize the cost of the employee's remote workspace ([see Remote Work Guidelines here](#)).

Will my work from home be monitored?

As set out in the [IT Services Acceptable Use Policy](#), the University may audit, access or restore any IT resource within its environment when it has reasonable grounds to suspect a breach of acceptable use or a possible violation of any law or University policy. Although work from home will not be monitored in a direct way, unless in accordance with the aforementioned policy, employees will be held accountable for meeting their work expectations including the agreed work output, standards and communication.

Are employees eligible for the "educational discount" on computers etc. as student are when they are buying personally?

Yes. For all hardware and software discounts, view the following pages:

- [Hardware Discounts](#)
- [Software Discounts](#)

Is there a university requirement to use Teams? (A suggestion was raised to have individuals set their status on Microsoft Teams to indicate if they are in office or remote each day).

There is no university requirement to use Microsoft Teams; however, it has been adopted by many departments and is an additional aid that offers another opportunity to increase your accessibility.

Supplies, Equipment and Resources

Will the university reimburse me for supplies such as toner, paper, pens, phone bill?

No. As participation in the BWA is not mandatory or a right of employment, employees that do not qualify for a company cell phone will not have their phone bills reimbursed and would be expected to work in the office if their position requires it. Employees are responsible for equipping their own home office with the supplies required.

I have a medical accommodation requiring ergonomic equipment in my office. Will the university provide me with ergonomic equipment?

If an employee requires ergonomic equipment as part of a workplace accommodation, one location will need to be identified as the primary work location and it will be outfitted with the required equipment.

What resources are available to help me thrive in a Blended Work Arrangement?

Transitioning to a hybrid working model can pose many challenges for employees, leaders, and organizations. We encourage employees to leverage opportunities, learnings and resources through LinkedIn Learning, PCS, CTET and Walmsley. In case you're not sure where to start, we've added a number of courses and resources below:

LinkedIn Learning

- [Tips for Working Remotely](#)
- [Be an Effective Hybrid or Virtual Employee](#)
- [Support Your Mental Health While Working from Home](#)

PCS

- [Creative Problem Solving for Innovation: Getting Everyone Out of the Box](#)
- [Influencing Through Effective Communication](#)

CTET

- [Getting Started with Zoom](#)
- [Teaching with Zoom](#)

General

- [BWA Toolkit for Leaders](#)
- [Microsoft Teams Training](#)

EFAP

- [Walmsley](#)

On Campus

Do I require a parking pass when participating in BWA?

Yes. If you are parking on campus, you must display a valid parking pass in your vehicle. Yearly, monthly, weekly and daily options are available. The yearly permit gives you the freedom of flexibility and is only \$123.20.

What happens if I am working from home and the university closes (for a snow day), do I stop working at home?

We understand that not every position is eligible to participate in the BWA pilot program. If you are working from home, this remote location will be considered an extension of the university's workplace. If the campus closure is not something that impacts your ability to perform the work in your workplace, you would be expected to work your scheduled hours unless notified otherwise by the university.

Can I be asked to come onto campus during my normal remote workday?

Yes. Supervisors may require their employees to come to campus to respond to an urgent situation or deadline or to maintain appropriate services. Supervisors will strive to provide as much notice as possible.