

# Hybrid Work Guidelines

## Introduction

Employees will be expected to attend on campus a minimum amount of time, beyond which Managers will have the discretion to permit Hybrid Work arrangements.

SAIT is **predominantly an in-person learning institution**. Even more than other post-secondary institutions, our role specializing in applied learning means that our customers (our students) will continue to receive most services on our physical campuses. Since our customers are in-person, this necessitates that SAIT's employees will also need to spend a considerable amount of their time on our campuses.

Being in-person enables us to create a sense of belonging, foster collaboration, enhance team dynamics, and promote a positive organizational culture. We are a vibrant community because of the people who work and learn in-person on our campuses.

However, SAIT's employees have also demonstrated that they can work remotely successfully, and that important benefits can be realized in regard to focused work and employee wellbeing. The availability of hybrid work is something valued by employees and can contribute to SAIT recruiting, retaining, and motivating top talent. The availability of hybrid work may also help the institution meet its goals to become more diverse and inclusive. It is SAIT's desire to capitalize on the advantages of both on-campus and remote work.

## Definitions

*"Collective Agreements"* means the collective agreements in force from time to time between SAIT and its Unions.

*"Employee"* means any employee of SAIT, whether unionized, excluded, management or otherwise, including casual, term, and permanent positions, full and part-time, but excluding all non-employee contractors.

*"Hybrid Work"* means work that is performed flexibly with regard to place; in part on-campus, and in part remotely.

*"Manager"* means an individual empowered to set work arrangements for an Employee and to make decisions about Hybrid Work.

*"Unions"* means the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), the SAIT Academic Faculty Association (SAFA), and any other union certified at SAIT from time to time.

## Overview

### *Applicability*

These Guidelines are applicable to all SAIT Employees.

### *Eligibility Criteria*

Hybrid Work arrangements **may not be suitable for all** work units, specific jobs, or certain Employees. Hybrid work may be offered at the request of an Employee, with the consent of the Manager, after the Manager considers whether the requested flexibility is compatible with:

- The type of work performed in the work unit
- The particular duties of the Employee's position
- The Employee's ability to work productively with minimal supervision

### *Unintended Consequences*

These Guidelines should not be interpreted to and are not intended to:

- Conflict with or limit rights under Collective Agreements
- Compromise SAIT's commitment to student success
- Compromise the commitment to SAIT's FIRST Principles
- Interfere with normal SAIT operating hours
- Result in overtime or overload costs, or any other material costs to the employer
- Reduce productivity or effectiveness of Employees
- Create safety, security, or supervision issues
- Replace the accommodation process where there is a medical need for hybrid work

These Guidelines may be updated from time to time, based on changing operational needs and updated research or data.

## Hybrid Work

Employees will be expected to attend on campus a minimum amount of time, beyond which Managers will have the discretion to permit Hybrid Work. Executive members may provide guidance to their respective divisions regarding general expectations for Hybrid Work.

### *Minimum On-Campus Attendance*

Being in-person enables us to create a sense of belonging, foster collaboration, enhance team dynamics, and promote a positive organizational culture. As a result, Employees are expected to attend on campus a **minimum of three (3) days per week**. Where an Employee has a reduced work load (part-time), this expectation should be adjusted proportionately. This minimum requirement may shift from week to week, so long as the regular schedule complies with the minimum expectation. SAIT generally does not have Employees who work fully remotely, and expects Employees to live within commuting distance of its campuses. **Exceptions** to this minimum expectation may be approved by the Associate Vice President Employee Services, in consultation with the appropriate Vice President.

### *Common Day On-Campus*

To the extent practical, given operational needs and space constraints, **Wednesday will be a common day** on campus for all employees. This is intended to facilitate the scheduling of meetings and events which cross schools, departments and divisions, and to support opportunities for face-to-face collaboration.

### *Manager Discretion*

Beyond the minimum attendance requirements, **Managers have the discretion** to approve Hybrid Work arrangements in accordance with the eligibility criteria listed above. Managers must set schedules in accordance with operational requirements, and it is expected that reasonable face-to-face service is available in all offices during normal operating hours. Every school and department should have a physical presence on campus every work day.

### *Generous Application*

Managers have the discretion and are encouraged to apply attendance requirements in a thoughtful and generous manner. These requirements are intended to establish a norm, but discretion can be applied to address temporary, one-off, and short term needs of employees. For example, a manager may grant temporary flexibility to employees to deal with weather events, short illnesses, medical/dental appointments, or important personal commitments. Longer term requirements (such as those in the nature of a disability) should be addressed through the accommodation process.

## *Principles & Expectations*

Where Hybrid Work is permitted, the Manager and the Employee must understand and accept the following principles:

- Employees will receive only one set of SAIT-issued devices on which to perform their work. Employees are strongly encouraged to use SAIT-issued devices, and not personal devices, to perform their work.
- The Employee will ensure that any remote work location has appropriate communications access (internet, telephone, etc), has suitable levels of privacy, is professional, and is free from distractions.
- The Employee is responsible for bringing any safety concerns to the attention of the Manager. Employees will remain eligible for Workers' Compensation coverage while working on-campus or remotely during assigned hours.
- SAIT's data and information must be protected in accordance with applicable legislation and SAIT's policies and procedures.
- Employees are responsible for any expenses related to their Hybrid Work, including but not limited to parking, fuel, utilities, insurance, travel, internet, telephone, home furnishings, or rent.
- Employees are responsible for ensuring that their Manager is aware of the location of their remote work, and to keep their home address current in SAIT's systems.
- Employees are responsible for making arrangements for childcare, eldercare, and other care responsibilities, at their own cost and in a manner which does not interfere with their work obligations to SAIT.

## Supplementary Guidelines for Academic Staff

### *Modality of Instruction*

The modality by which a course is taught (face-to-face, online, or blended) is **not the decision of an individual instructor**. This decision is made at the program, department, school, or institutional level (depending on the circumstances) based on desired pedagogy and learning outcomes. Instructors are expected to teach in the modality set for the courses they are assigned. In some cases, teaching assignments outside of normal business hours may require mutual consent in accordance with the Collective Agreement.

## Academic Autonomy

Academic staff should be afforded a reasonable degree of autonomy to self-direct Hybrid Work arrangements within the limits applicable to all Employees. Obviously being present for assigned teaching is not negotiable, but other types of work can be guided by the following non-exhaustive list of examples:

Work Best Performed on Campus	Work Which May Be Performed Effectively Remotely
Teaching face-to-face classes	Teaching online classes <sup>1</sup>
Teaching the face-to-face portion of blended classes	Teaching the online portion of blended classes <sup>1</sup>
Advising students who prefer to receive advice face-to-face	Class preparation
Participation in program and school meetings where the leader prefers in-person attendance <sup>2</sup>	Grading/marking
Professional development and scholarly activities offered in-person	Advising students who prefer to receive advice remotely
Social and team-building activities	Participation in program and school meetings where the leader prefers remote attendance <sup>2</sup>
	Professional development and scholarly activities offered remotely

1. Online teaching is only appropriate where technology is suitable, internet connections are stable, and the location is private, professional, and free from distractions.
2. Leader preferences regarding meetings should be consistent with institutional practices, and the principles taught in leader learning and development opportunities.

## Manager Responsibilities

### Approval

Managers are required to **keep a record of their approval** of Hybrid Work arrangements, and evidence that the expectations were communicated to the relevant Employee. Where an approval is given to a group of employees, this could take the form of a memorandum or email to the group. Where an approval is given to an individual Employee, this could take the form of an email, or Managers may use a Hybrid Work Approval form available from Employee Services.

## *Review*

Managers should periodically review Hybrid Work arrangements to ensure they continue to support operational needs and the other eligibility criteria listed above. Hybrid Work arrangements can be canceled or amended at any time by a Manager, upon giving the Employees affected reasonable notice (minimum 2 weeks).

## Learning & Development

Managers are **expected to continually learn** and educate themselves about the latest advice regarding how to lead and operate effectively in a Hybrid Work environment. Professional development offerings are available from a number of sources, including through Employee Services. Where leaders are exercising their discretion to make decisions about Hybrid Work, they should do so in accordance with these learnings and institutional norms.

## Concerns with Hybrid Work Decisions

Where an Employee (or the Union on behalf of the Employee) has concerns about whether these Guidelines are being applied fairly and reasonably, they may bring this concern to the attention of the Human Resource Business Partner assigned to the relevant area.