



VIEU JOB SHARE POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Rationale

VIEU recognises the negative impact that changes in the labour market are having on employees' quality of life. In the recent ACTU "Reasonable Hours" case, a full bench of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission accepted the ACTU's evidence that Australians are working longer hours than ever before. The Commission acknowledged a direct relationship between unreasonable hours of work and the physical, social and emotional life of employees.

Such changes have taken place at a time when more than ever before employees need flexibility to meet the demands and challenges of modern working life. No longer do we live in an era where men are the sole breadwinners, women stay home with the kids and jobs are for life.

Governments have a social responsibility to promote work life balance by way of appropriate legislation and effective workplace policies. Employers have a social responsibility to organise work in a manner which assists employees to meet family responsibilities

Employees have a right to have their family needs accommodated in the workplace, and employers should make employees familiar with these rights. Employees should not suffer career and economic disadvantage because they exercise their rights in relation to their family responsibilities.

VIEU is committed to ensuring that employees have genuine choice and power in balancing the needs of the workplace with those of their own lives and for some, job share employment is the most suitable option.

Advantages of Job Sharing

- Allows combining work and family responsibilities
- Ensures maintenance and further development of skills
- Allows for a period of transition for workers who have been on leave and intend to resume full-time employment
- Allows for flexibility of lifestyle, study pursuits and outside work interests
- Provides for a choice for employees near retirement
- Enables choice when health or disability impacts on full-time employment
- Provides options for people who choose to work in education and industry part-time

Section 1 - Policy

Definition:

Job sharing is a voluntary arrangement in which two people share one full-time position with equal or shared responsibility on a regular ongoing basis. Job share employees are treated as part-time and they receive pro-rata entitlements.

Conditions of Employment:

1. Pro-rata entitlements
Conditions for job share employees must be pro-rata for all existing and future award and agreement provisions
2. Additional Duties
Subject to conditions of employment, employees would be expected to do other duties on a pro-rata basis and only on a day when they are normally in attendance
3. Minimum and Maximum number of hours
Employees must be employed for .2 to .8 of the normal hours which a full time employee is required to work
4. Spread of Hours
The employer will provide for a reasonable and agreed spread of hours. Agreement must be reached in consultation with employees
5. Variation of hours
Hours can only be varied by mutual consent
6. Job Share Contract
 - The terms of the agreement and any variation to it shall be in writing and provided to the employee by the employer. The agreement includes:
 - That the employee will enter into a job share arrangement
 - The hours to be worked, the days upon which the employee works and the commencing times for the work
 - The period of part-time employment, if exercising rights under return to work provisions of agreement or contracts
7. Consultation
There needs to be a provision made for adequate consultation between job sharers
8. Absences
If a job share employee is absent then the employer will offer the other employee in the job share arrangement the day(s) work. This work if accepted is paid at the appropriate award rate.
9. Resignation
If a job share employee leaves employment the remaining employee will be offered the residue of employment. If this employee does not wish to accept this residue of employment a suitable alternative will be negotiated. In the event of such negotiations, the remaining employee will have the option of participating in the selection process.
10. Access and Equity
Job share employees should have the same access as full-time employees to
 - Training

- Professional development
- Career counselling
- Promotion opportunities
- Acting in promotion positions

To ensure participation of job share employees in training and employer funded professional development, employers should give careful consideration to access to PD, location of courses and provision of childcare.

Employers should ensure that consultation and communication with and to staff includes all employees and the timing of meetings considers the work patterns of all employees.

Section 2 - Implementation Strategy

Developing a Job Share Proposal:

The most successful job share arrangements are those in which the job share partners have negotiated the job jointly and where they have similar personal and professional values. As job sharing is a voluntary arrangement, the employees should approach the employer with a well thought out proposal.

Before initiating a job share proposal consider:

- Teacher's workload requirements
- Salary rates and effect on incremental progression
- Career structures
- Educational outcomes
- The needs of the wider school community

Checklist of questions to address:

1. Is the position and task clearly defined?
2. What are the abilities of the job sharers?
3. What are the requirements of the school?
4. Are the job sharers to be jointly responsible for the entire position or for specific functions within the position?
5. Have the job sharers set clear goals?
6. Are there procedures in place for review of the job sharing arrangement?
7. Have communication strategies been put in place between the job sharers and others in the school community?
8. Will the job sharers share a desk/facilities and have OH& S requirements been considered?

Benefits for the employer and school:

- Additional skills and experience are brought to the job
- Retaining experienced employees
- Reduced hours can mean less stress and increased freshness and enthusiasm
- Increased flexibility, for example, one can cover for the other during absence, both could work during peak periods