Dynamic Work Model Assessment Guidelines

Dynamic Work refers to the range of options for when and where work can happen at Harvard. These guidelines are designed to enable an objective analysis of a position or group of positions to determine appropriate dynamic work model. The work, local priorities, and culture are important elements in identifying and selecting an effective work model. For support in applying these guidelines and other dynamic work strategies, please see resources at the bottom of the page or reach out to your local HR partner.

Purpose:

- Provide transparency to staff, maintains a balanced approach, and supports an objective process using common language
- Assess the work of a group of similar positions or an individual position
- Guide managers in selecting the most effective work model: on-site, hybrid, remote or other type of flexible schedule
- Support validation of existing work models or assessing the work against any new, emerging, and influential factors

Assess: Determine what is driving the need to assess this position(s) to ensure this is the right guide (e.g., is this an individual flexwork or accommodation request)

1. Define the dynamic work culture in your unit and review your team/department's mission and objectives; ensure you have buy-in and support from your leadership
2. Identify the position(s) for assessment and group by job function as appropriate
3. Review job descriptions and groups/customers served
4. List the three to five essential functions or key tasks for each position/group of positions
5. Consider *portability*:
   - Does the work involve the physical handling or use of on-campus materials or equipment/technology?
   - Does the work involve collaborating with a population that is primarily on campus?
   - Is the population served by the position primarily on campus?
6. Consider *feasibility*--Are the tasks clear and defined so they may easily be measured?
   - Does in-person collaboration impact individual and team effectiveness?
   - Is synchronicity of place important?
7. Consider critical factors beyond the objective analysis such as culture, local academic/business cycles, and individual effectiveness
8. Determine place and time constraints and pace implications
   - Is the position largely on campus and shift-based? If so, is flexibility possible?
   - Could time of year or peak hours impact flexibility?
   - Is rotational/shared work coverage available?
9. Discuss, decide, and document the work model decision

Review: Periodically reassess dynamic work factors to test the decision and determine if the work model remains effective

- Build in a practice to check in and communicate with the team and other stakeholders
- Be aware of emerging influences, such as a shift in program demand, new leader expectations, or technology that enables a new communication method
- Objectively analyze the work model's effectiveness while considering factors beyond the analysis that may influence the decision

Additional Resources for working and managing in a dynamic work environment

Dynamic Work at Harvard

Dynamic Work Courses in Harvard Training Portal

See also Flexwork at Harvard for managing individual requests that vary from your local dynamic work structure