



## Purpose

Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) is committed to providing a healthy, safe and flexible work environment and is open to opportunities for blended approaches to working.

The purpose of the operating procedure is to provide guidance to Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) Team Leaders and employees when assessing, reviewing, and implementing Blended Work Arrangement (BWA). The operating procedure will guide employees about the application and approval process, and the responsibilities of the employee to their team or staff group. The Blended Work Operating Procedure applies to employees of CEB.

A BWA does not vary an employee's total contracted hours. Any alteration to an employee's duties or way of working resulting from the BWA must be outlined in the BWA and approved.

## Definitions

**Blended Work Arrangement:** The arrangement to be entered into between Catholic Education Ballarat and the employee for an approved number of hours to be worked from a remote workplace during business hours.

**Workplace:** The usual workplace for the employee nominated by Catholic Education Ballarat, including Catholic Education office or Catholic School in the Ballarat, or other Diocese. The workplace may include function centres or such locations where meetings or professional development is scheduled or endorsed by CEB.

**Home Office:** A home office, or other identified alternative place or work. The designated location and the specific area, such as the part of the home or environment, where the employee will carry out work duties.

**OHS Requirements:** The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and associated regulations, codes of practice, and guidelines, and includes the DOBCEL Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.

## Blended Work Arrangements

While engaged in a BWA, all terms and conditions of employment continue to apply including:

- the relevant Award or Enterprise Agreement
- all DOBCEL and CEB policies and procedures
- the responsibility to take all reasonable actions to protect personal health and safety

A BWA can be in place for up to a maximum of twelve (12) months, subject to review in accordance with this procedure at least once a year.

## Team Leader Considerations

When considering a Blended Work Arrangement, Team Leaders must consider the:

1. impact on operational requirements of Catholic Education Ballarat and DOBCEL schools
2. suitability of an employee's duties for remote work
3. impact on the team and other employees within CEB.

It is not always appropriate for an employee to perform their duties outside the workplace. BWAs may be refused or limited where a role requires regular face to face interaction and engagement with others; regular access to hardcopy files, equipment or other resources located in the workplace; or direct supervision and guidance.

Team Leaders must apply the CEB Blended Work Operating Procedure fairly and respond to requests in a timely manner. The Team Leader must assess each application on a case-by-case basis, on balance with the impact on service levels and operational requirements and consistency in application of the operating procedures.

## Blended Work Hours

When working in a blended way, the employee will, to the extent that it is practical, work the whole day (7.6 hours), or contracted daily part-time hours, in either the Workplace or the Home Office.

Blended working days do not accrue and can't be taken at a later date or cumulatively unless, in exceptional circumstances and pre-authorised by the Team Leader.

### Predominantly Office-based employees

For staff working predominantly from a CEB office location, the amount of time that can be worked in a blended way is proportionate to the employees' contracted hours. Blended Working can be agreed up to a **maximum of 40% of contracted FTE**.

Contracted FTE	Maximum Blended Working Days
1.0 FTE	Up to 2 days a week
0.8 FTE	Up to 1 day a week or 3 days over a fortnight
0.6 FTE	Up to 1 day a week
0.4 FTE	Up to 1 day a fortnight

### Regularly School-based employees

Staff regularly working in schools should commit to working **one day per week**, or contracted daily part-time hours, from a CEB office.

## Home Office

The employee is responsible for all costs incurred from creating a Home Office. This includes any installation, maintenance and usage costs for electricity, internet access, telephone lines, and mobile telephone usage. Employees are required to supply and maintain all furniture and equipment required to effectively carry out their duties. This includes but is not limited to suitable office furniture (e.g., desk, chair), computer screens, internet equipment and telephone.

CEB equipment designated for portable use (e.g., laptop, mobile phone) will continue to be provided in accordance with CEB's ICT policy.

Employees must have appropriate household insurance to cover a home office environment. CEB will not be liable for any liability, loss, damage, costs, or expenses incurred in connection with a BWA.

## Application Process

### Step 1: Employee Request

The CEB employee's application must be made in writing using the *CEB Individual Blended Work Agreement Form* (appendix 1) to their Team Leader.

The employee will also complete the *CEB Health and Safety Checklist* (appendix 2), including a photo of home office environment.

### Step 2: Team Leader Approval

The Team Leader will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis per this operating procedure and respond in writing, advising of the acceptance or refusal within 21 days of receiving a request (this may be extended allowing for non-term time if required). If the employer refuses the request, the written response must include the reasons for the refusal. The Team Leader may seek additional advice from Human Resources as required.

An approval of a BWA request is **conditional** on the home office endorsement by the OHS Coordinator. The Team Leader will forward the provisionally approved Blended Work Agreement to the OHS Coordinator for their review.

The OHS Coordinator will advise the employee and the Team Leader of any actions required for the home office to meet health and safety requirements within 14 days (this may be extended allowing for non-term time if required). Any identified health and safety actions/requirements must be completed prior to the commencement of the approved BWA.

To ensure CEB meets its duty of care to employees, the BWA cannot be operationalised or commenced before this endorsement is received from the OHS Coordinator.

### Step 3: Completed BWA

The completed BWA will be provided to Human Resources for filing in the employee's personnel record.

### Step 4: Maintain Web Central

Employees working in a blended way must maintain their Outlook Calendar to reflect their daily work location, which populates WebCentral for visibility. This must include specific details including working from home (WFH), or school name and location, etc. Where the employee's daily work location is not routinely maintained in this way, the blended work agreement may need to be reviewed or revoked.

## Responsibilities

### Communication

Team Leaders must ensure a protocol for regular communication is in place for the employee to remain regularly connected to the Team Leader, other team members and other CEB employees and activities.

## **Workplace attendance**

Where a Team Leader reasonably requires the attendance of an employee at the workplace to participate in work related discussions, meetings or training, the employee must attend the designated workplace.

## **Reviewing Blended Work Operating Procedure**

BWAs must have a nominated midway review and a final review at least four (4) weeks before expiration to be scheduled by the Team Leader. The employee or the Team Leader may require a review of the BWA at any time where there is a:

- change in operational requirements
- a specific concern regarding efficiency, productivity, or service
- a request to review the operating procedure
- a change in government or medical restrictions for the workplace

## **Variation to Blended Work Operating Procedure**

Any variation must be agreed in writing and provided to Human Resources for the employee's personnel file.

## **Termination of Blended Arrangements**

Either the employee or the Team leader may terminate a BWA at any time with reasonable notice, accept where government-enforced restrictions require immediate action. Reasonable notice should be no less than two (2) weeks. A period of less notice may be negotiated between the Team Leader and the employee.

Where a blended work arrangement has been terminated, the employee must attend the Workplace for work.

## **Accidents, WorkCover and Return to work**

If an employee has an injury or illness arising from working in the Home Office, they must notify their Team Leader as soon as practicable and complete an incident report form. The employee has the right to lodge a claim for compensation under DOBCEL's WorkSafe policy, including in a home office under a BWA.

A BWA may be suspended where an accepted workers compensation claim is active and/or a Return-to-Work Arrangement is in place or where medical evidence indicates the employee is unfit to work.

## **Supporting Documents**

- DOBCEL WorkSafe Policy
- DOBCEL Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (VIC)

## Appendix 1: Individual Blended Work Agreement

Before applying, an employee will consider operational requirements to CEB and school colleagues. All employees who request to work remotely are required to have a signed Blended Work Agreement.

Section 1: Employee details	
Name of Employee:	
Position:	
Contract   Work environment (please tick):	<input type="checkbox"/> Office-based <input type="checkbox"/> School-based
Contracted FTE/Hours:	

Section 2: Blended Arrangement details	
Blended Hours FTE:	
Commencement date:	/ /
Review date:	/ /
Expiration Date:	/ /

Section 3: Home Office details	
Address:	
Suburb:	Post Code:
Contact Number:	

Internet and Equipment	Yes	No
Does the Home Office have all the required equipment to undertake your role? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least one monitor (separate to laptop monitor)</li> <li>Computer accessories – mouse, keyboard</li> </ul>		
Does the Home Office have access to 3G or higher-speed broadband?		

4. Declaration & Authorisation			
I declare that I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>will maintain a safe work home office environment</li> <li>have appropriate household insurance to accommodate a home office</li> <li>will notify my Team Leader of any work-related accident, injury, illness within 24 hours</li> <li>will ensure the secure storage of confidential and sensitive information</li> <li>have read and will abide by the CEB Blended Work Operating Procedure</li> <li>confirm that I will be contactable during the periods in which remote work is carried out and available for communication with all relevant stakeholders via mobile or landline</li> </ul>			
Employee:		Date:	/ /
Team Leader Approval:		Date:	/ /

## Appendix 2: Health and Safety Checklist:

Employees are to take personal responsibility to ensure this checklist is accurately completed and maintained for the duration of the Arrangement. Please read "[How to set up a Workstation at Home document](#)" (appendix 3)

Home Office	Yes	No
My home office has at least 6.25 square meters of free space		
The room temperature can be adjusted as required		
There is no excessive noise affecting the work area		
There is adequate lighting for the tasks being performed		
All power outlets, adaptors, and cords are in good condition and not overloaded		
An appropriate dedicated work desk at least 1500mm (L) X 800mm (W) X 730mm (H)		
The seat height, tilt, angle, and backrest are appropriate for use		
The workspace is uncluttered and free of trips, slips, or fall hazards		

I have attached a photo of my Home Office working Environment

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Please provide a copy of the Blended Work Application with the completed Health and Safety Checklist and photo to the CEB, Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator for review.

<b>OHS Coordinator Approval:</b>		Date:	/	/
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For questions about completing the Health and Safety Checklist please contact the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator 0410 261 338.

For questions about completing the Blended Work Agreement please contact the Manager, Human Resources on 0436 460 275.