

Working arrangements for student support officers and school psychologists during the student vacation period

Information for student support officers (SSOs), school psychologists (SPs) and their principals/managers regarding the student vacation period.

Context

SSOs and SPs are employed under the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* (GSE). GSE employees are on duty 52 weeks of the year unless they are on an approved form of leave.

SSOs and SPs are employed in school-based roles. The *Flexible Working Arrangements for Corporate Employees* policy does not apply to employees in school-based roles.

The Department's *Flexible Working Hours Agreement 2022* (the Flex Agreement), which provides for flex and flex leave, applies to SSOs and SPs. The Flex Agreement is an industrial instrument and is separate from the *Flexible Working Arrangements for Corporate Employees* policy.

This advice only applies to SSOs and SPs, as well as Senior Psychologists Education (GSE) and Leaders Psychology Practice (GSE). This advice only applies to the student vacation periods.

Planning for work during the student vacation period

SSOs and SPs are encouraged to discuss their planned working arrangements in the student vacation period with their principal/manager. This includes:

- Periods of leave (if any) that are planned;
- Working days (if any) that remain;
- The nature of the work/duties that will be completed on working days;
- Anticipated working hours, having regard to the provisions of the Flex Agreement;
- Arrangements for working alone (if relevant) or other health and safety considerations; and
- Work location.

This should form part of the regular discussions between the employee and their principal/manager. Principals and managers are encouraged to plan for student vacation periods in consultation with relevant employees and to be proactive in discussing these matters. Principals and managers should have a follow-up discussion with employees at the commencement of the following school term to review and learn for future student vacation periods.

During the summer student vacation period, SSOs, SPs and their principals/managers should also refer to the [Christmas closedown](#) page for further information about the closedown.

Principals/managers and employees are encouraged to plan well in advance of each student vacation period.

SSOs and their managers may wish to use the [SSO holiday workplan](#) template to assist in planning for student vacation periods.

Working alone

Principals/managers should consult the Health, Safety and Staff Wellbeing Directorate's [working alone, in isolation or remote areas factsheet](#). Principals/managers must ensure that all appropriate arrangements have been made for SSO/SPs who will or may be required to work alone.

An employee may be required to work alone where the appropriate [risk assessment](#) has been implemented. Employees and principals/managers can seek further advice from the Health, Safety and Staff Wellbeing Directorate by contacting their [risk management advisor](#).

Working at an alternate location

An SSO/SP's location of work is their school or base school (for employees working at multiple schools).

Principals/managers are encouraged to consider, in consultation with the SSO/SP, whether the SSO/SP may work from an alternate location during the student vacation period. An SSO/SP must work from the location(s) that has been approved by the principal manager for the student vacation period. Approved locations may include:

- The school or base school;
- An additional school (where applicable);
- An alternate Departmental office (including network offices); or
- The SSO/SP's home.

It is the principal/manager's responsibility to determine the location of work during the student vacation period, having regard to the following factors:

- The operational needs of the school;
- The nature of the work that will be completed;
- Any planned professional learning or other activities;
- Supervision and/or working alone arrangements; and
- The personal needs of the SSO/SP.

An SSO/SP will be provided with access to a Departmental school or office location if they are unable or do not wish to work from home during the student vacation period.

An SSO/SP will not be approved to work remotely from a location in connection with personal travel.

An SSO/SP may only work from home during the student vacation period when the employee and principal/manager have completed the [Setting Up an Alternative Workplace Environment Checklist](#) and confirmed that the working from home arrangement satisfies each requirement on the checklist. Employees and principals/managers should consult the [Setting Up an Alternative Workplace Environment Factsheet](#) for further information.

Employees who ordinarily claim travel allowances, such as SPs who are allocated multiple schools, must note that they will not be entitled to claim any travel allowances on days that they work from home and are not required to travel.

Category:

-

Topics:

-
-
-
-

Business Unit:

-

[Page details](#)

[Page contact details](#)

Last modified date	19/12/2023
Business unit contact email	-
Executive director	-
Executive director's business unit	-

Last updated: 19-Dec-2023



This information is current as at "2/7/2025 9:15:46 am", Australian Eastern Time. For the most up-to-date information, go to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/industrial-relations/a-z-of-industrial-relations-topics/working-arrangements-for-student-support-officers-and-school-psy>

© State of New South Wales (Department of Education), 2025. For more information go to <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/copyright>.
