



## WORKING PART-TIME IN LEADERSHIP ROLES

Increasingly, employees in leadership roles look to work in agile ways, including to help balance career and personal needs. Western Sydney University is committed to supporting leaders to take up senior and management roles in more diverse and inclusive forms. There are many reasons leaders may want or need to work other than full-time hours; for example, family or carer responsibilities, disability or medical conditions, getting older and/or transitioning to retirement.

The University recognises that leadership roles have historically been considered inherently full-time and that this perception has tended to obstruct career progression for women in particular. Similarly, this rigid approach has been attributed to men in senior roles having less opportunity to balance work and family demands.

Western Sydney University encourages leaders to take advantage of the many supports and benefits available to those working part-time in supervisor, manager or other senior roles. Therefore, helping to tackle gender and other inequalities, build more inclusive, diverse and engaged leadership and attract and retain talented leaders.



### 5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Working part-time or fractionally is a relatively new and emerging leadership practice and will require some adaption to conventional habits. The following tips for success are based on increasingly recognised difficulties and enabling factors.

#### 1. CONSIDER JOB DESIGN FIT TO REDUCED HOURS

Simply reducing work hours and salary to less than full-time is a common pitfall of leaders taking on part-time or fractional roles. Instead, it is recommended that leaders also take into account whether the job design needs to be modified to ensure the work role tasks are manageable within the hours to be worked. Options such as job-sharing and other flexible arrangements may help to ensure the role is sustainable within a part-time or fractional form.



## 2. ACCESS A COACH OR MENTOR TO HELP NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGES

Managing senior roles in a less than full-time capacity can be challenging. Mentoring and coaching can be useful for generating solutions to navigate these challenges in a way that can be tailored to individual circumstances. Leaders working part-time are encouraged to make use of the University's coaching and mentoring programs.

Find further information about coaching and mentoring initiatives at the University:

- Coaching at Western  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/coaching\\_at\\_western](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/coaching_at_western)
- Academic and Professional Mentoring Programs  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career\\_development](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career_development)

## 3. KNOW THE SUPPORTS AND STAFF BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO LEADERS WORKING PART-TIME

As well as coaching and mentoring, the University has a broad range of relevant supports available to senior staff, managers and/or supervisors working in part-time or fractional roles. Sometimes, it is wrongly assumed that only full-time team members are entitled to access such measures. Getting to know these provisions and accessing them as much as possible can make a big difference when working part-time in a leadership role, for example:

- Support for Student and Staff Carers  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity\\_diversity/equity\\_and\\_diversity/disabilities](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity_diversity/equity_and_diversity/disabilities)
- Supporting Parents  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity\\_diversity/equity\\_and\\_diversity/gender\\_equality/parenting\\_support](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity_diversity/equity_and_diversity/gender_equality/parenting_support)
- Support for Staff with Disabilities  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity\\_diversity/equity\\_and\\_diversity/disabilities](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/equity_diversity/equity_and_diversity/disabilities)
- Transitioning to Fractional Appointment with Full-time Superannuation Benefit for staff over 52 years of age  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/human\\_resources/ohr/your\\_employment/flexible\\_work\\_options](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/human_resources/ohr/your_employment/flexible_work_options)





- Academic Development Program  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career\\_development/academic\\_development\\_program](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career_development/academic_development_program)
- Inspire Leadership Program  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career\\_development/inspire\\_leadership\\_program](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career_development/inspire_leadership_program)
- Vice-Chancellor's Professional Development Scholarship  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career\\_development/vice-chancellors\\_professional\\_development\\_scholarships](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career_development/vice-chancellors_professional_development_scholarships)
- Staff Postgraduate Coursework Study Scholarships  
[https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career\\_development/uws\\_staff\\_postgraduate\\_study\\_scholarships](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/tld/home/career_development/uws_staff_postgraduate_study_scholarships)

#### 4. CONNECT WITH COLLEAGUES

When working part-time and/or remotely it can become crucial to actively find ways to connect with colleagues, including those who are also in leadership roles. It is important to find routine opportunities to 'check-in' with colleagues, particularly those involved directly with your work. Because of the pressures of time, this may require creative solutions, for example regularly scheduled Zoom meetings across different campuses, working lunches together to catch up on important issues, or 'walk and talk' meetings where colleagues hold discussions whilst walking on campus together. The University also hosts several staff networks which may be particularly relevant, for example:

- Engaged Parents Network
- Senior Women's Network
- Network for Emerging Women





## 5. ADDRESS ANY POTENTIAL CONCERNS ABOUT LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY

This form of flexible working can at times elicit concern by others of a loss of productivity. It can be helpful to openly address these fears and to explicitly outline how performance and output will be managed in a conversation between the part-time staff and their supervisor. This can seem awkward initially, but is key to managing the situation constructively. Actively demonstrating clear and transparent measures to manage workload can help to alleviate concerns and build confidence that the arrangement will work well.

The University has an online module for managers about flexible working arrangements. This training is designed to support managers to more effectively supervise team members working flexibly. This may be a useful resource for supervising senior staff working in fractional or part-time capacities. Access the module via Staff Online and searching 'flexible working'. Also, many recent sources provide contemporary guidance on the growing trend of successfully working in a flexible way, for example:

### **Can you work part-time and be a leader?**

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/can-you-work-part-time-leader-jenny-garrett/>

### **How to Make Part Time Work for You**

<https://hbr.org/podcast/2019/11/how-to-make-part-time-work-for-you>

### **Flexible Working: The Way of the Future**

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/joyburnford/2019/05/28/flexible-working-the-way-of-the-future/#48f37ebd4874>

### **More of Us Could Work in Part-time Roles if They Were Designed Better**

<https://theconversation.com/more-of-us-could-work-in-part-time-roles-if-they-were-designed-better-82436>

## QUERIES AND ASSISTANCE

- Contact your HR Advisor or Senior HR Partner.
- Staff may also contact the Office of Equity and Diversity for advice and support.