

OVERVIEW

Change is a normal part of work and should form part of the day to day discussions between a manager and their employees. Managers are required to consult with employees about change that will affect them. Not only are there industrial obligations, research has shown that consulting with employees about change, early in the process, results in better outcomes for employers and employees alike.

At Southern Cross University, our formal obligations relating to workplace change are set out in the Enterprise Agreement (EA). The EA also establishes the Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) as a forum through which significant workplace change is proposed, discussed and feedback considered.

Examples of significant workplace change discussed at the JCF include, but are not limited to:

1. Changes that may involve redundancy, forced relocation or forced transfer of groups of employees, i.e. through work unit structural change, a downsizing of the workforce, or via a change in course offerings from one campus to another;
2. The introduction of significant technological change; and
3. Alterations to work arrangements such as hours of work.

JCF MEMBERSHIP

The JCF is chaired by the Vice-President (Finance) and consists of three additional management representatives and the Staff Consultative Group (SCG):

1. A member of academic staff (*currently Dr Daniel Bucher*);
2. A member of professional staff (*currently Ms Toni Ledgerwood*);
3. An employee nominated by the SCU Branch President of the CPSU (*Ms Shelly Odewahn*); and
4. An employee nominated by the SCU Branch President of the NTEU (*Dr Jenny Johnston*).

PROCESS

Prior to implementing the steps below, if you are considering significant workplace change, or are unsure as to whether proposed change within your work unit falls within this definition, please contact Mr Nick Mazzer (T: 02 66273964 or E: nick.mazzer@scu.edu.au) or Stephanie Jarvis (T: 07 55893017 or E: stephanie.jarvis@scu.edu.au) for advice as early as possible. If the proposed change is the result of the recommendations of either an internal or external review, evidence that the relevant Executive Member has accepted the recommendations of the review and approved its implementation must be provided.

Where it is identified that significant change is being considered within your work unit, take the following steps:

1. Have open discussions with employee/s within your work unit about the nature of and reasons for the proposed change. Discussions may occur on a group basis within teams/work units, or, where necessary, with individuals. Where redundancy is proposed as an outcome of the change

process, you will require a comprehensive briefing by HR Services before any discussion with the identified employee/s;

2. As a result of preliminary discussions, encourage employees to ask questions, seek clarification, give feedback, and provide alternatives to any proposal, especially when structural change may result in redundancy or redeployment;
3. Where downsizing is being considered, options such as a voluntary move to part-time work, potential for job-share or job-redesign, or a call for voluntary redundancies (where more than one position is targeted and only if considered appropriate), should also be considered. The University is required to demonstrate that these options have been considered as part of the formal JCF process.
4. In consultation with HR Services, complete the [JCF significant change proposal](#) template in preparation for discussion at a JCF meeting.
5. Allow plenty of time for the change process. Effective change can be adversely influenced by unrealistic timeframes. Where insufficient preparation time has been allowed, the JCF process will be delayed until suitable preliminary consultation has occurred.

JCF meetings are scheduled regularly from February to November each year. A final copy of the change proposal, together with other relevant documents, must be received by HR Services **at least three weeks prior** to a scheduled JCF meeting. Change proposals received after the three week cut-off will be placed on the agenda for the subsequent JCF meeting.

You are required to attend the JCF meeting at which your proposal will be discussed. This will allow members of the JCF to seek further clarification or ask any questions in regards to the change proposal.

After the JCF meeting, the Change Proposal must be distributed to all affected staff and their feedback invited on the proposed change via email to jcf@scu.edu.au. Employees who are on extended leave (eg maternity leave or long service leave) must also be provided with a copy of the [JCF significant change proposal](#), if they are affected by the proposed change. A strict 10 working day timeframe for feedback from JCF members and affected employees applies.

Feedback received is summarised by HR Services and provided to the Chair of JCF. After consulting with you and the relevant Executive Member about the feedback received, the Chair of the JCF forwards a recommendation to the Vice Chancellor concerning the proposed change.

Both you and the relevant Executive Member will be advised of the Vice Chancellor's decision. If the proposed change is approved, in consultation with HR you should advise affected employees and ensure they are kept informed as the change is implemented.

[Nov17]

Change proposal flowchart

Consultation

As early as possible, discuss the proposed change/s with affected employees and ensure they are aware of the workplace change process. Discussions should continue with affected employees as the formal change proposal is developed to ensure employees are kept informed. Ensure that the HR team is consulted at the earliest possible stage if redundancy or redeployment are potential outcomes of the proposed change.



Change proposal and formal consultation process

A formal [JCF significant change proposal](#) is developed (by the Head of Work Unit in conjunction with HR Services) outlining the nature of the change, expected impact including benefits or adverse effects, consultation, any alternatives to redundancy if applicable and timeframe for implementation. This document is discussed at a Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) meeting. All affected employees receive a copy of the change proposal and have 10 days to provide formal feedback to the Chair of JCF via email to jcf@scu.edu.au.



Feedback

The Chair of JCF receives the collated feedback and discusses this feedback with you and the relevant Executive Member. Affected employees, their nominated representatives, the two unions and JCF members have up to 5 working days to provide any further feedback. A recommendation is provided to the Vice Chancellor.



Implementation

If the proposed change is approved by the Vice Chancellor, the University will release the final change plan, and affected employees are advised of the decision to implement the relevant changes and kept informed as implementation progresses.