

Staff Change Protocols

Category: Human Resources
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Introduction:

This document details the University's standard processes when managing change processes that could impact on employees and aims, during periods of change, to minimise the disruption to staff members and facilitate 'business as usual'.

The University of Canterbury is committed to a policy of consultation with affected staff and their representatives during change processes, where any proposal is made by the employer that may result in significant changes to the structures, staffing levels or work practices within the University.

The University will follow all contractual provisions, legislative requirements and its own policy guidelines and terms of reference documents and will use a fair and consultative process.

These protocols apply to all University of Canterbury employees. They are not applicable to any function, duty or power of the University Council conferred on it by the Education Act 1989.

1. Principles

Affected staff are those people whose positions would, or might be, adversely affected to a significant extent by a proposed change.

The following principles will apply to affected staff during a proposed change:

- the change process will be fair and transparent;
- where a response is being sought on a proposed change, staff will be provided with access to sufficient information to enable them to develop an informed response to the proposal (subject to any commercial sensitivity or privacy considerations);
- throughout a change process, relevant information will be provided as soon as is practicable;
- reasonable time will be given to enable affected staff to assess the information and provide a response;

- where required, Unions will be notified and consulted;
- the University will enter consultation with an open mind and give genuine consideration to the matters raised;
- staff will be treated with respect and dignity during any change process;
- relevant legislation and the provisions of applicable employment agreements will be followed;
- alternatives to redundancy, including redeployment options, will be considered by the University, both during the change process and/or at the conclusion of the process, as may be appropriate in any particular case. However, the provisions of the State Sector Act 1988 must still be complied with. Therefore all new positions that are not temporary, relieving, acting or casual will be notified in a way to enable all suitably qualified people to apply and any subsequent appointments will be made on merit;
- the University will provide affected staff with access to support services.

The final decision in respect of any proposed change will be the University's.

2. Process

Change management must follow a thorough and fair process in order to meet good employer and other legislative requirements. However, the specific change process that is followed will vary from case to case depending on factors such as the number of affected staff and the particular area under review. At the minimum, the following activities need to occur before outcomes are communicated.

2.1 Proposal to Change

Affected staff and, where applicable, Unions will initially be notified either in person or by letter of a proposal to change, and will be invited to a subsequent meeting where details of the proposed change will be provided.

Information may be compiled into a proposal document (the precise form and detail of which will depend on the nature and extent of the proposed change). The information will advise affected staff on the nature and reasons for the proposed change, will outline the process that will be followed and will be provided to the affected staff either at the time of notification or shortly thereafter.

2.2 Opportunity to respond

After this initial notification, the affected staff will be given the opportunity to give their response and feedback to the proposed change and to put forward any suggestions and alternatives.

2.3 The Decision

The decision maker will consider feedback from the affected staff and then arrange for the decision to be presented to the affected staff. The decision will be recorded in writing by way of a letter and then given to the affected staff.

Alternatives to redundancy will be considered for any affected staff whose roles are to be disestablished. This shall include consideration of any potential redeployment options, subject to the requirements of the State Sector Act 1988.

Version Control Table		
Action	Approval Body	Date Uploaded
Full Review	Director, Human Resources	5 October 2009
Minor Amendment	Director, Human Resources	16 February 2012
Full Review <i>Minor amendments</i>	Director, Human Resources	29 August 2012

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