

INFORMATION SESSION

Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) - Process for Supervisors

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Acknowledgement of Country



Agenda

Background & Context – Why the VSS is being offered.

Key Dates & Milestones – Important deadlines managers need to be aware of.

The VSS Process – How requests are assessed and managed.

Manager's Role & Responsibilities – What you need to do and what you shouldn't do.

Common Questions – Handling difficult conversations and managing expectations.

Next Steps and Questions – Where to get more information and support.



Background

- **Why is this happening?**
 - Aligning workforce size with business needs.
 - Offering voluntary options to support staff with a structured exit opportunity where applicable.
- **Eligibility:** Open to **continuing** staff – Professional and Academic.
- **VSS as an alternative to redundancy:** A VSS is a common workforce management approach where employees voluntarily express interest in leaving, with mutually agreed separation terms, rather than undergoing a standard redundancy process where entitlements are strictly prescribed by the Enterprise Agreement. This process helps minimise involuntary redundancies and provides employees with greater flexibility in their departure.
- **Decision Making:** Each expression of interest will be considered in the context of our ongoing strategic and operational needs, ensuring that we can accommodate the reduction of the relevant position in that particular function. This means that, while we appreciate all applications, not every request will be supported.

*Employees are encouraged to seek independent financial, taxation and career advice before deciding.
They can withdraw their interest all the way until the point the formal mutual agreement document is signed.*



What can staff express interest in?

Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS)

- Allows staff to voluntarily express interest in departing the University via mutual separation.
- Final working days may be proposed up to **30 June 2025** at the latest.

Early Retirement

- These schemes are put in place by employers to assist those at a pre-retirement age to retire early.
- An approved early retirement scheme is a payment which is tax-free to a limit (pending eligibility).
- Like VSS, final working days may be proposed up to 30 June 2025.

This is subject to ATO approval of scheme (application is underway). Payment structure to be confirmed.

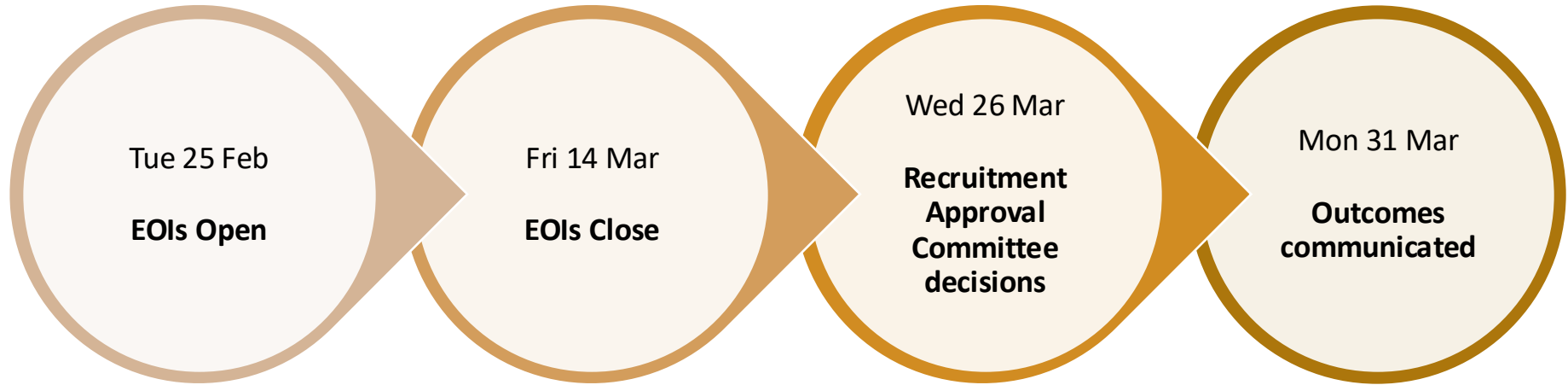
Pre-Retirement

- An expedited process of planning and preparing for retirement which may include a gradual transition.
- Final working days are still preferred to by 30 June 2025 however, there may be more **flexibility** as long as mutually beneficial to ANU and staff member. Payment structure to be confirmed.

Further advice is being sought on pre and early retirement scheme provisions, and staff are encouraged to express their interest in the VSS EOI form, where further advice will come from your local HR Business Partner as soon as possible.

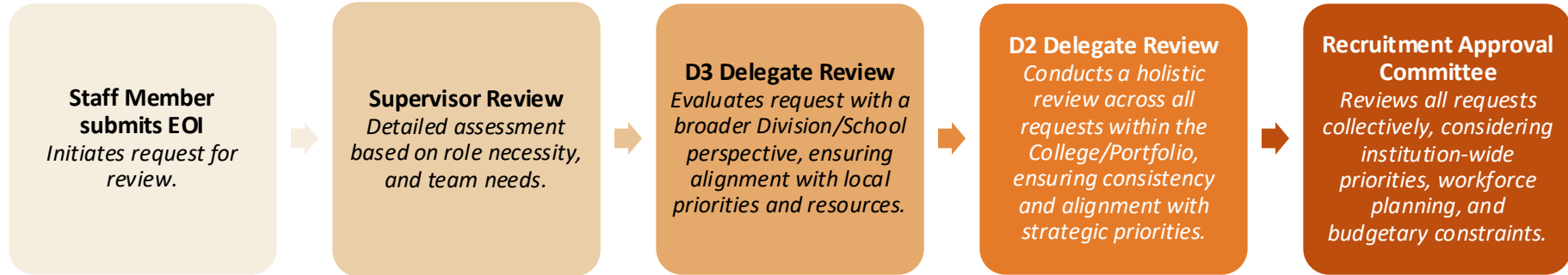


Key dates



VSS Process

- The VSS process is designed to be fair, transparent, and aligned with the university's strategic needs.
- Multi-level review process: All EOIs undergo a structured review to ensure careful evaluation of business impacts. RAC consider all requests for a final determination
- The **assessment form** helps supervisors and delegates holistically consider business needs for both Professional and Academic positions, including workload implications for remaining staff.
- Supervisors should also be open to **alternative solutions** suggested by staff, even if they are ineligible for VSS.
- Staff are encouraged to **speak** with their supervisor, and D3 delegate before submitting an EOI.



Assessment Criteria

Whether the position is essential to current and future needs.	<p>Does this position align with the University's evolving priorities?</p> <p>Can the duties of this role be absorbed by other roles?</p> <p>How will long-term operational or strategic needs impact the necessity of this role?</p> <p>Will the loss of the role negatively impact educational programs, research activity, or student experience?</p>
How the workload reduction could be accommodated.	<p>How will the tasks and responsibilities of this role be redistributed or cease?</p> <p>Is the redistribution reasonable and sustainable for remaining staff?</p> <p>Is the redistribution aligned with relevant academic workload models (where applicable)?</p>
Whether the employee has essential skills or knowledge that cannot easily be replaced.	<p>Does the staff member have unique skills or knowledge critical to strategic initiatives, academic projects, or other key University activities?</p> <p>What knowledge gaps would emerge if this employee were to leave, and how would they impact operational continuity?</p> <p>What risks exist if this expertise is lost, and are there strategies to mitigate them?</p>
Assess potential cost savings or budget adjustments from reducing the position.	<p>What are the potential cost savings or budget adjustments from this position's removal?</p> <p>How does this align with the University's financial strategy and long-term sustainability?</p> <p>Could this staff reduction impact income through student fees, research funding, or government grants?</p> <p>Would the VSS allow the University to recruit in new intellectual directions to in turn attract more students?</p>

Manager Responsibilities

Managers play a crucial role in supporting employees considering the Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) by offering guidance, addressing concerns, and providing necessary information.

Key responsibilities include:

Timely assessment for EOI request forms that are submitted;

Providing guidance on the process; and

Supporting empathetic and transparent communication.

Further information on how to assess the viability of the EOI, process considerations and guidance for how to supportively communicate with staff can be found within the **Managers Briefing Pack**.



Have transparent conversations about:

Employee expectations & disappointment

Managing disappointment and uncertainty is key. Some employees may assume submitting an EOI guarantees approval. Be clear that this is a business-driven decision and not automatic.

Impact on team morale & workload

Remaining employees may feel uncertain about workload distribution or staff may be resistant to express interest due to the potential impact on their team. Proactively communicate how workload changes will be managed.

Avoiding premature discussions

Managers should not pre-emptively encourage/discourage applications. Responses should always be neutral: “The organisation considers multiple factors, and decisions are made at a higher level.”

Fairness concerns

Employees may question why some requests are approved while others are not. Reinforce that approvals are based on operational needs and strategic workforce planning rather than tenure or personal preference.



Key compliance obligations

Roles will not be replaced

Headcount and salary budget for the role will be removed from your budget.

Although it is an employee-initiated process we are still subject to legal and compliance requirements for 'genuine' redundancy.

Obligation to explore alternatives

Consideration must be given to redeployment, re-skilling, or alternative solutions.

VSS, although voluntary, still must be a carefully considered and **only offered when alternatives are not available.**



Questions and Support



We ask to you please raise your hand or add a comment in the chat.



You can reach out to your local HR Business Partnering team for further questions or vss@anu.edu.au.



We will also update the website to add any new questions that haven't been covered in our FAQ's available online.

Wellbeing Support: Maintaining your health and wellness, whilst supporting the health and wellness of those around you, is important. We understand that supporting staff with this process and some conversations with staff can be a challenging time for managers too. For staff counselling support services, visit the [Employee Assistance Webpage](#).



Next Steps

Seek further
information

Chat to your
supervisor/
D3 Delegate

Submit your EOI
by
Fri 14 March

Expression of Interest for
Voluntary Separation

