

# FAQ's – Voluntary separation pathway for staff in areas undergoing formal organisational change

The University opened a second Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) to all staff on Friday 29 August 2025.

The VSS complements the formal change activities across the University, offering a supported and voluntary pathway for continuing employees to exit the University where appropriate.

This guide has been developed to support staff who are considering expressing interest in voluntarily separating from the University in the context of an organisational change proposal or implementation plan.

**Applications from staff in areas affected by formal organisational change** will have the review of their applications **prioritised**.

To ensure staff in areas affected by formal organisational change have the opportunity for an earlier review, please complete this form by **5pm Friday 12 September 2025**. We have set up a specific e-form for you to express your interest, available [here](#).

Submitting an EOI does not guarantee approval. Each request is subject to formal review against the communicated criteria. Staff will be individually notified of the outcome following assessment. Any approved separation will then proceed to formal documentation and confirmation of an agreed separation date.

Once consultation feedback and EOI outcomes have been considered, the impact on remaining roles will be reassessed and the workplace reorganisation process adjusted accordingly.

*Please note: this information is additional information for staff in areas undergoing formal change. Details on the VSS application process generally is available [here](#).*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is a voluntary separation EOI?

A voluntary separation is where employees express interest in leaving, with mutually agreed separation terms. This process supports both individual choice and organisational needs, balancing staff preferences with the requirement to retain critical skills and capabilities.

### I am directly affected in a change proposal or implementation plan; can I voluntarily leave?

Yes. If your position is proposed to be reduced in a change proposal, or confirmed for disestablishment through an implementation plan, you may be at risk of being declared surplus.

If you would prefer to voluntarily leave instead of progressing through these processes, you can indicate this to the University. If you do not, the University will proceed with considering alternatives in line with the formal processes.

### If my position is directly affected does this mean my EOI is guaranteed approval?

No. Submitting a voluntary separation EOI is a way to indicate your interest in exiting the organisation; however, it does not automatically remove you from consideration for other opportunities. Where alternatives, including redeployment are identified applications would not be supported. It is also important to understand that change proposals are subject to consultation and changes. This can also mean more opportunities become available.

### I am in an area undergoing change, but my position is not at risk, will my application still be considered?

Yes. Even if your role is not currently identified as being at risk in the proposal, your expression of interest will still be considered.

At this stage, planning is not finalised and the University must continue to progress toward our financial goals.

This means we are open to exploring all interest in the Voluntary Separation Scheme, as in some cases this may help to reduce the need for other involuntary redundancies.

While your application may not be supported if your role is required for the future state, every expression of interest is carefully assessed as part of the overall implementation planning.

### If I express interest in the Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) process, what payment package will I receive, A VSS or a VR?

Staff whose continuing positions are directly affected by a change proposal and are at risk of their position being declared surplus (to be disestablished or reduced in number) may be eligible for Voluntary Redundancy in line with the redundancy provisions of the Enterprise Agreement.

Staff in areas undergoing change but not at-risk of their positions becoming surplus (for example, a direct transfer, change in reporting line or a change to position title/position description) would be offered a package in line with the VSS.

### What are the criteria for the voluntary separation to be a 'genuine redundancy' and why is that important?

Even though a voluntary separation is initiated by you, it must still meet the criteria for a *genuine redundancy* in order to be approved. This is important for two key reasons:

1. **Tax treatment** – To be eligible for the tax concessions that apply to redundancy payments, the separation must meet the requirements of a genuine redundancy under tax law. Individual eligibility will also depend on your personal circumstances, but the University must meet its obligations in how the redundancy is defined and assessed.
2. **Organisational need** – It would not be appropriate or in the University's interests to support a voluntary separation unless your position is genuinely no longer required. This ensures that we retain the necessary skills and capabilities to support the future structure.

To be considered a genuine redundancy, the following must apply:

- There is no longer an ongoing requirement for your position due to changes in the organisation
- There are no suitable alternative positions available that match your skills and experience

As such, it may not be until the later stages of the change process — once structures are clear and redeployment options are assessed — that we can confirm whether a request can be supported.

### I am in a Closed EOI, will my interest be approved if no one else applies?

Submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) indicates your willingness to be considered for voluntary separation, but it does not guarantee that your request will be approved.

Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, considering the skills, knowledge and capabilities required to deliver the University's future operating model, and ensuring that critical functions are not affected.

The University retains the right to use a merit-based assessment process to ensure that these critical needs are met. We also have an obligation to transfer staff into suitable alternative positions where they are available.

If multiple staff express interest, and not all can be accepted, a determination between similar applications must be made.

Each staff member who submits an EOI will be advised of the University's decision following assessment.

### How will the timing of this process work alongside formal change activities?

Interest can be considered alongside planning already underway. The voluntary pathway was already offered to relevant staff as per the change proposal documentation, and some staff have already expressed interest in this option however we are taking this opportunity to re-emphasise this option, alongside the broader VSS scheme.

### When will I receive an outcome?

The outcome of the University's decision (**in principle**) will be communicated as swiftly as possible but must occur alongside decision making around future-state designs.

For areas that are already working through implementation, interest will be considered alongside the EOI processes already underway.

For areas yet to release implementation plans, we will advise staff of outcomes prior to the commencement of an implementation plan where possible. In some instances however, the ability to confirm if a separation would be 'genuine' cannot be confirmed until during implementation. This is due to several important factors:

- **The proposed future structure is subject to change.** During consultation, feedback may lead to adjustments in the number, type, or configuration of roles. Confirming a voluntary separation before this is finalised may not be possible.
- **Redundancy must meet specific criteria.** Even where a position is identified for disestablishment in an implementation plan, this alone may not meet the threshold for a genuine redundancy. As outlined above, a position is only genuinely redundant if there are no other suitable roles available within the organisation.
- **Organisational changes can be complex.** For example, while a number of positions may be proposed for disestablishment or reduction, through the process new vacancies may arise. Even if these roles do not initially appear to align with your position, skills or interests, they may be suitable for others, and their movement may in turn create further vacancies that

could be a match for your position — potentially removing the need for redundancy altogether.

These complexities mean the timing and process for considering voluntary separation or redundancy requests can vary. We hope this context is helpful in understanding the University's approach. Engage with your supervisor or the relevant HRBP to stay informed of timing.

### Who will review and approve my request?

Your request will be reviewed and assessed by the relevant leaders responsible for the change proposal or implementation processes with Executive review from a University-wide lens.

Final approval must also be granted by the CPO at signing of the deed of release.

### What if I am not able to be considered genuinely redundant, so am not offered a package, but still want to leave the University?

If your role is not considered genuinely redundant and you are therefore not offered a separation package, you still have the option to resign from your position if you wish to leave the University. The terms of your resignation, including notice periods and any final entitlements, will be in accordance with your contract of employment and the relevant provisions of the Enterprise Agreement.

If you are considering this option, we encourage you to speak with your manager or HR Business Partner. In some cases, there may be alternative pathways worth exploring, such as pre-retirement arrangements or other forms of transition support, depending on your individual circumstances and eligibility.

### If my EOI is approved, when will my separation take effect?

The effective date of your separation will be a decision made by your leadership, as agreed with the University, taking into account the business requirements of when the work of the position is able to be ceased. Your voluntary separation offer will be conditional on your agreement to leave by the date set by the University.

### Can I swap roles with someone else so I can leave, and they can stay?

We appreciate your willingness to support the change process and your interest in exploring flexible options such as role swaps. However, there are important industrial and structural considerations that limit our ability to accommodate these kinds of arrangements.

A redundancy must be linked to the *position*, not the individual in the role. This means we can only consider a separation where the role you currently hold is identified for disestablishment due to changes in the University's operational requirements.

If another position is not identified as no longer required, it must remain part of the ongoing structure, and we cannot

make it redundant simply because someone in that role has expressed interest in leaving.

With that in mind, formally swapping roles also presents several challenges. While roles may appear similar, they often involve different duties, accountabilities, or capability requirements. If a swap were to be considered, the person moving into the ongoing role would need to be assessed as suitable, typically through a merit-based process, to ensure they meet the requirements of the position. In many cases, this may not be straightforward or possible.

We genuinely value all expressions of interest that support the University through change; however, role swaps may not be able to be accommodated.

We hope this guide has provided helpful information to support your consideration of voluntary separation in the context of formal change.

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss your individual circumstances, please contact your local HR team at any time or [vss@anu.edu.au](mailto:vss@anu.edu.au) — we are here to help you understand the available options and the process.

You are also encouraged to speak with your supervisor to explore what may be possible in your specific situation.

If you need additional support, please visit the Renew ANU Wellbeing and Support Services page for a range of resources and services available to staff.

[Renew ANU Wellbeing and support services page.](#)