

Dear Member of the Finnish Union of University Professors!

The Covid-19 Pandemic, in its various phases, has had an impact on the work of the university personnel. The use of different remote working systems has increased, among other things. The necessity to learn new methods has increased with the changes in work. Additionally, securing the functional capability of organisations during the prolonged crisis may have demanded measures where the personnel has been accommodating at the expense of its own well-being and carrying capability. Also, [the work loads of academic leaders and supervisors has increased](#). They have been burdened with worry about the well-being of the personnel.

The Negotiation Organisation for Public Sector Professionals JUKO and the Finnish Union of University Professors want with this letter to direct the attention of members to certain key issues regarding work time and remote working during the pandemic.

In the university sector, matters affecting work have been, e.g., the following:

- the additional work caused by special arrangements (e.g., additional work caused by remote teaching, taking care of tasks remotely)
- the additional support for learning and well-being of students (e.g., the need for supervision)
- the immediate and necessary tasks caused by the pandemic, such as, e.g., nonstop workday caused by the additional tasks, and the stress thereof.
- the breaks in relationships with students caused by the pandemic, which increase the need for support
- the requirement of increased level of hygiene maintenance caused by the pandemic (e.g., in laboratories)
- the new protection and security measures in various functions and their supervision (such as the use of protective masks and the supervision of that use)
- the additional work caused by the arrangement of student selections and the tasks related to the supervision of entrance exams.
- the remote leadership

Working environment in remote work

The longer remote working continues, the more significant become remote work conditions. The ergonomics of work conducted at home is often challenging. The right working equipment, such as work seats, electric tables and the computer screen size and quality, helps coping at work. The occupational safety and ergonomics in remote work conditions should be discussed between the employer and the employee in all work units. It is justifiable to redirect resources that have been freed due to the pandemic (such as, e.g., travelling expenses reimbursements) into, e.g., solutions maintaining and improving work ergonomics. In principle, it is the

responsibility of the employer to provide working equipment also for remote working at home. If you yourself have bought, e.g., an electric table, you should look into the instructions given by the tax authorities.

During exceptional times, the emphasis is on the importance of work planning

Work plan, granted in the collective agreement, serves as a security and an important tool for tracking the amount of work on both individual and unit levels for research and teaching personnel. Work plan enables individuals to make their work visible.

We would like to point out that also in the middle of a term's work plan, it is possible to change and update the plan to match the real work amount. It has been agreed in the collective agreement that the supervisor and the employee may assess the realisation of the work plan and change the plan should tasks to require it. Additionally, it has been decreed in the agreement, e.g., about the compensation of teaching happening outside the scope of the work plan. During this pandemic, the use of this option has been sparse. We encourage you to suggest compensation regarding extra work when your tasks amount to more than is required in the work plan.

It is soon time to draw next academic year's work plan. It is worth investing in and taking care of noting the actual scope of the work.

Shop-stewards are there to assist you!

We invite you to contact, with low threshold, the Union professor shop-steward or your local Union chapter or the office of the Union, should you have any questions regarding work time or reconciling work and work time.

We remain looking after your interests, best regards,

JUKO
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Negotiations Manager

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