Part 1 General

1.1 Summary

.1 Unless otherwise indicated, follow the standards below when planning for office areas. These standards are not intended to restrict or replace professional judgment.

.2 The purpose of this section is to provide office areas to the diverse members of the McGill community that are flexible and efficient while promoting well-being, collaboration, equity, inclusion, sustainability, and health & safety.

.3 Optimizing our current and future office spaces ensures that, as an institution, we use these important physical resources effectively. The following guidelines were developed to orient the allocation of office space, provide design parameters for office areas and align these decisions with benchmarks of existing and future buildings.

.4 Any project or initiative which aims to or involves a change to the occupancy type or an increase of the occupant load of an existing space must be carried out in conformity with the Directive on the Allocation of University Space and in consultation with the project architect. The constraints of existing buildings shall be considered at all times.

.5 There is no 'one-size-fits-all' office area design for the diverse members of the McGill community. Designs should follow the nature of the work and the functional needs of the unit or team. Any Flexible Work Arrangements within the unit or team must be communicated in any space request or prior to the start of a design exercise for Office Areas.

.6 For clarity, the terms department, group, or team will be used interchangeably to represent a distinct subsection of a larger faculty or unit. Similarly, the term unit will be used to represent an academic faculty or administrative unit.

.7 These guidelines should be read with the specific technical sections of McGill's Building Design and Technical Standards as well as McGill's Office Furniture Standards.

1.2 Codes and Standards

.1 The existing laws, regulations, standards, and reference documents govern the design of Office Areas:

- .1 B-1.1 – Building Act
- .2 B-1.1, r.2 – Construction Code
- .3 B-1.1, r.3 – Safety Code
- .4 S-2.1 – Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety
- .5 NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code

.2 The following guidelines also impact the furnishing of Office Areas:

- .1 Office Ergonomics
- .2 L'approvisionnement en biens et services accessible aux personnes handicapées - Guide d'accompagnement – Volet équipements de bureau, 2e édition

1.3 General Planning Principles

.1 Planning Framework:

.1 The design professional shall begin by acknowledging the number and type of concurrent occupants based on the work model(s), the nature of the work and functional needs of the team and the task profile of the individual occupants.

.2 Establish the appropriate mix of space typologies within the office area which support the team's functionality.

.3 Define the space type attributes for each space typology needed to efficiently support the occupant's task profiles.

.4 Design the office area based on existing conditions of the space, general design requirements and the appropriate mix of space typologies within the total office area.

.2 Types of Occupants:

The McGill community is composed of diverse members with different roles that support the mission of the University. These include:

- Academic Faculty and Staff
- Administrative Staff
- Graduate Students
- Library Faculty and Staff
- Maintenance & Operations Staff
- Research Faculty and Staff
- Visitors

The following table shows the target net assignable square meter per person by type of Occupant for planning purposes. These guidelines are not a guarantee that a faculty or staff member will be assigned a specific amount of space, but rather, these guidelines define the target net assignable area that a person should occupy across all space typologies within the Office area.

Types of Occupants	**Target net area per concurrent occupant (m^2)**
PETP • Academic Faculty and Staff • Administrative Staff • Library Faculty and Staff • Maintenance & Operations Staff • Research Faculty and Staff	11.5 m^2
EETP • Graduate Students	5.30 m^2

Net assignable square meter is defined as the area of a building suitable for occupancy measured from the interior walls, including closets and internal corridors within assignable space. This excludes public corridors, bathrooms, technical shafts, and other non-assignable space.

.3 **Space Typologies within the Office Area:**

The Office Areas for each of the types of non-student occupants identified above are composed of a variety of space typologies. The diagram below is a visual example of the space typologies within the Office Area.

The following table shows the recommended ratios to be used as a starting point for planning and design purposes.

Space Typologies within the Office Area	**Target net area / concurrent occupant (m^2)**	**% of the total Office Area**
Individual Workspace	$6.9m^2$	60%
Collaboration Space	$3.45m^2$	30%
Support Space	$1.15m^2$	10%
TOTAL OFFICE AREA	**11.5 m^2**	**100%**

There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ design for office areas. The space layouts should be optimized according to work functions and tasks, to foster innovation, and create long-term flexibility of offices spaces. As such, the design team must determine, in consultation with the occupants, the appropriate proportions of each space typology within the ranges established in the table below, based on the diverse methods and manners of working in the different faculties, administrative units and other supporting functions of the University.

The following table shows the recommended maximum and minimum proportions of each space typology within the Office Area. The proportions will differ within these ranges based on the nature of the work, the functional needs, the hybrid work model, and task profiles of the teams.

Space Typologies within the Office Area	**Range of net area / concurrent occupant**	**% of the total Office Area**
Individual Workspace	5.75m^2 – 9.775m^2	50% - 85%
Collaboration Space	1.15m^2 – 5.175m^2	10% - 45%
Support Space	0.575m^2 - 2.3m^2	5% - 20%
TOTAL OFFICE AREA	**11.5 m²**	**100%**

1.4 Glossary of Space Typologies within the Office Area:
The following are examples of space types included within the space typology categories:

.1 **Individual Workspaces**: Physical environment devoted to individual work where most daily tasks are performed.

.1 **Individual Office**: A closed workspace equipped with flexible or semi-flexible furnishings designed for a single concurrent occupant (single workpoint) that may or may not also contain collaboration space and support space.

.2 **Multi-desk Office**: A closed workspace equipped with flexible or semi-flexible furnishings designed for more than a single occupant (multiple workpoints) that may or may not also contain collaboration space and support space.

.3 **Open Office Area**: An open workspace containing multiple individual workpoints and flexpoints, often configured in clusters, and likely also contains collaboration space and support space.

.4 **Workpoint**: A configuration of flexible or semi-flexible furnishings, integrated in a closed or open workspace, designed for a single concurrent occupant, and is distinct from a collaboration space.

.5 **Flexpoint**: A configuration of flexible furnishings, integrated in an open workspace or collaboration space, designed for a single occupant or multiple concurrent occupants.

.2 **Collaboration Spaces:** Physical environment devoted to collaborative activities that support in-person and virtual interactions. Different modes of collaboration can take place (presentations, content sharing, brainstorming, team planning, etc.) in spaces configured in different ways in terms of size, capacity, and layout.

.1 **Conference room:** A closed collaboration space with fixed furniture and furnishings.

.2 **Meeting room:** A closed collaboration space with flexible or semi-flexible furnishings. This type of space is typically occupied by one group that focuses on one activity at a time.

.3 **Multimodal area:** An open, semi-open or closed space for a diversity of working modes carried out by multiple occupants. Different working modes may include teamwork sessions, impromptu work activities or tasks at flexpoints, and socialization. This type of space can be occupied by multiple individuals or groups focused on different activities occurring at the same time.

.4 **Focus room:** A closed space with minimal sound transmission for up to 2 occupants dedicated to virtual collaboration and/or private conversations.

.3 **Support Spaces:** Related spaces necessary for the operation of the office area and supports the working activities of the occupants.

.1 **Individual storage area:** A closed or open storage area for personal equipment and belongings (e.g. locker area, cloakroom).

.2 **Shared storage area:** A closed or open storage area for the supplies belonging to a department or unit such as documents, files, office supplies and equipment.

.3 **Lunchroom/ Breakroom:** A closed or semi-open space, often equipped with a kitchenette or equivalent, dedicated to socialization, breaktime and meals.

.i **Kitchenette:** An area without occupancy equipped with cabinets, counters, a sink and other services. This typology may sometimes be contiguous with other space types (i.e. Conference Room or Multimodal space).

.4 **Printing area:** A closed, semi-open or open area dedicated to document reproduction, scanning and recycling.

.5 **Reception area:** An open space located near the entrance of a building or a suite equipped with a fixed reception desk and other flexible furnishings.

.6 **Specialized support space:** A closed space spatially organized to support specific work activities unique to the unit or department (including by not limited to training, interviewing, testing, workshop, etc.) that may require specialized architectural features/services, equipment, or furniture.

The type of individual workspace should be developed according to the task profile of the occupant and the functional needs of the team: the confidentiality level of the work, the collaboration level of the work and the flexibility level of the work equipment. Some positions in a unit or department may require private (closed) office space, while a person with similar duties in another unit or department may not.

1.5 Space Type Attributes

A variety of space type attributes can be applied to the space typologies identified above to further support the task profiles of the occupants. These space type attributes will help determine the optimal choice within certain design parameters such as types of partitions, types of furnishings as well spatial configuration within the Office Area.

.1 **Privacy/Confidentiality Level**

.1 **Open**

.1 Space where the majority of the work being carried out does not regularly require acoustic or visual separation.

.2 Space where one of the occupant's responsibilities or tasks involves direct visibility over another area.

.2 **Semi-open**

.1 Space where the majority of the work being carried out regularly requires visual separation.

.2 Space where the majority of the work being carried out regularly requires visual and acoustic separation.

.3 **Closed**

.1 Space where the majority of the work being carried out regularly requires visual separation and acoustic separation due to the discussion or handling of confidential materials on a regular basis.

.2 **Flexibility Level:**

(Flexible furniture and furnishings are strongly encouraged in most instances.)

.1 **Flexible**

.1 Furniture and furnishings can be rearranged by any faculty or staff member.

.2 Computer or other specialized work equipment is mobile and WIFI is available.

.2 **Semi-flexible**

.1 Furniture and furnishings require specialized knowledge to rearrange.

.2 Computer or other specialized work equipment is mobile and WIFI is available.

.3 **Fixed**

.1 Furniture and furnishings are anchored to the floor, walls, or ceiling.

.2 Computer or other specialized work equipment is hardwired.

.3 **Collaboration Level** (applies to Individual Workspaces only)

.1 **Regular**

.1 Occupant has multiple unplanned in-person interactions with individuals or groups on a daily basis.

.2 Occupant spends more than half their weekly work hours in virtual or in-person meetings with individuals or groups.

.2 **Semi-regular**

.1 Occupant has occasional unplanned in-person interactions with individuals or small groups on a daily basis.

.3 **Irregular**

.1 Occupant has occasional unplanned in-person meetings with individuals or small groups on a weekly basis.

Designers, planners, and occupants are encouraged to reflect and collaborate in order to develop balanced functional and technical programs which respond to the needs of the individual tasks and group interactions of the diverse teams.

1.6 Special Circumstances

.1 **Multiple Offices**

Assignment of multiple offices for faculty and staff is strongly discouraged unless there is a true demonstrated need. Faculty with joint appointments and persons with staff in multiple buildings or campuses may be assigned a secondary workpoint, provided it is not located within the same building or connected building as the primary workpoint. A secondary workpoint can be shared or private; however, it should be smaller than the primary workpoint. All decisions related to multiple offices or workpoints should be made on a case-by-case basis.

.2 **Assigned Space**

The determination of the use of assigned, shared and/or unassigned workpoints is at the discretion of the Faculty or Unit in accordance with McGill's Healthy Hybrid Guiding Principles and Framework.

Part 2 Design Standards

2.1 General Design Parameters for Individual Workspaces

.1 In accordance with the space type attributes defined in the previous section, the following table outlines some general design parameters to consider for the spatial arrangement, separation and furnishings for Individual Workspaces within the Office Area:

Space Attributes for Individual Workspaces (Privacy / Collaboration Levels)	Regular collaboration	Semi-regular collaboration	Irregular collaboration
Open	- Located adjacent to multi-modal spaces in open office areas - No privacy panels - No guest chairs	- No privacy panels or short privacy panels - No guest chairs	- Locate further from multi-modal spaces and/or meeting rooms - No privacy panels or short privacy panels - No guest chairs
Semi-open	- Include short or tall privacy panels - Include up to 2 guest chairs	- Include short or tall privacy panels - No guest chairs	- Include short or tall privacy panels - No guest chairs
Closed	- Space is enclosed with opaque or partially glazed partitions - Include up to 4 guest chairs and a separate table	- Space is enclosed with opaque or partially glazed partitions - Include up to 2 guest chairs	- Space is enclosed with opaque or partially glazed partitions - No guest chairs

.2 See Office Furniture Standards for examples of configurations (Currently under revision to integrate most recent updates)

2.2 Key Spatial Arrangement Parameters for Individual Workspaces

.1 Smallest workpoint footprint, including net circulation, is 5.15m2 (55.25 sq.ft.). A workpoint is minimally equipped with a work surface, a comfortable chair, power access and network access, and a lockable storage solution. See Annex 1.

.2 Smallest flexpoint footprint, excluding net circulation, is 2.2m2 (24 sq.ft.). A flexpoint is minimally equipped with a work surface, a seat and access to power. See Annex 1.

.3 Where workpoints or flexpoints are located back-to-back, there must be a minimum of 2100mm (7ft) between work surfaces. See Annex 1.

.4 Where workpoints or flexpoints are located where the seat backs onto a wall or other fixed element within the space, there must be a minimum of 1220mm (4ft) between the work surface and the wall. See Annex 1. This does not apply if the seat is fixed and the work surface is movable.

2.3 Types of Partitions, Finishes & Acoustical Parameters for the Office Area

.1 Partitions around closed offices, where acoustical intimacy is required, shall extend to the underside of slab and be insulated for sound (min. STC 52). Otherwise, offices partitions shall extend to the underside of suspended ceiling.

.2 For rooms within the Office Area under a common plenum, if the Ceiling Attenuation Class (CAC) of the ceiling composition is lower than the Sound Transmission Class (STC) of the wall composition, the ceiling rating will limit the overall performance of the spaces.

.3 Wall finishes within the Office Area are recommended to have a sound absorption average (SAA) of 0.7 where possible.

.4 Wall finishes within the Office Area are recommended to have a light reflectance value between 50 and 70% to encourage light distribution.

.5 Use of demountable privacy panels, for semi-open spaces, are recommended as a strategy for future flexibility.

.6 Privacy panels:

Privacy panels are solid space dividers which provide acoustic and visual privacy within an open space. Privacy panels can be free-standing or attached to workpoints.

.1 The height of privacy panels may not extend beyond 610mm from the finished ceiling in a given space.

.2 Where visual separation is required, 1400mm tall privacy panels (min. STC 20) are recommended.

.3 Where visual and acoustic separation is required, 1600mm tall privacy panels (min. STC 20) are recommended. To balance the needs of acoustic separation and daylight autonomy, panels above 1400mm are recommended to be transparent to encourage daylight penetration.

Perforated privacy panels that extend all the way to the ceiling may be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with ventilation and fire-protection requirements.

.7 Ceiling finishes within the Office Area are recommended to have a sound absorption average (SAA) of 0.9 where possible.

.8 Ceiling finishes within the Office Area are recommended to have a light reflectance value between 75 and 90% to encourage light distribution and to avoid ceilings becoming sources of glare.

.9 Designers should not exclusively rely on the sound absorptive properties of the finishes specified to ensure the acoustical comfort a given space. Consideration of the activities taking place in the Office Area when spatial planning with also have an impact on the acoustical comfort of the occupants.

2.4 Daylighting

.1 Direct natural light and views to the outside should be favored in offices.

.2 The upper limit of windows and openings should be as close as possible to the ceiling to maximize daylight penetration.

.3 Adjustable daylight control devices, such as blinds, should be installed in all windows to help control glare.

.4 Having a buffer space between perimeter glazing and the closest workpoints will help reduce glare and thermal asymmetry between occupants.

.5 For recommended light levels and lighting control, see Division 26.

2.5 Electricity and network connections

.1 All new workpoints shall have telephone and network connections, and a minimum of three electrical outlets.

.2 For existing spaces where workpoints are being reconfigured, a survey of existing electrical and network infrastructure must be conducted and considered for new furniture layouts.

2.6 Other Design Requirements for Closed Offices

.1 Each closed office shall be equipped with wall mounted coat hooks.

.2 Doors to offices shall be located no less than 150 mm (6”) from the nearest wall to the door frame. This is to allow space for coat hooks behind the door.

2.7 Accessibility

.1 A minimum of 10% of workpoints and flexpoints withing the office area shall be accessible.

.2 Recommendations for furnishings for accessible workpoints based on the type of disability:

	Recommendations
Disability related to Vision	• Matte work surface without texture. • If wood, pale finishes such as maple. • Height adjustable work surface. • Avoid surfaces with high specular reflectivity, surfaces with different tones, or an abundance of objects within a space (visual clutter).
Disability related to Physical Mobility	• Height adjustable work surface. • Adjustable keyboard tray. • Sufficient clearance without barriers around and under the work surface. • Minimal work surface depth of 400mm for work without a computer and minimal work surface depth of 760mm for work with a computer.
Disability related to Hearing	• Well illuminated workspace to facilitate lip reading. • Closed workspace to limit auditory disturbances. • A visual fire alarm.
Disability related to Learning or Cognition	• Matte work surface without texture. • If wood, pale finishes such as maple. • Height adjustable work surface.

.3 See McGill Accessibility Standards for additional guidelines.

Part 3 Related Standards

3.1 Related Design Standards

The related Design Standards should be consulted with the current document, most notably (but not limited to) the following:

.1 Office Furniture Standards

(Currently under revision)

.2 Accessibility Standards

McGill Accessibility on Campuses

3.2 Related Technical Standard Sections

The technical sections of the McGill Building Design and Technical Standards should be consulted with the current document, most notably (but not limited to) the following:

Section Number	Title of Section
06 40 00	Architectural Woodwork
08 11 14	Metal Doors and Frames
08 14 10	Interior Flush Wood Doors
08 80 50	Glazing
08 71 10	Hardware
09 22 27	Suspended Ceiling
09 68 00	Carpet
09 84 10	Acoustic Treatment
09 91 26	Painting
10 22 19	Demountable partitions (under revision)
12 50 00	Furniture
12 51 30	Window coverings
26 50 00	Éclairage (Lighting)

END OF SECTION

ANNEX 1 – KEY SPATIAL PARAMETERS FOR WORKPOINTS AND FLEXPOINTS

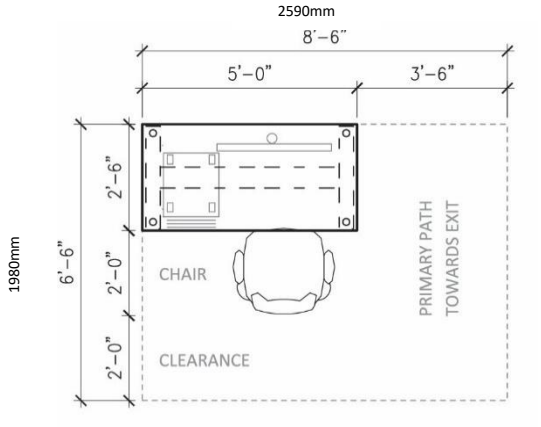

FIGURE 1
Minimum workpoint footprint
5.15m² (55.25 sq.ft.)

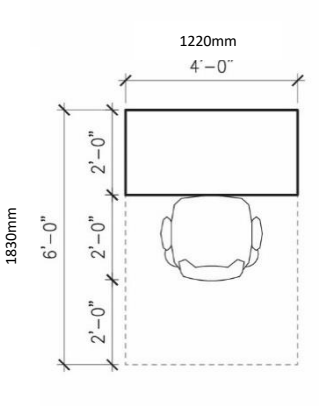

FIGURE 2
Minimum flexpoint footprint
2.2m² (24 sq.ft.)

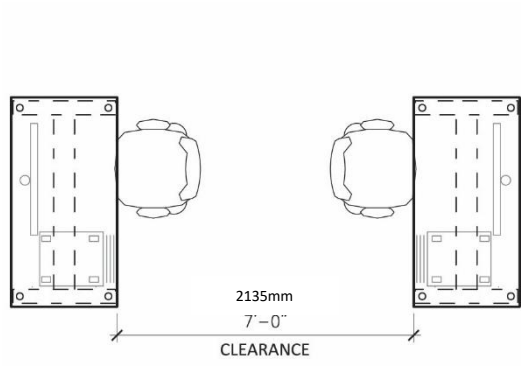

FIGURE 3
Minimum distance between back-to-back workpoints/flexpoints

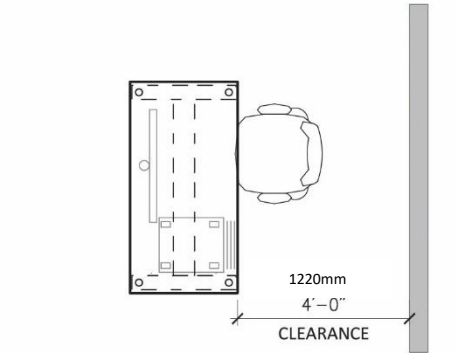

FIGURE 4
Minimum distance between workpoints/flexpoints and other fixed elements