



Academic Work Allocation Models

Development Principles and Operational Guidance

1. Introduction

The University is committed to the fair, reasonable and equitable allocation and distribution of work. Whilst recognising that academic staff must have scope to manage their own time, the University must also ensure that the allocation of work is informed by and supports its strategic objectives and priorities.

Each School will put in place, monitor and review a work allocation model (WAM) which adheres to the guiding principles set out in Section 4 below and reflects the operational guidance in sections 5 – 7.

2. Purpose

The purpose of an academic WAM is to ensure that there is:

- a) fair, reasonable and equitable distribution of work among all academic staff;
- b) an appropriate balance of key activities assigned to academic staff which reflect and support the aims and objectives of the University, College and School and their career development needs and aspirations;
- c) no significant and/or protracted over or under-allocation of duties;
- d) a transparent process for consulting with and informing staff of individually allocated work;
- e) appropriate balance of activities to ensure excellence in teaching, student support, research and knowledge exchange and optimum efficiency in staff deployment.

3. Scope

All academic staff with the exception of clinical academics¹ who undertake teaching, research, or any combination of teaching, research and administration of teaching and research will be included in a School's work allocation model.

¹ Clinical academic staff have an annual job plan, jointly agreed with the NHS, detailing their clinical and non-clinical workload.

4. Guiding Principles

The development and use of a School specific WAM must adhere to the following principles; namely it will:

- be practical and as simple to use, explain and maintain as possible;
- be as transparent² as possible, and so aid understanding and equity of treatment;
- enable the balance of an individual's activity in teaching, student support, research and scholarly activity etc to be visualised;
- be restricted to time spent on activity (i.e. input) i.e. it will not be used as a measure of performance (output);
- be indicative in nature, i.e. it will not be used to make fine/granular distinctions between work allocations;
- allocate work on the basis of the time, expressed in hours, that the work will take an experienced member of staff to perform to an acceptable standard;
- ensure the time allocated to perform work is fair and reasonable;
- ensure maximum consistency across areas where work and tasks are comparable;
- ensure work allocated to individual members of staff:
 - is compatible with reasonable expectations of work-life balance and the principles of equality and inclusion and facilitates a healthy working environment;
 - is appropriate to their role and takes account of their career developmental needs and the needs of the University, College and School;
 - covers all aspects of agreed academic work and duties;
 - provides time for personal Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and time for reflection on that development.

Operational Guidance

5. Development, implementation and review

Heads of School are responsible for developing and maintaining an allocation model which is in line with the above guiding principles and is reflective of the work undertaken by the School.

Staff included in the allocation of work will be consulted regarding the introduction of a new model, its detailed content, the time allocated to activities and any subsequent revisions.

² It is expected that transparency will mean that the allocation should bear up to objective scrutiny, taking into account the work that requires to be distributed, the staff available and the sensitivities such as disability or caring responsibilities.

Heads of School will ensure:

- their School’s work allocation model remains fit for purpose by reviewing it every four years, in consultation with the staff included in the allocation of work, and
- that the time allocated to each work activity within the School’s work allocation model is reviewed every two years. Staff included in the model will be consulted on any subsequent revisions to these time tariffs.

6. Content

6.1 Work activities

In addition to the core components of teaching, student support and research activity, a School’s WAM should take account of and include:

- work undertaken by staff on behalf of the University which contributes to the national or international academic community; where this includes pro-bono work, this will be approved for inclusion in the staff member’s work allocation by the Head of School;
- academic related activity e.g. course organisation;
- leadership and management activity e.g. participation and involvement in University and/or College/School decision making, governance and strategic projects, planning and managing resources

Except in exceptional circumstances, and approved by the Head of School, time spent by a member of staff engaged on paid consultancy work should not be taken into account/reduce the total amount of work allocated.

6.2 Bought out time

Where a member of staff has a partial buy-out of their time, the work allocated to their remaining time should be discussed with and approved by the Head of School. Whilst the resultant allocation would normally mean an equal buy-out of all key elements of academic work (teaching, student support, research and academic-related work), this will be determined by the Head of School bearing in mind the School’s needs and the member of staff’s skillset.

6.3 Early career academics

The allocation of work to early career academics should acknowledge and take account of their need for more time to prepare for and deliver some of their allocated work; staff new to teaching should generally have a lower allocation of work in their University probationary year.

7. Individual Consultation and Agreement

In practical terms, the appropriate manager (e.g. head of subject or research centre) will consult with each academic member of staff and agree their work allocation for the full 12 months of the forthcoming academic year³, matching the University, College and School's requirements to the employee's job, knowledge, skills and career development needs and the rebalancing of any bought-out time and/or pro-bono work agreed by the Head of School.

If agreement cannot be reached through continued, informal discussion between the academic member of staff and the appropriate manager, the employee has the right to request a meeting with their Head of School.

Employees will have the right to be accompanied at this appeal meeting by a workplace colleague or trade union representative. An HR Advisor will also attend the meeting to provide advice to the Head of School.

8. Review

This document was originally created in consultation with UCU, Edinburgh in June 2010. It was reviewed in 2016 to reflect the University's commitment to enhancing learning and teaching and was agreed by UCU at the meeting of CJCNC on 12 October 2016. Section 7 was revised in May 2018 to clarify the appeal process and agreed by CJCNC on 12 June 2018. In March 2019, CJCNC approved the addition of the principle of fair time allocation and the requirement for regular review of the model and the time allocations.

³ Although work allocation will be agreed annually for the forthcoming year, this should not preclude planning for future years and averaging of research, teaching and other activities over a longer period.