

Guidance - Workload Allocation Planning

Note – This document should be read in conjunction with the Workload Allocation Planning Framework. The clauses relating to workload, annual leave and research and scholarly activity in The University of Bolton Academic Handbook and the Contract of Employment for Academic Staff

1 Objectives

- 1.1 The Academic Workload planning process is intended to provide a structure and a set of clear guidelines which will enable an equitable, transparent and consistent approach to the allocation and management of academic staff workloads within Faculties, Schools, Centres and Academic Areas across the University. In developing the process, sector norms have been used to inform this guidance document and the parameters herein.
- 1.2 The key objectives of the Process are:
 - To assist Faculties, Schools, Centres and Academic Areas to plan and monitor workloads in a way that is sufficiently dynamic to cope with the changing needs of academic programmes and business development initiatives;
 - To enable the distribution of workload to be carried out locally in a way which takes account of differing circumstances and values activities in an appropriate way;
 - To ensure academic staff are allocated a reasonable individual workload, by ensuring the equitable and transparent distribution of work in line with the academic staff contract and handbook;
 - To recognise the professional contribution academic staff make to the University by ensuring that the workload planning mechanism supports the full range of academic duties, continuing professional development and professional practice.

2 Workload Principles

- 2.1 The context within which academic staff workload planning is carried out includes the University's Strategic Plan and supporting strategies, the Faculty and School/Centre/Area Plans, agreed . Performance Reviews , the Academic Staff Contract and the University of Bolton Academic Handbook.
- 2.2 The workload planning process covers the totality of what is expected of each member of academic staff.

These are, principally: teaching (on and off campus); research, reach-out, student support; curriculum development; leadership, management and administrative duties (including University-level and agreed external activity); external academic commitments, agreed staff development activity (including studying for appropriate awards such as a research degree or teaching qualification); and agreed strategic development activities.

- 2.3 The proportion of time a member of academic staff should devote to any of these activities is a matter for professional judgment bearing in mind the needs of both the individual and the institution.
- 2.4 There should be a transparent, fair and equitable allocation of workloads which takes into account the totality of the workload across the profile of activities expected of every member of academic staff.
- 2.5 The University is committed to achieving high standards in academic work and to continuous improvement in academic quality. This includes:
 - Improving student retention, progression and completion rates;
 - High student satisfaction and good customer service;
 - High levels of readiness for graduate employment;
 - The quality and timeliness of academic programmes at all levels (FD through to PhD) including external examiner opinions;
 - High quality research outputs that are REF eligible and good levels of external funding from various sources for research.
- 2.6 In line with academic governance principles it is important that all activities within the workload are in line with University, Faculty and School/Centre/Area plans and policies and that the workload is within the context of the professional and ethical standards expected of staff.
- 2.7 Faculty and School/Centre/Area Plans should be drafted and provided to staff and, where possible, individual workloads should be drafted at the start of the PR round. This will allow a review of the workload and any staff development needs, within the PR.
- 2.8 It is important to recognise the need to balance the needs of individual members of staff and the changing requirements of the University. It is essential to maintain an ongoing review of the situation so as to adjust to changing circumstances and to deal with any difficulties which may occur. This commitment to flexibility by staff, the Faculty and School/Area/Division is a key component of the workload planning process as it ensures that the needs of students, staff and external clients can be met appropriately as circumstances change, as they inevitably will, during the year. Any changes to workloads will be made following discussion and consultation with the individual.
- 2.9 In line with the University's commitment to work life balance, and in recognising that some staff have responsibilities as carers, consideration should be given to these factors, where possible, when assembling academic staff timetables.

- 2.10 In assessing a reasonable workload for an individual, the number and distribution of consecutive formal scheduled teaching hours being undertaken in any one day should be taken into account, ensuring staff can take necessary breaks within normal meal time patterns.
- 2.11 If any member of staff wishes to object to the workload allocated to them they should pursue this under the University's Grievance Procedure.

3 Workload Allocation Guidelines

- 3.1 The workload allocation guidelines provide a structure for the range of activities into five areas whilst recognising the relevant provisions contained within the academic staff contract (as set out in the Contract of Employment for Academic Staff and the Academic Handbook).
- 3.2 The following aspects of the contract are important to consider in understanding the parameters of any individual workload:
- 3.2.1 **The Working Year.** Full Time academic staff are contracted for the whole year and the Academic Handbook sets out that the working year as made up of the Teaching Year, Holidays, Research and Scholarly Activity. Academic staff are expected to work such hours as are reasonably necessary in order to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of their role. The full time equivalent of 37 hours per week is used for nominal purposes only.
- 3.2.2 The individual's **teaching year** (which may be different weeks of the year for different areas of the University's work) should not normally total more than 38 weeks (including 2 weeks of teaching-related administration).
- 3.2.3 **Total Available Working Time.** The allocation of activity to an individual member of staff is based on the total available working time. The individual's duties are a balance of activities, including research and reach-out, which should be integrated into the overall pattern of activity.

The following table shows the total number of hours available for work per year (based on a full time equivalent contract) from which the contractual entitlement for annual leave and statutory and public holidays has been deducted.

Teaching Year	38 weeks x 37 hours = 1406 hours
Scholarly Activity	154 hours (and subject to a maximum of 3 hours per week during the teaching year)

- 3.2.4 The total number of available working hours for staff on fractional contracts is calculated on a pro- rata basis.

3.3 The following is an indicative list of the kinds of activities that academic staff are involved:

3.3.1 Formal Scheduled Teaching. Formal Scheduled Teaching is specifically identified within the Academic Handbook. It is considered to be the direct delivery of teaching (i.e. lectures, seminars, academic tutorials) and supervision of students. The allocation of work within this element should take into account the following:

- an individual lecturer may normally expect to have formal scheduled teaching responsibilities for students within a band of 14 to 18 hours a week on average over the anticipated teaching year of the lecturer;
- formal scheduled teaching responsibilities should not exceed 18 hours in any week or a total of 550 hours in the teaching year; and
- the above provisions need not necessarily apply in practice based and professional disciplines.

3.3.2 Teaching Delivery Related Activity. This covers unscheduled work that is directly related to the delivery of formal scheduled teaching, such as preparation, assessment, and marking and is determined in accordance with the requirements of the teaching to which it relates and Faculty specific requirements.

3.3.3 Academic Leadership, Management and Administration. This element covers work associated with the leadership, management and administration of academic activity. Examples include programme leadership, Division/Academic Group-wide responsibilities and recognised trade union duties.

3.3.4 Widening Participation, Reach out, Consultancy and Business Development. This covers activity associated with reach out, consultancy and business development.

3.3.5 Research Activity. This includes Research which is publicly or non publicly funded and that which is externally funded or internally supported. The University defines research as „original investigative or creative work, or critical study of existing work or data, and its communication through publication or presentation or public exhibition“. Such work would normally be expected to be eligible for submission to the REF.

3.3.6 Scholarly Activity. The University's definition of scholarly activity is production of books, contribution to books, articles, conference papers, creative and original work in all media, professional updating and personal academic development.

As the contract specifies this element as being the balance of the working year this is calculated as 1560 (total hours available) less 1406 (38 weeks@37 hours) = 154 hours.

Scholarly Activity is expected to be in line with the individual's agreed personal plan. The time is to be taken in weeks rather than days (but not necessarily as a block). Whilst the individual is accountable for the use of, and the impact of the outputs from, this time, the activity is principally self-managed.

- 3.3.7 Other Academic activity. This covers the allocation of responsibilities that are likely to be exclusive to the Faculty and School/Centre/Area Plans Academic Group for example field trips or design shows.
- 3.4 Flexibility to accommodate changes and developments during the year is expected in order to manage commitments in response to for example illness, resignations, new appointments, new agreed strategic developments, research and other contracts awarded, changes in student numbers and other relevant circumstances. Changes in workload will always be discussed with the individual.
- 4 Using the Framework (see Workload Allocation Planning Framework document)**
- 4.1 The development of a Framework is intended to allow the Academic Group Leaders and line managers an appropriate degree of flexibility in managing the deployment of staff, taking local circumstances into account. It is necessary, however, to ensure that the activity within certain workload elements is derived using a clear and specific formula.
- 4.2 The calculation and allocation of Formal Scheduled Teaching and Teaching Delivery Related Activity must be carried out in accordance with the guidance set out in the **Workload Allocation Planning Framework** document.
- 4.3 Duties which fall into academic leadership, management and administration, reach out, consultancy, business development and Divisional/Academic Group specific elements demonstrate the range of factors likely to be considered when determining individual workloads. It will be important to consider the impact of the particular mix of activities for each individual.
- 4.4 A degree of commonality in the allocations is expected however it is important to recognise the differences in Faculty and School/Centre/Area Plans structures and needs which exist across the University in relation to what appear to be similar roles and activities. Each Faculty and School/Centre/Area Plans will be required to be in a position where it can provide a sound rationale for such variations and report on the tariff of allocations used.
- 4.5 To meet the transparency requirements of the process in a way in which the information can be analysed and considered in a common, identifiable format a Web based application has been developed which line managers will be asked to use.

5 Implementation

- 5.1 The guidance and framework will be used to capture the workload allocation during the academic session to capture the workload.
- 5.2 This would be undertaken by line managers at an appropriate point in the Performance Review Cycle.