

University of East London Academic Workload Policy

1. Introduction

This policy and procedure outlines the principles underpinning the allocation of academic staff workload at the University of East London (UEL) and the implementation of its workload framework. This policy and procedure applies to all academic staff at UEL.

2. Aims

- To enable effective, efficient and high-quality student provision.
- To ensure that individual workload allocations are reasonable and equitable.
- To take into account local, individual and peer group circumstances, including reasonable adjustments, in setting and balancing workload allocations.
- To facilitate consultative approaches to workload allocation to establish a mutually agreed workload and provide guidance on resolution of failures to agree.
- To ensure academic staff well-being by ensuring workloads are not excessive and thus avoid impacting adversely on staff health and performance.
- To make workload allocation processes and outcomes transparent and comparable, and to publish individual workload allocations annually online in read-only form.
- To ensure reasonable distribution of institutional/administrative/managerial duties amongst staff.
- To ensure part-time academic staff workload allocations are clearly pro rata, and to make adequate administrative remission for probationary lecturers undertaking the Lecturers Development Programme or PG Cert in Learning and Teaching.

3. Principles

In the following Policy and Procedure, 'Dean or nominee' means The Dean, Associate Dean or Head of Subject (the latter replacing Field Leaders from 2012/13).

Academic duties and responsibilities are of a professional nature and range from direct teaching, research, knowledge exchange and other forms of scholarly activity, to curriculum development and administration, and participation in the collegiate and democratic processes of UEL. All academic staff are expected to engage in formal scheduled teaching. Duties should be allocated in a fair and open manner and performance monitored so that all staff are seen to be contributing fully to the activities of the University.

Methods of allocating work should be based on the total workload of the staff concerned. In planning this workload, Deans should ensure that full account is taken of three principal categories of responsibility and duty, namely:

1. Formal Scheduled Teaching & Teaching-Related Activity;
2. Research, Knowledge Exchange & Scholarly-Related Activity; and
3. Service & Administration/Management-Related Activity.

The exact proportion of time a staff member should devote to these three categories is a matter for each Head of Subject to discuss with the academic staff member. The allocation of work should normally reflect the academic staff member's experience and development needs as well as those of the academic programme, school and institution.

Members of staff who are employed to do certain kinds of work should be given appropriate time and resources to perform that work. Deans (or nominee) should ensure that staff are not required to work excessive hours and have regular breaks from work on a daily, weekly and annual basis.

The intention is to reach mutually agreed allocations of work but, should this not prove possible, the Head of Subject will decide on the initial workload allocation for publication. The process for dealing with disagreements is produced in section 6 of this document.

4. Annual hours

This workload framework is based upon a notional working year in the region of 1600 hours. It should be noted that this indicative figure does not account for all academic staff duties. Time is not explicitly allocated for activities such as travel to and from classes, email correspondence, printing, taking part in staff discussions etc.

It is recognised that many academic staff will work beyond the 1600 notional figure and such goodwill is appreciated and valued by the University. This indicative figure is not to be regarded as either a minimum or maximum but as a reasonable normal expectation over an annual cycle. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, excess workload in any one semester should be agreed by the staff member and their Dean (or nominee) and should be rebalanced by a reduced load in another semester.

Academic staff are expected to fulfil the above duties and responsibilities, agreed with the Dean (or nominee); normally to be contactable during University office hours; and, in the interests of good professional practice and courtesy, to agree with relevant colleagues when they are working at home or elsewhere off-campus. It is recognised that the nature of academic duties and responsibilities means that staff may not always be immediately available but that reasonable availability to students should be agreed as part of teaching-related duties.

In the interests of consistency there should be a reasonable distribution of work in Schools, including institutional/administrative duties amongst staff (e.g. student recruitment, clearing, course organisation, committee membership).

It is the responsibility of the Dean (or nominee) to ensure that the discussion on workload is commenced in good time. It is the responsibility of academic staff to engage in consultation in good time within the annual cycle of this agreed academic workload process.

It is the responsibility of senior management to ensure, as far as possible, consistency of application across the University.

5. Parameters

Formal Scheduled Teaching and Teaching-Related Activities are the main items assigned through the workload allocation framework and serve as the anchor to other duties under Research & Scholarly Activity and Service & Administration-related Activity.

Indicative definitions of each category of work are provided in the Workload Template, but key parameters are:

- Formal Scheduled Teaching (direct contact teaching-hours with students) shall not exceed 18 hours in any week and 550 hours in the teaching year. It is an objective of UEL to maintain, wherever possible, FST below the contractual maximum of 18 hours per week. This parameter will not apply in subject areas where the nature of the curriculum and teaching style make it inappropriate, such as aspects of Teacher Education, Art, Design, Performing Arts, and Music.
- Programme Leadership
 - Minimum allocation of 50 hours (teaching-related activity) per annum per programme.
- Module Leadership
 - Minimum allocation of 20 hours (teaching-related activity) per 20 credit module.
- The teaching year is 38 weeks in length, including two weeks of teaching-related administration.
- No member of staff may teach for more than 14 consecutive weeks.
- Academic staff are entitled to 35 days' annual leave plus public holidays and UEL closure days.
- Evening work may be undertaken, but unless there are exceptional circumstances:
 - Not more than two consecutive teaching sessions (Morning; Afternoon; Evening) in a day
 - No split sessions (morning and evening) in the same day
 - Not more than two evening sessions per week
 - An evening session not to be followed by an early morning session (10.00 or earlier)
- Weekend work may be undertaken by agreement, paid either at the appropriate hourly rate or by time off in lieu.

The following nominal ranges are suggested for the three-workload allocation categories:

- Formal Scheduled Teaching and Teaching-Related Activity
5-85%
- Research, Knowledge Exchange & Scholarly-Related Activity
10-85%
- Service and Administration/Management-Related Activity
5-30%

6. Practice and process

The determination of academic workload occurs within an annual cycle that commences in advance of each academic year, providing academic staff with sufficient time to prepare effectively for the full range of duties and responsibilities they are to undertake in the course of the year.

The need for adjustments to academic workload may arise in response to changes in student recruitment patterns, the award of a research grant, staff absences, or the assumption of new duties and responsibilities. There will be a contingency element in all individual workloads to allow for response to such changing circumstances, and there must therefore be the possibility of review, consultation, agreement and adjustment of individual workload within a year.

The workload allocation process entails discussion between the individual member of academic staff and their Head of Subject who will, in consultation with the individual staff member, draw up an initial draft workload allocation schedule incorporating a balance of the three categories of duties appropriate for the individual, including consideration of their individual professional and career development.

In allocating academic workload the other key reference documents are:

1. 'Factors to be Taken into Account' contained in the UEL Employee Handbook, Guidelines for the Determination of the Duties of Lecturing Staff';
2. UEL Academic Staff Workload Scheme.

If a staff member has a concern about his or her workload that is not resolved with his or her Head of Subject this will be referred for informal discussion with the Associate Dean or Dean (at the staff member's request their UCU representative will be involved in the discussions with Associate Dean or Dean). Where any disagreement cannot be resolved through informal discussions at this level, the member of staff may subsequently choose to invoke the University's Grievance Procedure.

In each annual cycle of workload allocation, when initial individual consultations have been completed a summary of all individual workload allocations will be produced and made

available to all staff within each school. Individual consultations and the workload information will be completed according to the timetable outlined below.

Indicative timetable for Annual Academic Workload Allocation Cycle

Exact timings may vary from school to school but the elements of the annual academic workload allocation process should be completed by the end of each calendar month indicated in this timetable:

- March
 - Initial discussions between individual members of staff and their Dean (or nominee)

- May
 - Initial draft individual workload schedules completed
 - Individual workload schedules agreed (any disputed allocations referred for resolution)
 - Publication in schools of a summary of workload schedules

- September
 - Adjustments to workload schedule if variation to Semester A necessary
 - Agreed individual workload schedules confirmed
 - Publication in schools of summary of workload schedules

- January
 - Adjustments to workload schedule if variation to Semester B necessary
 - Agreed individual workload schedules confirmed
 - Publication in schools of summary of workload schedules

University-wide monitoring

Issues arising from the implementation of academic staff workloads will be discussed annually by Deans and senior management. There will also be an annual discussion of any issues relating to workloads involving senior managers and UCU representatives.

7. Policy Review and Variation

This Policy and Procedure was agreed by UEL management and UCU on xx.

The operation of the Policy and Procedure will be the subject of an initial review at a meeting of UCU representatives and senior managers in June 2014. This will establish if either party has any major concerns following implementation from the start of the 2013-14 academic year.

Following this first review, any proposed changes to this policy and its associated guidance will be dealt with in accordance with the agreed procedures for negotiation and consultation.

October 2013