**Queen’s University Belfast**

**Workload Allocation Guidance**

1. Purpose

The purpose of an academic Workload Allocation Model is to ensure that there is a fair, reasonable and equitable allocation of work. It will also ensure the following:

1. The allocation of work is informed by and supports the achievement of local and institutional priorities.

1. There is an appropriate balance of activities assigned to staff, which supports staff health and wellbeing.

1. Allocation of work is visible and there is an opportunity for staff to contribute to decisions in relation to workload allocation.

1. Workload allocation informs workforce planning and ensures that quality research, scholarship, teaching and citizenship is delivered across the University.
2. Scope

The guidelines apply to staff on all academic career pathways. It is recommended that there should be a single model at an appropriate level of management, usually at the level of School. The Head of School (HoS) is responsible for developing and maintaining workload allocation aligned with this guidance and the priorities of the School.

1. Principles

The following principles are intended to underpin our approach to workload allocation across the University, creating consistency, while at the same time allowing flexibility to reflect local/disciplinary differences specific to Schools.

1. Our approach to workload allocation, including decisions and related discussions, will be underpinned by our [core values ICARE](https://www.qub.ac.uk/about/Leadership-and-structure/Core-Values/), and in line with our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/hr-filestore/Filetoupload%2C866894%2Cen.pdf). The aim of this is to engender collaborative working between colleagues, in a spirit of collegiality, in which all staff are treated with dignity and respect.

1. Workload will be fairly and transparently distributed among academic staff. There will be a transparent process for discussing with, and informing staff of individually allocated work.
2. There will be no significant or protracted over or under allocation\* of hours over a 3 - 5 year cycle relative to peers.
3. Comparable allowances will be provided for similar research/scholarship, teaching and citizenship tasks across the University, while recognising the varying demands of specific roles across Schools and disciplines.
4. Workload allocation will enable the balance of an individual’s activity in teaching, research/scholarship and citizenship to be visualised and to be appropriately distributed over a period of time.
5. A practical and realistic approach to the process of workload allocation will be taken, which acknowledges the difficulties of accounting for all staff time. The process itself should not require disproportionate effort to maintain. The approach should evolve each year to reflect any changes in effort required for duties, as well as identifying and eliminating any inefficiencies in the way that we work.
6. Workload allocation will be agile and flexible enabling us to respond to internal and external factors which may impact workloads in any given Semester or Academic Year.

1. Workload allocation will be compatible with reasonable expectations of work-life balance, our EDI principles taking into account individual circumstances which may have an impact on workload, such as:
* maternity, paternity, parental or adoption leave, or other family leave;
* part-time working;
* disabilities, including neurodiverse conditions;
* minority and ethnic backgrounds, including BAME;
* periods of absence arising from ill-health, including disability or long term condition, mental health, or injury;
* periods of absence arising from gender reassignment;
* career breaks;
* personal, family (for example, dependants, caring responsibilities) or other non-academic circumstances that have impacted on work for a sustained period; or
* secondments and previous employment.

Meetings between the employee and the Head of School will provide an opportunity to discuss any flexibility and/or considerations that may be required to achieve a fair allocation of work and facilitate a healthy working environment.

1. Workload allocation will be appropriate to the role and takes account of School requirements and individual priorities, development goals and career aspirations as discussed in the [Personal Development Review (PDR).](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/employees/career-progression/personal-development-review/)

\* Under allocation may result from confidential personal circumstances

1. Activities

Workload allocation models should capture the following key areas of academic activity as defined in the Academic Profiles: Research/Scholarship, Teaching and Citizenship. Further detail on the activities in each of these areas are available in the [Academic Profiles](https://home.qol.qub.ac.uk/default.aspx).

1. Time Allocation

5.1 Institutional

There are a number of roles which are broadly common across the institution, the roles and time allocation ranges are included at Appendix 1. It is important to note that these are provided by way of exemplar and that the actual time taken to carry out the role will depend on a number of variables, for example, size of the School, existing School leadership structure, whether there is more than one postholder etc.

5.2 Faculty

It is proposed that Faculty Executive Boards (FEBs) agree time allocation for activities that are common across the Faculty as required, for example, time for teaching preparation and delivery, assessment activities, curriculum development etc. taking into account student numbers. Further specific adjustments may be made by the School Senior Management Team.

1. Impact of COVID-19

6.1 Current Priorities

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the University is transitioning to a Connected Learning model from September 2020. The preparation of high quality education and offering the best possible student experience for the first semester in the Academic year 2020/2021, are a priority for all staff over the summer months. As a result, some of the Operational Guidelines in Section 7 will not apply at this time. For example, IV. relates to assumed time allocation; it is expected that the time allocation for teaching will be significantly higher as we prepare for Connected Learning. While teaching is the priority, it is also recognised that research activities still need to continue, particularly with regard to meeting obligations to funders and meeting other types of deadlines.

6.2 Head of School Responsibilities

During this transitionary period where staff will be concerned over work pressures, Heads of School are responsible for working with their leadership teams to identify priorities which are communicated to staff, while being mindful of individual circumstances and the need to support staff health and wellbeing. They should consider these pressures and what mitigations might be put in place, identifying team members might face particular challenges and need additional support and flexibility, including support to postpone particular work streams without any detriment.

The University recognises that future academic progression decisions will take into account the work set for this year and will allow managers to consider the impact of the pandemic particularly on those with caring responsibilities, as well as acknowledging any special efforts that staff have made to address challenges that have specifically arisen as a result of the crisis.

It is acknowledged that during this transition period colleagues, have and will continue mobilise, to ensure that we deliver Connected Learning and the best possible student experience. There is a unique opportunity at this time for colleagues across the University to collaborate, to play to each other’s strengths, sharing best practice internally and externally and to eliminate inefficiencies in the way that we work, enabling us to successfully address our priorities.

1. Operational Guidelines (fully effective 2021/22)
2. Managing workload allocations provides a means of capturing data to provide information which will aid decision making on issues such as workforce planning, e.g. understanding current staffing needs, determining future staffing needs, identifying any existing staffing gaps or gaps between the present and future needs, identifying inefficiencies and improving productivity and the quality of outputs. In order to support these aims it is recommended that workload allocation models are prospective.

1. The University recognises academic staff do not have defined working hours and that this arrangement provides flexibility, which benefits individual members of staff, students and the University as a whole.
2. For the purposes of workload allocation an hour-based model should be used with a notional figure of 1628 hours (220 working days x 7.4 hours per day) for research/scholarship, teaching and citizenship, representing the total hours for a full-time member of staff, as the baseline. The total number of hours will be adjusted for those on part-time contracts or whose University contracted commitment is less than full-time, for example, clinical academics.
3. A working general assumption of time allocation as follows\*:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Academic Career Pathway** | **Research (R&E)****Scholarship (E)** | **Teaching** | **Citizenship** |
| Research & Education | 40% | 40% | 20% |
| Education Only | 10% | 70% | 20% |

These general allocations should be tailored to the needs of the School and the individual.

1. It is recommended that colleagues on probation on the R&E pathway have a reduced teaching and service load in year one and year two of their employment – in year one an expected teaching load should normally be 50 to 60% of the School norm and in year two 75 to 85% of the School norm.
2. Workload allocation should be an annual exercise with planning commencing January through to March each year and finalising allocations by early September. Staff should be encouraged to discuss their workload preferences at the start of the planning cycle and workload allocation should be aligned to PDR priorities and development goals. Time should be allocated for professional development appropriate to the role and career trajectory.
3. Grant applications which include a dedicated budget line for teaching cover costs should be agreed in advance with the HoS. The HoS will consider the request in line with the individual, research project, School needs/priorities and the viability of recruiting cover. For other grants, e.g. UKRI, which provide costs for Principal/Co-Investigator time, staff may wish to request some teaching relief, particularly when large amounts of PI/CI time extend above the 40% time typically allocated for research. A Faculty agreed approach, balancing the maximisation of income contribution against teaching needs, should be applied, and the HoS should ensure that teaching relief accurately reflects time spent on the grant.
4. When allocating time to teaching, the following should be taken into account: class size, methods of teaching e.g. lecture, practical, tutorial, laboratory and project supervision, and assessment methods including marking, moderation and feedback. Consideration should also be given to whether the module is new, the individual is teaching in a subject area they have not previously delivered, there are significant changes to the delivery approaches of the module which include innovation, and also if there are additional requirements by accrediting and professional bodies.
5. Unless in exceptional circumstances, and with the prior agreement of the HoS, 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.

1. Responsibilities and tasks should be given a notional allocation of hours to complete on an annual basis, recognising that many activities may be concentrated in a small period of time throughout the year.
2. Key leadership roles should be rotated and when a member of staff is responsible for a number of roles they should receive the appropriate recognition, see Appendix 2.
3. A member of staff who considers their workload to be unreasonable or considers that they are being treated unfairly with regard to their workload allocation, should raise concerns with their Head of School. If the concerns are not addressed through discussions with the Head of School, the issue will be escalated to an appropriate member of the School Management Board.
4. A Head of School may build in some flexibility to account for leave of absence or discontinuation of contract within their workload allocation.

\* The School of Medicine Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences has a different assumption of time allocation and will implement this in line with the principles in this document.

1. Review

It is recommended that workload allocation practices are reviewed annually by Schools and Faculties and that the approach to review is agreed and communicated to staff. SWAN Champions are required to report on this information on submissions and mid-way reviews.

An annual audit of a sample of Schools will be conducted by People and Culture reporting to the University Executive Board (UEB) to ensure adherence to the institutional principles and that fairness and consistency is maintained.

**Appendix 1**

**Sample Common Institutional Roles**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role**  | **FTE/Range** |
| Head of School | 0.7 FTE  |
| Faculty Deans | 0.6 – 0.75 FTE |
| GRI Director | 0.6 - 1.0 FTE |
| Centre Director (MDBS) | 0.7 FTE |
| SWAN Champion  | 0.5 – 1.5 days per week\*  |
| Deputy Head of School  | 0.3 - 0.4 FTE |
| Director of Education\*\*  | 0.3 - 0.7 FTE |
| Director of Research\*\* | 0.2 – 0.5 FTE |

\* This range represents the minimum allocation of 0.5 days a week in non-submission years rising to 1.5 days a week in a submission year. This allocation is shared between Champions; a single Champion would get the full allocation, if there are two Champions the allocation would be shared (the share between Champions would depend on the specific allocation of work/roles to each Champion).

\*\* Note some Schools have more than one DR

**Appendix 2**

Sample leadership roles and activities

Pioneer Research Programme Director

Director(s) of Education - UG

Examinations Officer (ELO)

Director of UG Admissions/Academic selector

UG Degree Board Convenor/Programme or Subject Convenor

UG Advisor of Studies

Module Coordinator - all UG or PGT modules

Chair of UG Staff/Student Consultative Committee

Study Abroad Coordinator/International Student Officer

Personal Tutor (UG students only)

Student Disability Officer

Student Support Officer/Chair of Student Support Committee

Member of Student Support Committee

Supporting Staff Networks, e.g. PRISM, iRise, Staff Forum etc.

Chair of Exceptional Circumstances Board

Student Work Placement Coordinator

Summer Studentships/Work Experience Coordinator

Work Placement Visits

Year lead

Professional lead

External examiner (teaching)

Director of Education - PG Taught

Director of PG Research (incl. Chair PGR Committee)

Coordinator of PG Differentiation Panel

Member of PG Differentiation/APR Panel

PGT Advisor of Studies/ personal tutor

PGT Programme/Pathway lead for NMC approved courses

Chair of PG Staff/Student Consultative Committee

Postgraduate Symposium Coordinator

QUB convenor for MPhil and PhD viva

Examiner for MPhil and PhD viva

Director of Research/Research Group/Cluster Lead

REF Champion

REF outputs reviewer

Chair of Research Ethics Committee

Member of School Ethics Committee

Director of Internationalisation

Athena Swan Champion

Member of Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team

Quality and Student Support Champion

Staff Development Champion

Lead for CPD and PG

Academic Lead for Student Experience

Academic Lead for Equality

Simulation Lead

Academic Lead for Service Users and Carers

PDR Reviewer

Academic Progression Committee Member (for CiP)

Member of selection interview panel for new staff

Chair of other committee or working group at School or Faculty Level

Membership of other Committee /Working Groups at School or Faculty level

Membership of other Committee/Working Groups at Institutional level

Other external partner committee membership

University Service (Major Committees e.g. Senate)

Member of UG Staff/Student Consultative Committee

Academic Offences Panel Member

Investigations for Health & Conduct committee

Student Peer Mentoring Coordinator

Open Day Contributor

Attendance at graduation

School Library Representative

School Specific Outreach/Public Engagement activities

School Representative at Open Day events

School Talk presenter

Academic Postdoc Forum member

Fire Warden/ First Aid Officer

Other mentor (excluding for academic progression)

Notes:

1. The above list is not exhaustive.
2. Colleagues may carry out a number the above roles, some of which due to their scope may not have a dedicated allocation within the model, it is therefore important that the cumulative effort of these contributions are recognised.