



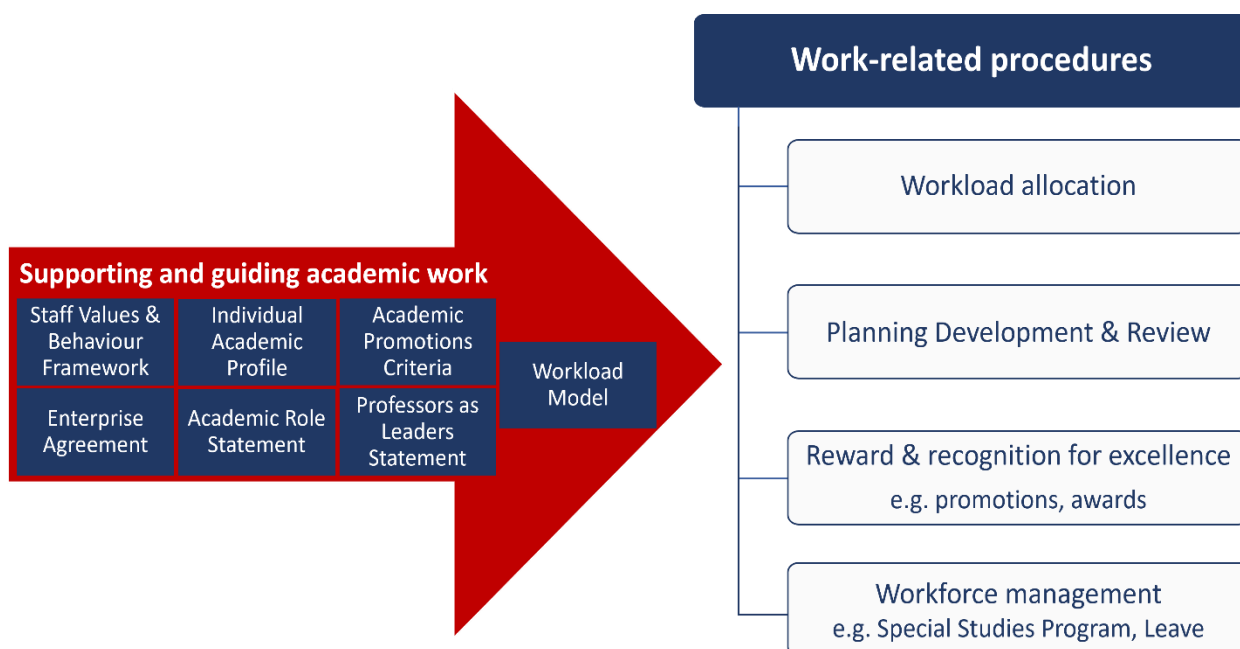
THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE

# Academic Workload Allocation Principles & Expectations



# Academic Workload Allocation Principles & Expectations

Workload allocation should be a respectful and collaborative two-way discussion between the line-manager (such as a Head of School or delegate) and the academic staff member. The process of workload allocation will complement other HR-related procedures and should be aligned with the Planning, Development & Review (PDR) process (Figure 1). Allocation of workload will occur in a timely manner and be defined by the duties assigned to the relevant role and within the broader context of the institutional and Faculty requirements and expectations.



**Figure 1 Complementary work-related procedures and information supporting academic work.**

Workload allocation will be guided by a set of principles (Figure 2) which should be applied to the application, governance and communication of the process while also adhering to the [Staff Values and Behaviour Framework](#) and being compliant with the [Enterprise Agreement](#). Individual Academic Profiles, Academic Role Statements, Academic Promotions Criteria, Workload Models, and the Professors as Leaders Statement should also support and guide academic work and its allocation.



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| <b>Fairness &amp; Equity</b>               | Workload allocations should be distributed in a way that neither favours nor overloads any academic staff member in the School. The workload model should be applied to ensure equity.   |
| <b>Transparency</b>                        | Information on the workload model methodology, consultation with staff, and the outcomes of workload allocation model implementation will be widely visible to academic members of the School.   |
| <b>Enabling &amp; Flexibility</b>          | Workload models and processes for allocation should allow for flexibility and responsiveness to strategic changes/opportunities, as well as being supportive and nurturing of an individual's career progression and life/work balance to ensure motivation, productivity, and the wellbeing of everyone.  |
| <b>Simplicity &amp; Clarity</b>            | Workload allocation models and benchmarks for staff activities are clearly identified and communicated, and well-understood by academic members of the School. Clarity and simplicity are essential for <i>Transparency</i> and to be <i>Enabling</i> .  |
| <b>Reliability</b>                         | Workload allocation models and benchmarks/measures for staff activities are fit for purpose being realistic and accurately reflecting the varied roles of academics. They will be inclusive of different appointment types and career stages, recognise discipline-diversity and be sufficiently detailed. |
| <b>Responsibility &amp; Accountability</b> | Clearly defined mutual expectations for quality of work should be met through appropriate workload modelling, allocation, and reliable implementation.   |

**Figure 2 Workload allocation principles and associated expectations.**

The expectation for each of the overarching principles (Figure 2) and their application in practice are captured below in each table. Any links to the application of other principles have also been identified (in italics).

## Fairness & Equity

**Expectations:** Workload allocations should be distributed in a way that neither favours nor overloads any academic staff member in the School. Wherever possible, the workload model should be applied to ensure equity.

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| <b>In Practice</b> | <b>Institution:</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide a commitment to ensuring staff workload is fair and equitable across the Institution.</li> <li>- Workload allocation models should ensure fairness and recognize the diverse contributions of academics. Workload allocation based on equity would recognise each person's individual needs and context.</li> <li>- Provide a set of evidence-based guidelines that <i>Enable</i> fairness of workload allocation by setting <i>Reliable</i> and <i>Transparent</i> benchmarks/measures for the allocation of hours to common tasks. Guidelines and workload models will facilitate fair and equitable workload allocation by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Being communicated in an easy-to-understand manner (providing <i>Simplicity &amp; Clarity</i>)</li> <li>o Considering, on a case-by-case basis, the balance of capacity with experience at different levels of seniority (that is, years of service, time in a particular role and academic level). Promoting the pursuit of excellence and quality work but also accounting for contribution to the team effort (at the Area, Faculty and/or Institution level).</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Provide training to all staff in the application of fairness and equity as well as associated principles such as diversity and inclusion.</li> </ul> |
|                    | <b>Line Manager (such as Head of School, HoS, or delegate):</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where appropriate, implement Institution guidelines, taking into consideration individual circumstances and opportunities for <i>Enabling &amp; Flexibility</i>. Be proactive at identifying unique situations and exercise appropriate discretion when allocating tasks. Consider capacity and commitment of every individual in the broader strategic context.</li> <li>- Reinforce to staff that the workload model seeks to be fair and enable equity.</li> <li>- Ensure that number of hours allocated (including accounting for tasks not captured in the guidelines or workload allocation model) does not exceed those available based on the Enterprise Agreement.</li> </ul>  |
|                    | <b>Academic Staff Member:</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide complete details of capacity to their Line Manager to ensure actualities of each unique situation are considered.</li> <li>- Be understanding that work may not be distributed equally but that the workload allocation model seeks to achieve equity and meet the strategic goals of the Area, Faculty and/or University.</li> </ul>   |

## Transparency

**Expectations:** Information on the workload model methodology, consultation with staff, and the outcomes of workload allocation model implementation will be widely visible to academic members of the School.

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| <b>In Practice</b> | <b>Institution:</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Components and range of tasks within the workload are clearly communicated to; modelled and captured for all staff. Workload models will define any measures and how workload is allocated based on those measures in a <i>Reliable</i> manner. Where models vary due to disciplines, these differences should be clearly explained and made transparent.</li> <li>- Staff can compare their workloads with others in the School especially for their discipline, level, and role enabling checks on <i>Fairness &amp; Equity</i> and <i>Responsibility &amp; Accountability</i>. Subsequently, they should have the opportunity to review their own workload allocation and plan for the following year with their Line Manager. Where appropriate, discussion and amendments to workload allocation may also occur to cater to needs for <i>Flexibility</i>.</li> </ul> |
|                    | <b>Line Manager (such as HoS or delegate):</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Timelines and processes for the planning of and actual workload allocation for the following year should be transparent to staff that the individual line manages.</li> <li>- Responsible for providing accurate data and updates to workload allocation throughout the year [in response to needs for <i>Flexibility</i>].</li> </ul>  |
|                    | <b>Academic Staff Member:</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be aware of the wide range of activities within the academic role and broadly speaking the workloads of their colleagues.</li> </ul>  |

## Enabling & Flexibility

**Expectations:** Workload models and processes for allocation should allow for flexibility and responsiveness to strategic changes/opportunities, as well as being supportive and nurturing of an individual's career progression and life/work balance to ensure motivation, productivity and the wellbeing of everyone.

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| <b>In Practice</b> | <b>Institution:</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All staff will have the opportunity to discuss career aspirations and how that might impact their workload allocation during the Planning, Development &amp; Review (PDR) process and at any other time, if required. Staff can negotiate their nominal allocation to the traditional categories (in teaching, research and service) and any deviations during PDR.</li> <li>- Make staff aware of how the institution aims to support recognition of diversity and individual needs through training, provision of access to resources and clear communication. The flexibility to vary workload based on individual circumstances will be clearly communicated to all staff members.</li> <li>- Provide simple, clear and efficient processes and training for Line Managers to have respectful, inclusive and timely discussion with staff about their individual circumstances and to update workload allocation when appropriate.</li> <li>- Career progression activities should be captured appropriately within workload models, and benchmarks/measures for work activities, and clearly communicated to staff members to ensure <i>Transparency</i> and <i>Simplicity &amp; Clarity</i>.</li> </ul> |
|                    | <b>Line Manager (such as HoS or delegate):</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish ongoing and respectful communication with staff about personal circumstances and individual needs supporting inclusivity and diversity.</li> <li>- Construct a 'baseline' workload allocation for the following year with a consideration of longer-term needs and capacity for responsiveness. Provide staff with an opportunity to review their own workload allocation and plan for the following year (including through the PDR process).</li> <li>- Monitor and implement updates to workload allocation. Where necessary and appropriate, reallocate resources and workload allocation in a timely manner that ensures <i>Fairness &amp; Equity</i>, to support staff career progression and work/life balance as well as to cater to other unforeseen circumstances.</li> <li>- Provide <i>Transparent</i> communications around changing priorities and nature of components affecting workload allocation to staff including longer-term needs and strategic decisions.</li> </ul>  |
|                    | <b>Academic Staff Member:</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff should have shared ownership of workload to negotiate allocations that cater to their career aspirations and special circumstances (<i>Enabling &amp; Flexibility</i>) while also contributing to the team effort (at the Area, Faculty and/or Institution level) (<i>Responsibility &amp; Accountability</i>).</li> <li>- Actively monitor their workload commitments and raise issues and opportunities with their Line Manager for the purpose of future planning and/or workload reallocation during the year.</li> </ul>   |

## Simplicity & Clarity

**Expectations:** Workload allocation models and benchmarks for staff activities are clearly identified and communicated, and well-understood by academic members of the School. Clarity and simplicity are essential for *Transparency* and to be *Enabling*.

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| <b>In Practice</b> | <b>Institution:</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simple, clear and efficient processes, systems, and guidelines are in place. These should allow <i>Enabling</i> discussions for negotiation of workload allocation where required (<i>Enabling &amp; Flexibility</i>) and with regards to <i>Responsibility &amp; Accountability</i>.</li> <li>- Benchmarks and guidelines for workload allocation will be created collaboratively with Line Managers and academic staff members to ensure comprehensiveness (enabling <i>Fairness &amp; Equity</i> and <i>Transparency</i>) and recognition of different work tasks, appointment types and career stages.</li> <li>- The Institution will provide training to ensure that all staff are able to understand benchmarks for staff activities. Induction for new staff will include an overview of the workload allocation principles, processes, and benchmarks.</li> </ul> |
|                    | <b>Line Manager (such as HoS or delegate):</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear commitment to support staff where further explanation and orientation is needed to understand the workload allocation model (and benchmarks therein).</li> <li>- Confirm shared understanding by using the workload model in the specified format (that is, the model remains true to form in its implementation).</li> </ul>  |
|                    | <b>Academic Staff Member:</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively participate in the collaborative creation, evaluation and review of workload models, guidelines and benchmarks therein.</li> <li>- Seek support from Line Manager where further explanation and orientation of workload allocation model (and benchmarks therein) is required.</li> </ul>   |

## Reliability

**Expectations:** Workload allocation models and benchmarks/measures for staff activities are fit for purpose being realistic and accurately reflecting the varied roles of academics. They will be inclusive of different appointment types and career stages, recognise discipline-diversity and be sufficiently detailed.

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| In Practice | Institution:                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide <i>simple, clear</i> and efficient procedures and systems that maintain consistency and accuracy. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o the provision of accurate and reliable data, wherever possible, to Line Managers (including Individual Academic Profiles and timetabled Course activities).</li> <li>o the regular training of Line Managers in the use of data for workload allocation purposes to maintain reliability of the process.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- In collaboration with staff, develop realistic guidelines (benchmarks/measures) for work activities that, where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o reflect differences between disciplines</li> <li>o consider the impact of workload allocation splits (between research, teaching, and service)</li> <li>o recognise non-traditional contributions</li> <li>o give special consideration to certain activities which often require <i>Flexibility</i> to capture workload realistically.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Recognise that all work activities may not be benchmarked and incorporated into a workload allocation model but should still be considered in workload allocation to ensure <i>Fairness &amp; Equity</i> and contribution to the strategic goals of the Area, Faculty and/or University.</li> </ul> |
|             | Line Manager (such as HoS or delegate): | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allocate workload by using accurate data in an ethical and timely manner. The data may also be used to understand gaps related to staff numbers, efficiency, practicality, and feasibility of work activities in meeting the strategic goals of the Area, Faculty and/or University.</li> <li>- Provide staff with the opportunity to review their own workload allocation and associated data. Where data suggests the number of hours allocated is excessively different than those available based on the Enterprise Agreement, have a discussion with the affected individual to determine its accuracy. Where accurate, act according to the <i>Fairness &amp; Equity</i> and <i>Responsibility &amp; Accountability</i> principles to adjust workload accordingly.</li> </ul>  |
|             | Academic Staff Member:                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively monitor workload commitments and maintain realistic commitments to maintain workload within expectations.</li> <li>- Proactively check and ensure the accuracy of data used by Line Managers in workload allocation (such as the Individual Academic Profiles).</li> </ul>  |

## Responsibility & Accountability

**Expectations:** Clearly defined mutual expectations for quality of work should be met through appropriate workload modelling, allocation, and reliable implementation.

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| <b>In Practice</b> | <b>Institution:</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear elucidation of responsibilities at each level:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o the Institution has responsibility to design the guidelines for workload allocation in accordance with the intended principles (Figure 2)</li> <li>o Line Managers have responsibility to allocate workload in accordance with the intended principles in a timely manner</li> <li>o academic staff have responsibility to produce quality work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Clear communication of Academic Role Statements which clearly define what is required of staff to meet expectations, thus increasing accountability that work allocated is completed at a high quality and in a healthy and safe workplace.</li> </ul>  |
|                    | <b>Line Manager (such as HoS or delegate):</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake the workload allocation in accordance with the principles of the allocation model and the Enterprise Agreement in a timely manner.</li> <li>- Ensure communication to all staff regarding workload allocation has <i>Transparency</i> and <i>Simplicity &amp; Clarity</i>.</li> <li>- Report back to the Institution and communicate to the School and individuals any problems/issues where the practical implementation of the workload allocation process will not allow the intended principles to be met.</li> <li>- Provide recognition for excellence where a staff member exceeds the normal expectation of excellence. Where a staff member does not meet expectations, Line Managers will develop and implement strategies collaboratively with the staff member concerned to improve performance as per the appropriate HR process.</li> </ul> |
|                    | <b>Academic Staff Member:</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be aware of the mutual expectations in the production of quality work and demonstrate responsibility for undertaking the allocated tasks to meet expectations.</li> <li>- Participate fully in the workload allocation and PDR process.</li> <li>- Report back to Institution and/or Line Manager concerning problems/issues where the practical implementation of the workload allocation process will not allow the intended principles to be met.</li> <li>- Commitment to engaging fully with the assigned workload tasks and the contribution to the strategic goals of the Area/Faculty/Institution.</li> </ul>   |