



SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING ACADEMICS

The role and place of scholarship is essential for developing quality learning and teaching practices. It provides the opportunity to improve all facets of teaching and learning including curriculum design, to maintain and develop disciplinary knowledge, to incorporate research into teaching practice and to develop and evaluate new approaches for facilitating student learning.

An important component of the Teaching Academic role is the dedication of a minimum of 20% of the individual's overall workload to "scholarship" activities. This will be a key driver for the University to develop "a high performing, sustainable workforce, one that is dedicated to the provision of excellence in all its forms" (as outlined in Action Set 3 of the University's Strategic Action Plan; *Crossing the Horizon 2013-2018*). Ultimately, this emphasis on Teaching Academics having dedicated time to improve their teaching and learning practice will lead to "an outstanding student experience, whereby UniSA will design and deliver curriculum that is relevant and of high quality, delivering excellent outcomes for graduates in an educational environment that allows our students to make the most of their student experience" (Action Set 1; *Crossing the Horizon*).

Whilst the scope of this document is to provide guidance on the workload of "Teaching Academics", there is an expectation that all academic staff engaged in teaching in any capacity will undertake reflective teaching, continuously strive to improve their practice, and engage in a range of scholarly activities designed to enhance their discipline expertise and teaching and learning skills.

What comprises scholarship for Teaching Academics?

For the purpose of workload allocation, the concept of scholarship can be thought of as activities designed to:

1. **Maintain and build discipline expertise:** Teaching Academics are expected to utilise high levels of discipline related expertise in their teaching and incorporate research and industry knowledge into the curriculum. To facilitate this, scholarship covers activities such as those required to maintain professional competency, attending conferences and workshops to keep up to date with developments in the field, and undertaking research activities that directly contribute to teaching practice.
2. **Maintain and build teaching and learning expertise:** Teaching Academics display a commitment to excellence and innovation in pedagogical practice. Scholarly activities could include critical reflections on teaching practice, gaining knowledge and skills on teaching and learning theory, and contributing to conferences and/or literature on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

For Teaching Academics it is important that activities undertaken as part of their scholarship workload goes beyond simply keeping up to date with discipline and teaching and learning developments; rather the individual applies the knowledge and skills gained in their scholarship allocation to their teaching curriculum and activities, demonstrating continuous development, innovation and improvement in their teaching practice.

The set of activities listed in Table 1 provide a guide as to what can be included in the scholarship component of a Teaching Academic's workload. These activities expand on the general professional development activities described in the University of South Australia Academic Workload Guidelines. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list nor a requirement for an individual to undertake all activities.

Table 1: Examples of scholarship for workload purposes

| Scholarship activities | Outcomes may include |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with discipline specific and teaching and learning literature to incorporate into teaching • Professional development activities, including those required to maintain professional registration/accreditation or to develop professional networks • Keeping up to date with developments in the relevant disciplinary field, including attending research seminars, conferences, symposia, workshops and other fora • Undertaking work (paid or unpaid) for an external organisation to maintain industry/professional knowledge relevant for teaching • Investigating teaching and learning practice for personal, local or public knowledge, with the latter being characterised by (often peer reviewed) discipline education-focused presentations and publications, including reports, articles, book chapters and books • Contributing to the research effort of the discipline or profession, or generating creative works • Engaging with opportunities for internal and external teaching and learning awards, grants and fellowships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of professional development qualifications, workshops or courses • Innovative practice informed by relevant literature, which could include dissemination through refereed conference presentations, journal articles, book chapters, textbooks etc. • Invitations to share expertise externally • Participation in practitioner investigations of teaching and reflection on and critique of the results • Membership of professional associations • Development and dissemination of new and rigorous models for curricula and teaching practice, in classroom, practical, online and clinical settings • Success in obtaining funding for internal/external teaching and learning projects and programs • Participation in industry or discipline-related organisations |

Considerations when allocating scholarship workload

The Teaching Academic workload profile includes a *minimum* of 20% allocation for scholarship activities, with the Head of School having discretion to increase this allocation beyond 20%. The only circumstances where scholarship can be less than 20% is where the position is a short term administrative role, or where the academic staff member is enrolled as a student with that division or associated research unit[†].

[†] Contained in University of South Australia Academic Workload Guidelines



At certain points in a staff member's career it may be appropriate for a higher percentage of scholarship to be assigned. This could be where the activities are aligned with leadership roles or strategic goals, or for newly appointed staff who are employed based primarily on their industry/professional experience and would benefit from a workload emphasis on developing their teaching expertise.

The Head of School (or Associate Head of School) is responsible for ensuring the scholarship activities and the percentage of allocation best suit the needs of the individual and the School. These discussions should be held between the staff member and Head of School (or Associate Head of School) as part of Performance Development and Management discussions.

Whilst an individual's performance and outputs related to scholarship may not be evaluated in the same manner as other categories of academic activity, the allocated time must be spent on undertaking strategic and meaningful activities which support innovation and quality in the Teaching Academic's teaching and administration workload.

Additional information

- [University of South Australia Academic Workload Guidelines](#)
- [University of South Australia Enterprise Agreement 2014](#)
- [Teaching Academic Standards of Performance](#)
- [Performance Development and Management Framework](#)
- [Quality Teaching Framework for Teaching Excellence at UniSA](#)