



University of
South Australia

University of South Australia Academic Workload Guidelines



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Introduction

Scope & application

These academic workload guidelines apply to all continuing and fixed-term academic staff (whether full-time or part-time) employed pursuant to the *University of South Australia Enterprise Agreement 2014* (the Agreement). It does not apply to casuals, or staff employed as pilots within the UniSA Aviation Academy pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Agreement. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with clause 64 of the Agreement as they provide guidance and operational support in implementing the academic workload provisions.

“Manager” for the purpose of these guidelines refers to the staff member’s Head of School (or equivalent), or another designated position where the Head of School (or equivalent) has delegated the responsibility for allocating and supervising workloads.

Why does UniSA need workload guidelines?

Clear allocation of duties ensures a shared understanding of expectations between a manager and staff member. It is important that workloads strike a balance between ensuring that staff members are productive and contributing to the University’s goals, while recognising occupational health, safety and welfare considerations to prevent workloads from becoming excessive.

These guidelines provide a framework for constructive discussions between managers and academic staff members in setting and varying workloads. They are intended to provide protections to staff members as well as build on the performance expectations outlined in the Minimum Standards for Academic Levels (as per Schedule 6 of the Agreement).

The aim of these guidelines is to encourage innovation, quality and efficiency in teaching and research. The guidelines provide transparency by illustrating how workload is allocated, and detail how an individual staff member’s specific strengths and career ambitions can be a driver in influencing their workload. The guidelines will also facilitate a consistency of approach across the University for academic staff members.

Workload Profiles

Continuing and fixed-term academic staff members may be employed within one (1) of the following workload profiles:

Teaching and Research Academic: The majority of staff members entering the UniSA academic workforce will initially be appointed within this profile. These roles contain a balance of the three (3) broad categories of academic activity, typically structured with 40% of the staff member’s workload allocated to teaching, 40% allocated to research/scholarship activities, and 20% allocated to administrative activities (referred to as 40:40:20).

Research Academic: These roles predominately focus on research and related activities and will also provide the opportunity to undertake activities related to teaching, administration and scholarship.

Teaching Academic: These roles undertake a combination of teaching and administrative activities of up to 80% of their allocated workload. The Teaching Academic profile can also capture circumstances where the role is purely administrative in nature (e.g. an academic staff member employed on a fixed-term basis to undertake a program review).

For the majority of Teaching Academics, scholarship must be a *minimum* of 20% of total allocated workload. The only circumstances where scholarship can be less than 20% is where the role is a short term administrative role, or where the academic staff member is enrolled as a student within that Division or associated research unit. In these instances the level of scholarship time allocated will depend on the individual circumstances.

Eligibility to workload profiles

Academic staff members may be appointed as a Teaching Academic, a Research Academic, or as a Teaching and Research Academic on either a continuing or fixed-term basis. There are however certain eligibility restrictions which are outlined in the table opposite:

	Teaching and Research Academic (40% Teaching, 40% Research, 20% Administration)	Teaching Academic (up to 80% Teaching and Administration, 20% Scholarship)	Research Academic (up to 100% Research)
Continuing employment	No restrictions.	<p>Appointment is limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Roles within UniSA College; ○ Roles predominately associated with the delivery of online education (e.g. Open Universities Australia); ○ Roles within the Learning and Teaching Unit; ○ Fixed-term Teaching Academic staff appointed to continuing employment as per clause 28.1 f) of the Agreement; ○ Transition from 40:40:20 profile to Teaching Academic via PDM discussions (as per clause 64.5 h) of the Agreement); ○ Fixed-term staff member with a right to continuing employment. 	No restrictions.
Fixed-term employment	<p>Appointment is limited to the following fixed-term categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specific task/project ○ Replacement staff member ○ Workforce planning contract ○ Any other circumstance mutually agreed with the NTEU 	<p>Appointment is limited to the following fixed-term categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teaching Academic (as defined in clause 28.1 f): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Casual academic employment experience within the past twelve (12) months plus no continuing employment within UniSA during the previous three (3) years; or ▪ Relevant experience for the work activity; or ▪ Enrolled student ○ Specific task/project ○ Replacement staff member ○ Workforce planning contract ○ Any other circumstance mutually agreed 	<p>Appointment is limited to*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where a staff member is engaged on research only functions; or ○ A person directly supporting such a person and funded by the same source (not being funding that is part of an operating grant from government or funding comprised of payments of fees made by or on behalf of student). <p>*As per clause 28.1 b) of the Agreement.</p>
Casual employment	<p>Staff members are engaged to undertake specific and defined duties and are employed on an hourly basis. There are no specific restrictions on the composition of a casual staff member's workload. Reference should be made to Schedule 4 of the Agreement which outlines conditions for casual academic staff.</p>		

Career development

All staff members have the opportunity to seek to broaden or specialise their academic focus. Whilst there are distinct workforce profiles of Teaching Academic, Research Academic, and Teaching and Research Academic, opportunities to change or increase focus onto teaching, research or administrative areas of a staff member's discipline can be discussed with their manager as part of Performance Development and Management (PDM) discussions.

Specific conditions for Teaching and Research Academics

In relation to Teaching and Research Academics transitioning to a Teaching Academic role, there are two (2) distinct mechanisms:

1. A staff member and their manager, through discussion and agreement, can increase a staff member's allocated teaching load above 40%; or
2. Following evaluation of a staff member's research activities and outcomes via PDM discussions, the manager realigns the workload with an increased focus on teaching duties and a corresponding decrease in research responsibilities.

Academic staff members who become Teaching Academics will have up to 80% of their allocated workload attributable to a combination of teaching and administrative activities. A minimum of 20% of the staff member's workload will be for scholarship activities.

A staff member who has become a Teaching Academic via one of the avenues listed above, may transition back to a Teaching and Research Academic through PDM discussions and with the agreement of their manager.

Similarly, opportunities exist for Teaching and Research Academics to increase research responsibilities. This could be via a management initiated discussion or by the staff member seeking opportunities to develop their research profile. If a staff member wishes to decrease their allocated teaching or administrative workload, it must be negotiated and agreed with their manager.

Definition of academic activities

Understanding which activities are categorised as teaching versus research or administration is integral to workload allocation. Outlined below is a range of academic activities grouped into three (3) broad categories. These activities are not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Scholarship activities are a subset of research given that scholarship will typically contribute to the 40% research component of a Teaching and Research (40:40:20) Academic. For the majority of Teaching Academics however, scholarship is distinctly defined as at least 20% of the allocated annual workload.

Teaching and Related Activities

- Course development, including online and offshore learning materials
- Course coordination
- Preparation of teaching materials for face to face, online and other modes of delivery
- Delivery of clinical education, laboratory classes, lectures, practicum, tutorials, seminars, studio sessions and workshops
- Delivery of off-shore and distance education
- Delivery of online course and related activities
- Student consultation
- Supervision of students undertaking fieldwork, placements or research projects
- Supervision of Masters projects by course work
- Preparing and marking and/or moderation of student assessment, including checking for plagiarism

Administration and Engagement

- Academic Integrity Officer
- Attending and/or chairing Program, Discipline, School, Division or University meetings
- Conducting student and staff orientation
- Engaging with clinical partners
- Ethics advisor
- Major program reviews – internal/external
- Participating on advisory boards
- Participating in planning days
- Peer teaching review
- Public relations and marketing, including promotion of School programs and the University
- Quality assurance (e.g. accreditation)
- Recruiting, training and coordination of staff contributing to the delivery of courses
- Running of student exchanges/field excursions/study tours
- Undertaking directed training
- Industry liaison
- Sourcing and securing clinical placements, internships etc
- Travel associated with international teaching
- Travel between campuses or to other locations for the purpose of teaching related duties

Research and Related Activities (Including Scholarship)

- Securing and coordinating internal and/or external grants/funding
- Grant applications approved by the Head of School/Institute Director and formally submitted
- Conference presentations
- Creating publications – scholarly book, scholarly book chapters, refereed journal articles, referee conference papers
- Early career/publications mentoring
- Exhibitions
- HDR supervision*
- Undertaking a higher degree by research
- Creating and delivering applied research reports
- Editorial review work for external publications
- Grant Assessment Panel duties
- Research group coordination

*In instances where a manager and staff member agree, HDR supervision may contribute to the teaching workload rather than research.

Scholarship Activities

- Professional development activities including those required to maintain professional registration
- Attendance at approved conferences, seminar and lectures
- Keeping up to date with developments in the relevant disciplinary field
- Interface with national and/or international colleagues.
- Developing professional networks

Workload allocation principles

How is workload allocated?

Successful work allocation is achieved through an open conversation between the staff member and their manager as part of PDM discussions. Factors which influence the composition of a staff member's work include the University's overarching direction, an increase or decrease in student enrolment numbers, and financial impacts such as grant funding.

A staff member's strengths, preferences and previous work outputs are also integral components of a workload allocation discussion. Managers however will need to consider the staff member's workload in the context of balancing the workload of each academic staff member within the School, including taking into account numbers of students and courses taught. It is the manager's role to balance a staff member's needs with the strategic priorities of the University.

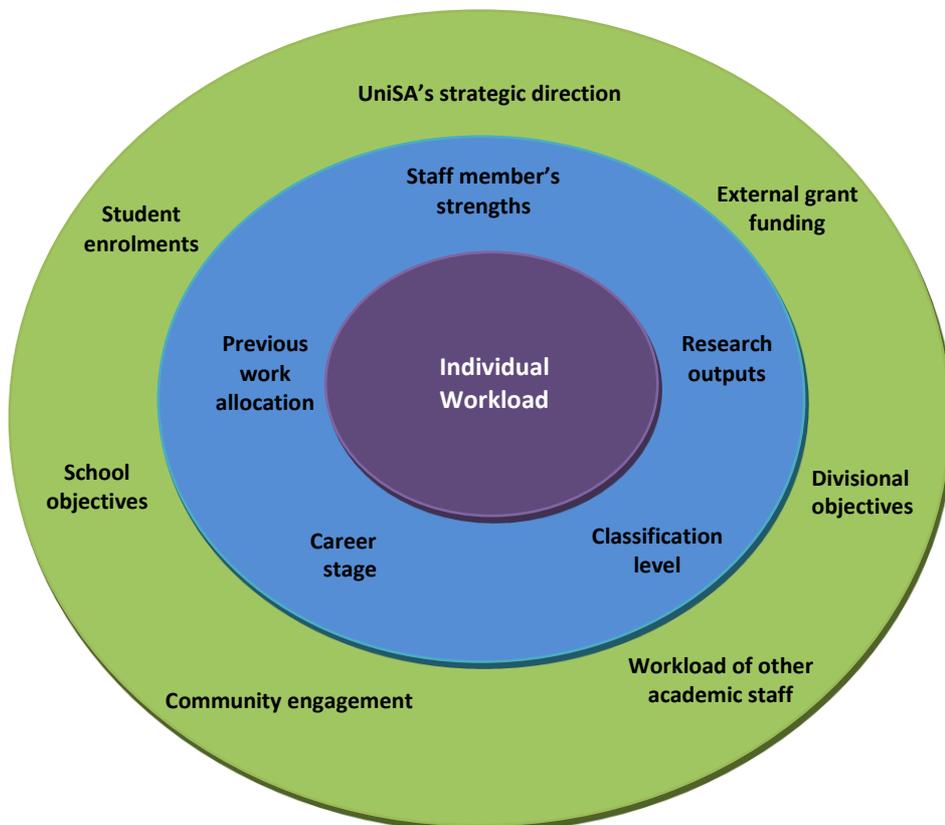


Diagram 1: Drivers and influences in determining composition of workload

Principles

The aim of these guidelines is to assist managers and staff members have productive discussions and encourage innovative approaches to continually improve the delivery of teaching and research. Considered within this context, outlined below are the principles which are to underpin each staff member's allocated workload.

Principle 1: The total hours of work will be reasonable

- (1a) A full-time academic workload should be achievable in 1725 hours over the course of a service year. The total of allocated activities should not exceed, or be significantly under 1725 hours. A part-time staff member will be allocated work commensurate with their pro-rata hours equivalent to their employment fraction.
- (1b) The standard times outlined in Schedule 4 of the Agreement will form the basis of determining the activities which will contribute to the 1725 hours. Managers will still be required to make judgements to ensure the times accurately reflect the complexity of the task within the individual environment. If the times do not reflect the complexity of the task, a commensurate reduction or increase in time shall be made by the manager based on what is a reasonable time for the tasks to be undertaken, having regard to the variances with other academic staff members across the School and Division.
- (1c) It is recognised that workloads will reflect the number of students within a course/program.
- (1d) A staff member's entitlement to four (4) weeks of recreation leave has been taken into account in the 1725 hours per year requirement. Any other periods of approved leave (including PEP, long service leave etc) will be considered in the workload allocation process and result in a commensurate reduction in workload. It is not the intention for total workload hours to be adjusted due to short periods of unanticipated leave (e.g. personal, family responsibility leave or other unexpected leave of this nature).
- (1e) Academic staff members are expected to manage their own hours and it is recognised that there may be a fluctuation in hours worked each week. During the University's operating hours academics are to spend most of their working time on campus, or make other arrangements to ensure accountability and encourage student interaction.

Principle 2: The work value of an individual's duties will be appropriate

- (2a) A staff member's allocated activities and expected outputs will be aligned with their level of appointment. Reference should be made to the Minimum Standards of Academic Levels (as per Schedule 6 of the Agreement) which outlines the levels of autonomy, complexity and leadership requirements expected at the different levels (e.g. expectations relating to research outputs will differ from an Academic Level B compared to an Academic Level D).

Principle 3: Workloads should be tailored to each individual with consideration to the staff member's Performance Development and Management Plan

- (3a) For 40:40:20 academic staff members, an increase in allocated teaching activities above 40% will require a corresponding decrease in research and/or administrative components to ensure total hours allocated do not exceed 1725 in a service year (pro-rata for part-time staff). Alternatively, negotiations can focus on increasing research or administrative activities above the standard allocation, with a corresponding reduction in other activities.
- (3b) Particular consideration will be provided to the needs of early career academics in establishing their research profile.
- (3c) PDM discussions will take into account opportunities for staff members to undertake work which will produce outcomes required for career advancement.
- (3d) Workloads can be adjusted to reflect individual circumstances with agreement between the staff member and the manager. Agreement to alter a staff member's workload profile is not required in instances where a 40:40:20 staff member is deemed as not being research productive.

Principle 4: Performance outcomes will be evaluated

- (4a) A staff member's outputs and performance will influence their workload for the upcoming twelve (12) months.
- (4b) Whilst research is largely a self-directed activity, academics will remain accountable via PDM discussions and associated evaluation of evidence based outcomes. The quantity and quality of outcomes will be assessed over a reasonable period and will influence the research time allocated to the staff member for the coming year.
- (4c) As a guide, 'a reasonable period' for evaluating research performance will be a three (3) year period. Assessment will also involve consideration of the staff member's research outcomes relative to those of colleagues at the same classification level.

Principle 5: Allocation of workload will be appropriately transparent

- (5a) Workloads will be allocated in line with these principles to facilitate transparency for staff members to understand how their workload has been established.
- (5b) Key roles allocated to staff members (e.g. Academic Integrity Officer) will be advised to other academic staff within the School/Division.

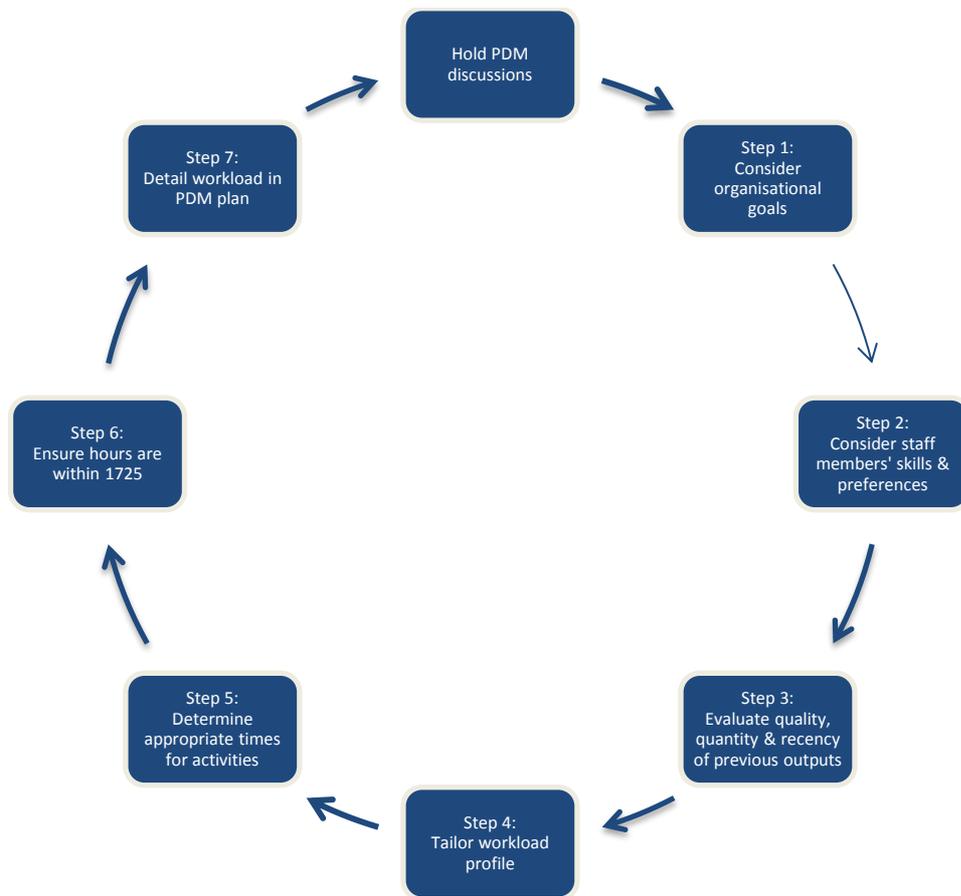


Diagram 2: Principle based workload allocation as part of PDM discussions

Time allocation

Allocation of workload will be based on planned outcomes rather than inputs. To assist in determining how many and which activities should be allocated, managers will draw on the times allocated to casual academic activities (as per Schedule 4 of the Agreement).

It is recognised however that times may vary across different Divisions/Schools and that individual staff members perform work at different speeds. Given this, the proposed times must be used as a general guide to assist discussions, with the opportunity for the staff member and manager to discuss times more suitable for their own context.

It is important to note that where a staff member is required to undertake a Program Director role and it is not the sole duty of the individual, a manager is to subtract a commensurate number of hours representing the Program Director role from the staff member's total annual hours (e.g. 1725 hrs for full time, pro-rata for part-time staff members).

Individual workload review

If a staff member believes that their workload is excessive, unreasonable or inconsistent with the Agreement, the staff member is able to raise the matter with their Head of School (or equivalent) to seek amendments. If the matter is not resolved, the staff member may seek a review by their Pro Vice Chancellor.

Reference should be made to clause 64.6 of the Agreement for additional information.

Amendment of guidelines

These guidelines apply during the life of the *University of South Australia Enterprise Agreement 2014*, except as varied by agreement between the University and the NTEU.

Further Information:

Managers should contact their local Human Resources team in the first instance. Queries may also be directed to the Employee Relations team within the People, Talent and Culture Unit.

Staff members may seek assistance from their manager, local People, Talent and Culture team or the NTEU.

March 2014

Amendment: August 2017

Amended: January 2019