

2. ACADEMIC & TEACHING STAFF WORKLOAD POLICY

This policy sets out the standards and measures of workload for the academic and teaching staff.

2.1 Preamble

As an institution established to maintain, advance and disseminate knowledge by teaching, training, consultation and research, the National University of Samoa is one of an international community of universities which recognize the inter-connection of ideas and theories to human intellectual advancement.

For the University to achieve that objective, it needs to ensure that the academic staff adhere to the duties and responsibilities, terms and conditions of their contract, the Code of Professional Conduct (Section 11 of this Manual) and that their workload reflects that commitment.

The intellectual and educational content and the standards of courses and training are the responsibility of the academic and teaching staff. Academic staff are also obliged to engage in scholarship and research and teaching staff lecturer grade 2 and 1 have to complete projects. The academic and teaching staff are therefore a most valuable human resource. They provide the drive and creative energy that enables the University to achieve its mission in teaching, research and scholarship and service to the disciplines and the community. NUS acknowledges that its mission will be achievable if it promotes and encourages a culture that endeavours to be inclusive, supportive and appreciative.

The allocation of work is central to such an environment for it should be done with consideration of the personal qualifications and skills of each staff member. At the same time the allocation of work must satisfy the contractual obligations.

This will necessitate the effective management of different workload pressures through a re-examination of essential work, the omission of redundant and non-essential tasks and the incorporation of emerging trends in the discipline and working environment. Within the context of the University's mission, goals and objectives, the career development of academic and teaching staff, should be recognized.

Since academics and teachers tend to work with high levels of personal autonomy and little, daily supervision, it is important that deans/heads of school are aware of each staff member's management of her/his workload. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that stress does not become a permanent feature of an individual's working environment.

2.2 Allocated Work

The contract of employment and the duties and responsibilities/position description consistent with the level of appointment (Part II Sections 1 and 2), provide the guidelines for the allocation of work.

The supervisor and the staff member should agree on the details of the workload as both the faculty's/school's/sector's and the staff member's objectives and aspirations need to be considered.

This agreement may be reached normally at the time of the annual staff appraisal. However detailed teaching and administrative duties may have to be finalized at the beginning of the academic year/semester by the head of department for academic and teaching staff.

The process of allocating work should be transparent and equitable so there should be an annual review by the sector, discipline or faculty/school of the balance and distribution of workload, having regard for the different levels of responsibilities of different grades of appointment.

2.3 Quantum of Work

The supervisor must bear in mind the principle of equity when allocating the work load according to the level of appointment. Uniformity is not required as each staff member's workload in terms of courses and level of courses offered, modes of teaching, research and administrative or discipline or community responsibilities or activities is likely to be peculiar.

The supervisor is responsible for the annual workload. The "seasonal" demands of various sectors may require some variation. The duties/responsibilities or position description provides a guide for allocation.

Staff in Degree Programmes & Foundation Programmes

Teaching and research/scholarship should be the focus for academic staff activity. In NUS these define an 'academic'. Some administration is required of academic staff and is seen as a legitimate constituent of an academic staff member's workload. Administrative duties however should be minimized to allow the focus on teaching, research/scholarship.

To indicate the emphases to be given to each of the duties required of senior lecturers and lecturers, a 40:40:20 ratio of teaching, research, contribution to the University or discipline or community is a notional guideline. A variation from this guideline should be based on factors such as personal strengths, career development, and the faculty's requirements or needs. This Manual also indicates (see part II.1 Duties and Responsibilities) that 15 hours of teaching per week is normally required of those appointed as senior lecturer, lecturer grade 1 and grade 2 and 21 hours for lecturer grade 3 (no research required). That may be lessened when a staff member is teaching considerably more than the average 7.75 EFTS per semester. [80 Foundation students is equivalent to 8EFTS; 80 first level students are equivalent to 10 EFTS]

Professors, associate professors will have a greater emphasis on research. For professorial staff, normally research shall be about 60%; contribution to the University 15-20% and teaching 15-20%. Teaching hours for professorial staff are about six hours per week: 3.1 EFTS per semester.

Normally, in the case of a dean, the contribution to the University shall not be less than 50% and not more than 60%; research 20% (at least one published article per three-year contract) and teaching between 20-30%. Minimum six hours teaching per week. For heads of department/head of school, contribution to the University shall be 30%; research 40%; and teaching 30%. Minimum 12 hours teaching per week or 7.75 EFTS per semester.

The staff member and the dean may seek/require an adjustment. Extra teaching (such as programme or course development) or extra research may reflect a more appropriate profile of workload to meet University or the faculty's needs. A staff member engaged in pursuing a masters or doctoral qualification whilst teaching at NUS has the quantum of workload adjusted so that the postgraduate study replaces research. (See Section 13)

Deans/heads of departments will monitor timetabled contact hours and collate the data to allow analysis of actual contact hours.

TVET Staff

The workload for a lecturer comprises class contact hours and activities in addition to teaching delivery, including but not limited to:

- preparation for classes
- routine administration and participation in meetings and functions
- student assessment
- consultation, pastoral care and extra tuition assistance with students
- routine upgrading of courses and material
- contribution to day-to day maintenance of teaching areas and equipment

- approved staff development
- participation in research projects/consulting as appropriate.

As a guideline for work allocation, lecturers are expected to deliver an average of between a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 25 class contact hours per week for the teaching weeks. Senior lecturers who are programme co-ordinators are expected to deliver an average of between a minimum of 15 class contact hours per week, up to a maximum of 20 class contact hours per week for the teaching weeks. This may be reduced by the head of school depending on the administration load for the position. These guidelines are based on a 14-week semester. Heads of school/heads of department will teach at least twelve hours per week, per semester.

For short periods a lecturer may be required to exceed the weekly maximum contact hours, but will be time tabled so this is offset by lower hours at another time as agreed with the head of school, by approved time in lieu, or other arrangements approved by the head of school so that the annual limit is not exceeded.

The dean may vary the hours in the following and other exceptional circumstances:

(a) above the minimum:

- there is a repeated delivery of the same material to different classes
- there is significant supervision of several practical exercises with reduced requirement for preparation and subsequent assessment
- off campus activities such as field trips/work placement. Field trips must be approved by the head of school who will determine how much time is to be counted as work or class contact hours, taking into account the planned learning outcomes, travel time, allowances for overnight stays etc.
- the lecturer is co-teaching, which must be approved by the head of school, taking into account how both lecturers will contribute to the learning outcomes, the number of students, safety, other factors
- there is repeated retraining and re-assessment for competency based programmes. If this is significant, other planned contact hours may need to be adjusted to compensate.

(b) reduced contact hours:

- the requirement for a lecturer to teach in several different courses resulting in additional preparation
- agreed time being provided for approved study
- the lecturer undertaking specific administrative responsibilities
- undertaking higher duties, e.g. relieving a senior lecturer
- experience and skill level of the staff member, for example a new lecturer on probation
- class size, requiring additional tutorials, marking time etc.
- relevant approved applied research into technical developments.

Heads of Schools and departments will monitor timetabled contact hours and collate the data to allow analysis of actual contact hours.

2.4 Role of Dean/Head of School and Head of Department

With the guidance provided by paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 above, the dean, in consultation with the head of school/department where appropriate, is responsible for the allocation of work and ensuring that efficient practices are utilized.

The dean and the head of department or the head of school have to consult with staff members on the allocation of duties.

The dean should:

- (a) monitor workload changes that increase or decrease workload for the staff member or subject/discipline area etc. and
- (b) provide advice on methods of achieving efficiencies and
- (c) adjust allocation(s) to produce more efficient and effective results or reduce stress.

2.5 Staff Member's Role

Each staff member has a responsibility to discuss the allocation or workload and to reach an agreement that takes account of the individual's and the faculty's/school's needs.

Staff members should discuss their concerns about workload with the dean/head of department/head of school.

Staff should participate in workload discussions to listen to others' concerns and means and ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the faculty or school.

2.6 Grievance Resolution

Deans have the responsibility of endeavouring to prevent problems and resolving staff concerns and grievances.

Most concerns and grievances should and ought to be resolved informally through a process of frank but sensitive consultation.

A staff member who is not satisfied with the allocation of work load should discuss the specific details with the dean/head of school and may offer probable solutions. The dean may wish to discuss the total workload the subject area with the staff involved and seek a resolution. The dean's decision shall be final.