ACADEMIC WORKLOAD POLICY

Category	Employment
Policy Owner	Group Director – People and Culture
Last review	7 March 2024
Next review	7 March 2026
Approved by	Vice-Chancellor
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(Applies to all lecturers and Physio Educators except non-teaching lecturers)

1. Purpose

This policy, which applies to all lecturers except non-teaching lecturers, should be read in conjunction with the Academic and Associated Staff Collective Employment Agreement; and has full effect as if it were a term of that Agreement.

This policy exists to assist Heads of Department and Heads of School to make effective deployment decisions that ensure equitable, reasonable and safe workloads for lecturers, thus facilitating the effective operation of the University and staff well-being.

AUT is also committed to the development of work practices which are effective and efficient. Innovation in teaching which fosters effective learning and student independence is encouraged and supported.

Workload consists of an agreed balance of activities including Teaching, Research, attendant duties, and other contributions to the University – the balance to be agreed between the Manager and the staff member taking into consideration the University's needs and priorities and the staff member's professional interests, experience, and qualifications.

This policy applies only to matters of workload, including teaching, research and contribution to the university, and not to other aspects of the employment relationship.

2. Principles

2.1 The principles that follow represent good practice and guide the deployment of lecturers and their workloads. Managers and lecturers will use their best endeavours to give practical effect to these principles.

The workload will be equitable

- Lecturers with similar responsibilities and duties will have similar workloads.

- Part-time and proportional lecturers and lecturers on probation will have workloads that reflect the time they are available for work (in accordance with their agreements), and which are fair relative to full-time lecturers.

Total workload will be reasonable

- It will be manageable within the timeframes and deadlines set or agreed.

- Lecturers will be able to maintain a balance between professional and personal life, accepting that normal fluctuations will occur, and accepting that lecturers may have particularly demanding family and/or cultural responsibilities.

- It will acknowledge lecturers' responsibility to maintain skills and professional currency.

Total workload will be safe

- It will be allocated in a manner consistent with the requirement to take all practicable steps to

minimise harm to the lecturer and other staff members, and to the students with whom the lecturer works.

The organisation of work will be efficient

- Work practices will seek to maximise the productivity of lecturers without compromising the quality of the learning experience available to students

- Lecturers will be deployed according to their strengths

- Duplication of work will be minimised by encouraging collaboration and building on prior efforts.

- Deployment of a lecturer to teaching requiring them to utilise e-education technologies (where such e-education technologies are unfamiliar to the lecturer) should be made in agreement with the lecturer.

- Lecturers will receive training in the use of new technologies prior to being required to use these technologies and will receive appropriate technical support.

- Lecturers will receive professional development in effective on-line teaching before engaging in such teaching.

The allocation of work will seek to constrain complexity

- Lecturers will not be spread too widely across modules, subjects and programmes.

The process of allocating work will be:

- Transparent - i.e. duties and responsibilities of all lecturers (excluding non- teaching academic staff) within a school (or department, or academic group) will be available to each member of the school, and to the Collective Monitoring Committee.

- Open – i.e. involve consultation with lecturers within their teaching teams.

- Planned – i.e. duties and responsibilities will normally be allocated prior to the start of the period, accepting that plans may require adjustment in unexpected circumstances.

All aspects of workload will be taken into account in the allocation of work, including:

i)   Timetabled teaching hours and attendant duties, which include:

- preparation for lessons

- routine administration and participation in University process

- student assessment

- ordinary student pastoral care and assistance

- routine updating of courses and material

- contribution to day-to-day maintenance of teaching areas

- maintaining skills and professional currency

and

ii)   All other relevant workload factors including:

- class size

- course development requirements, including evaluation and review

- assessment requirements

- student support requirements

- other demands of the teaching programme

- experience and skill level of the lecturer

- particular requirements related to open/distance learning

- cultural requirements of Charter obligations

- EEdO/EEO obligations of the organisation

- the need for breaks from timetabled teaching throughout the year

- participation in research projects as appropriate

- teaching across a range of courses/programmes

- rapidly changing disciplines

- post-graduate supervision (refer to Appendix I for workload guidelines relating to post-graduate supervision)

- community service

- industry liaison.

NB: Whether or not clinical supervision or supervision of students on work experience, co-operative education practicums or undertaking clinical experience, or being on standby to assist students who are undertaking self-directed learning is to account as a TTH or another workload factor is still under consideration. Should a dispute arise concerning the workload of a lecturer who has this component in their duties the dispute will be resolved taking into account the total workload of that individual.

2.2   In applying the foregoing principles the following conditions shall be acknowledged:

- AUT has a commitment to a stable and experienced workforce. This commitment may result in workload imbalances from time to time as a result of the changing demand of programmes.

- Academic work is complex, which may make direct comparisons of workload difficult in individual circumstances.

- AUT has a significant infrastructure for supporting students in their learning. Lecturers have a responsibility to be aware of the services available to students, and to refer students as appropriate.

- Lecturers have ten duty days per annum available for the purpose of maintaining skills and professional currency.

- New lecturers have up to three weeks per annum in each of their first two years of employment for initial teacher training.

3. Workload Expectations of Lecturers

3.1   To help ensure that workloads are reasonable, the expectations of lecturers set out in each of the workload bands that follow shall be maintained.

It is not intended that these bands prescribe any particular approach to allocating work, or preclude deployment to a variety of levels, and they should not be interpreted to prevent a fully negotiated process of determining workloads. Nor should these bands be regarded as a permanent definition of any individual lecturer's workload, which may change from one semester to another.

Workload Bands

To assist in the allocation of work to individual lecturers five workload bands are identified which link workload to timetabled teaching hours (TTH). A TTH is "one hour spent in timetabled class instruction including any timetabled hour of structured learning activity for which the Employee is responsible".

Where the term "expected to" is used in this section, it refers to the expectations/requirements of the University. In exercising an expectation on behalf of the University Heads of Department and Heads of School are to take account of the principles established in Section 2.0.

Workload Band A

(51-300 Timetabled Teaching Hours (plus attendant duties) per annum i.e. 0-150 TTH per semester).

Lecturers will be expected to:

- Maintain skills and professional currency (discipline, and as teachers)

Lecturers may be expected to:

- hold higher (generally post-graduate) qualifications;
- be actively engaged in research (refer to 3.2);
- publish, exhibit or perform creative works, or present to conferences the result of their research (refer to 3.2);
- teach mainly at levels 5-8 (including large classes at undergraduate level and small- group post-graduate classes).

Lecturers would normally:

- use assessment that involves significant marking out of class

Lecturers in this Band would benefit from at least one day a week free of classes to pursue academic activities associated with research. Such time may be off-campus.

Workload Band B

(301-450 Timetabled Teaching Hours (plus attendant duties) per annum i.e. 150-225 TTH per semester)

Lecturers will be expected to:

- maintain skills and professional currency (discipline, and as teachers).

Lecturers may be expected to:

pursue higher (generally post-graduate) qualifications if these are required by the Department/School;

- be actively engaged in research (refer to 3.2);
- publish, exhibit or perform creative works, or present to conferences the results of their research activity (refer to 3.2);
- teach mainly at levels 5-7 (including larger groups).

Lecturers would normally;

- use assessment that involves significant marking out of class.

Lecturers in this Band would benefit from at least one day a week free of classes to pursue academic activities associated with publication and research. Such time may be off-campus.

Workload Band C

(451-600 Timetabled Teaching Hours (plus attendant duties) per annum i.e. 225-300 TTH per semester).

Lecturers will be expected to:

- maintain skills and professional currency (discipline, and as teachers).

Lecturers may be expected to:

- pursue higher qualifications if these are required by the Department/School;
- teach mainly at levels 2-5 (with class sizes up to 30);

Lecturers would normally:

- use assessment that involves some marking out of class;

Lecturers cannot be expected to:

- engage in research; (proviso: there is an expectation lecturers will engage in scholarship related to their teaching.)

- publish or present to conferences.

Workload Band D

(601-750 Timetabled Teaching Hours (plus attendant duties) per annum i.e. 300-375 TTH per semester).

Lecturers will be expected to:

- maintain skills and professional currency (discipline, and as teachers).

Lecturers would normally:

- teach a significant proportion of classes involving practical workshops or work experience;
- use assessments that are usually carried out within class contact time;
- teaching mainly at levels 2-4 (usually smaller classes – up to 20).

Lecturers cannot be expected to:

- pursue higher qualifications;
- engage in research; (proviso: there is an expectation lecturers will engage in scholarship related to their teaching.)
- publish or present to conferences.

3.2 The particular programme of research undertaken and the expectations relating to publication

(eg. refereed journals versus other journals; international conferences versus other conferences) may have a highly variable effect on workload. Specific research and publication outcomes must be agreed with the lecturer concerned, taking into account timeframes for completion. Teaching Path Lecturers in Workload Band B could be expected to meet more demanding research and publication outcomes than Teaching Path Lecturers in other Bands.

3.3 Nothing in the descriptors of the workload bands should be construed to preclude research activities being pursued by lecturers who teach primarily below level 5. Where research activity is an agreed component of the workload of lecturers in Bands D, or E, it shall be taken into account according to the requirements of Section 4.0 of this policy.

3.4 The Timetabled Teaching Hours to which these workload bands refer assume a traditional face-to-face mode of educational delivery and the attendant duties which arise from this mode of delivery. It is acknowledged that technology-enhanced educational delivery brings a different set of workload demands that must be taken into account according to the requirements of Section 4 of this policy.

The current policy adopted by the Academic Board 'Learning and Distance Education' will be reviewed by the CMC.

4. Other Academic Contributions

4.1 The expectations set out for each Band are not intended to be exclusive of other duties, some of which may involve significant workload (e.g. cultural contributions to AUT; beginning post-graduate supervision; programme leadership; curriculum development, especially new modules, or keeping pace with a rapidly changing curriculum; developing significant teaching resources).

4.2 Where such other duties or responsibilities are expected of a lecturer and involve significant workload there shall be:

- a tangible reduction to timetabled teaching within the band, in recognition of the workload; OR
- provision of alternative support e.g. Teaching Assistant, or
- a written agreement with the lecturer setting out agreed results or outcomes to be achieved within an agreed timeframe (usually one semester or one year).

5. Workload Guidelines for Postgraduate Supervision

5.1 Introduction

These guidelines relate to academic staff who supervise postgraduate students for research activities and the consequent products of research (theses and dissertations and their equivalents).

"Supervision of a postgraduate thesis is a learning/teaching activity of great importance to the research/teaching nexus at AUT. Supervision workload may include regular meetings/email/phone contact with the student, research methodology training, provision of guidance on research resources and AUT systems (e.g. enrolment, research proposals, ethics approval, reporting progress, assessment) reading student work, giving formative feedback, formal reporting about the student and sometimes summative assessment, guiding students through the research process, and organising peer support".

All postgraduate supervisors should be qualified for their role (refer to policy in the Postgraduate Handbook); and it is essential that those undertaking supervision are themselves engaged in research.

5.2   Factors Relevant to determining supervision workload

The following factors should be taken into account in determining supervision workload:

- The supervisor's teaching responsibilities.

- The supervisor's own programme of research.

- The supervisor's administrative or leadership responsibilities.

- The supervisor's own experience in supervision.

- Any higher study or other professional development which the supervisor is undertaking.

- Any new research students, as well as ongoing ones, allocated to the supervisor.

- The number of NEST students being supervised.

- NEST research students require different forms of supervision and support from faculty than students who are excellent speakers and writers of English. For such students, extra time should be allocated in the supervisor's workload, and there should be University-wide or faculty-level or programme-level support provided, e.g. language nest, thesis writing sessions.

- The nature and extent of supervision, and whether the supervisor is a principal or second supervisor. (Specific roles and duties of each staff member in liaising with the student and the other supervisor must be taken into account. If principal supervisors generally need more time but it cannot be assumed that the second supervisor will always need less.

- Whether the supervised students are fulltime or part-time.

- The academic level of the supervised students and whether they are in the first or subsequent years of enrolment in a research thesis, or dissertation.

- The extent or not of overlap between supervision and the staff member's own research (e.g. in laboratories and design studios, whenever the staff member researches with students working alongside).

- Supervision of research students at a distance will require similar workload provisions to supervision on campus.

- Safety issues.

- Where student research activities which could be unsafe (to the student or to their research subjects) are being supervised, the workload of the supervisor should be adjusted to allow the safety of all parties to be carefully monitored and protected.

- Active, eminent researchers should be encouraged to spend at least half of their workload on their own research and postgraduate supervision combined.

5.3   TTH Equivalency

The time allocation for an individual supervisor, for the supervision of one fulltime student, is

0.5 – 2.0 hours/week over the supervision period.

In disciplines where supervising a cluster of research students is equated with teaching modules to calculate a fair workload across a department or school, 5-6 supervised students equate to the workload of teaching one AUT module.

N.B. Notwithstanding the above, a staff member is not normally principal supervisor to more than five doctoral students or nine postgraduate students in total.

6. Monitoring Of Workload

6.1   The Head of School (department, or academic group) shall maintain a summary record of the workload of each lecturer in the school (department, academic group). This summary must at least record the Workload Band in which the lecturer falls, the research contributions and expectations, as well as identifying the other duties which are subject to written agreement and TTH reduction, as set out above. The summary should be made available to and be discussed with the lecturers concerned, as should the issues which impact on workloads.

6.2   A lecturer may request the details (including the summary and any written agreements) of the workload of any one or all of the lecturers in the same schools/groups across which the staff member teaches (Such requests will be actioned promptly by the Head).

6.3   Workload information on all or any lecturing staff to whom this policy applies shall be made available promptly to the CMC, on request by the CMC, through the convenor of the CMC.

7. DEFINITIONS

8. SCOPE

This policy, which applies to all lecturers and Physio Educators except non-teaching lecturers, should be read in conjunction with the Academic Staff Collective Employment Agreement; and has full effect as if it were a term of that Agreement.

9. LEGISLATION AND COMPLIANCE

[Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)

10.RELATED PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS

Academic and Associated Staff Members' Collective Agreement.

11. RESPONSIBILITY

AUT University and TEU Union

12. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

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