1. **Preamble**

1.1 The University promotes a safe and healthy environment in which staff take a proactive approach to their own wellbeing. Working hours are an important part of this environment and this policy establishes the basic principles for fair, equitable and balanced distribution of realistic workloads amongst staff. The University actively discourages excessive working hours and undertakes that all aspects of the management of working time and workloads will be fully compliant with legal requirements.

1.2 The provisions and principles in this document apply to all academic and research staff in each of the three Academic Career Pathways [Teaching & Research, Teaching & Scholarship, or Research & Innovation]. In what follows, the term ‘academic staff’ has the same meaning as defined in the University Statutes – it covers the Professors, Readers, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers, Research staff, and other staff of the University who are so designated by the Council after consultation with the Senate.

1.3 It is intended that this policy will provide Heads of Unit with a framework within which models for workload planning can be developed and operated.

1.4 Whilst there is a clear expectation that all staff will make a full contribution to the goals of the School, Faculty, University and where appropriate partner organisations, this policy does not seek to alter the relative flexibility inherent in the employment contract of academic staff. It is also important to consider this flexibility in relation to maintaining an appropriate work-life balance.

1.5 Workload planning also has important equalities implications. Pressure on individuals to work long hours, and a long-working hours culture in institutions, undermines equal opportunities since it may make a job unmanageable for staff with caring responsibilities. The University takes the view that staff should be able to achieve progression and promotion by working normal [but flexible] family-friendly hours.

2. **Working Time**

The working times specified in this section are for full time staff and should be adjusted in an appropriate pro-rata manner for part time staff.

2.1 In accordance with the principles in Section 1, academic staff are expected to manage their own time to achieve the objectives of their position, based on a normal expectation of a 37 hour week at grade F and a 40 hour week at grades G and above, averaged over the year. Staff should not work in excess of 48 hours per week except for short periods of time to (a) achieve a specific goal or (b) to deal with a time limited surge in activity.

2.2 The annual leave entitlement for academic staff is 30 working days. Public holidays and closure days provide a further 12 days leave, giving 218 working days.

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1 The Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) has produce guidance on work life balance.
days [43.6 working weeks] per year. The normal expectation for workload planning purposes is therefore that staff at grade F will work 1613 hours and staff at grade G and above 1744 hours per annum.

2.3 In order to maintain the health and wellbeing of staff, and to ensure the University is in full compliance with current working time legislation, the University expects Heads of Unit to:

- Provide opportunity for and actively encourage staff to take annual leave, and to keep records of annual leave. The University expects that all members of staff take as a minimum the 28 days statutory holidays per annum inclusive of bank holidays, and all staff are encouraged to take the full allocation of 30 days annual leave provided by the University. The University Leave Policy sets out in more detail arrangements concerning annual leave.
- Provide opportunity for and actively encourage staff to take reasonable breaks from work.
- Carefully manage instances where staff are judged to be working excessive hours or are not taking holiday allowance. This should be addressed as soon as an issue is identified and may also be raised at the PDR.

2.4 Under the University's Flexible Working options, all staff can request flexible working. The kinds of changes that can be requested are:

- a change to the hours they work (part-time, job sharing).
- a change to the times when they are at work (term-time, staggered hours, specific days of the week)
- changes to the place they work (between home and place of business).

Further details on flexible working are available at [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/flexible-working.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/benefits/flexible-working.php)

3. **Principles of workload management**

The University expects Heads of Unit to apply the following principles when managing workload:

3.1 Every effort should be made to agree workload allocations in a collective and collegiate manner. Where a member of staff disagrees with their workload allocation, they should discuss this with their line manager in the first instance (see paragraph 3.12)

3.2 Reasonable workloads will be fairly distributed between individual employees in an open and consultative way. Account must be taken of the fact that the working hours of staff at grade F are lower than those at higher grades.

3.3 Work should be contained within socially acceptable working hours, taking into account individual needs and circumstances.

3.4 Staff will be afforded the opportunity for regular, reasonable, daily, weekly and annual breaks from work [see paragraph 2.3].
3.5 Any member of staff with a disability can request reasonable adjustment to the way in which they work. This can include their duties or working hours. Further information is available at [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/support/disability.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/support/disability.php).

3.6 Workload allocation should be sufficiently flexible to allow for emergency cover, illness or some other unexpected development and may need to be adjusted during the course of the year.

3.7 Time should be made available during reasonable working hours for the full range of academic activities (ie teaching, research and engagement activities). The detailed allocation of time will depend on the member of staff's balance of activities which will reflect their contract/career pathway. It is important that the overall allocation incorporates the total workload.

3.8 The "tariffs" allocated to different tasks should be realistic and reasonable real time [not notional] values specified in hours. In line with Principle 3.1, before implementation of the workloads staff should be consulted on the tariffs which should be based on Faculty-wide recommendations.

3.9 Staff will have access within normal working hours to reasonable professional development time (and resource) for training appropriate to their role. Training and development needs will normally be identified through Performance & Development Review (PDR).

3.10 The University recognises that institutional performance depends to a large extent on the performance of academic staff. It is, therefore, important that academic staff have appropriate opportunities to pursue their own academic development. The University makes provision for leave of absence for academic purposes and further information can be found at [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/academic.php](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/leave/academic.php).

3.11 Although workload allocations will normally be agreed within a unit before the start of the academic year, there may be situations where the Head of Unit or an individual might seek to renegotiate a work plan during the year. These include:

- changing teaching demands, as a result of student recruitment;
- research grants achieved during the year;
- an area of work proving significantly more onerous and time-consuming than expected;
- changing role responsibilities;
- cover for staff absence;
- ill health or other personal circumstances;
- reduced work load during a phased return to work;
- maternity or paternity leave or extended sickness leave by the individual or other individuals in the unit.

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2 Activities that can be recognised in workload plans include, but are not limited to, the following principal areas: research and scholarship; teaching and teaching preparation; assessment; research and teaching administration; management; engagement such as membership of a research panel, other external activities agreed with the Head of Unit; academic leave.
Changes, after agreement, should be published in the peer group.

3.12 Should any member of staff wish to challenge and dispute unfair or unreasonable distribution or volume of work, this should be discussed informally with their line manager as soon as possible. This may also be a matter for discussion at their PDR (see section 2.3). If unresolved, staff should raise the matter with the Faculty Human Resources Officer. As a last resort, a member of staff has recourse to the University grievance procedure.

4. Responsibilities of the Head of Unit

4.1 Excessive workloads come from several sources, including demands placed upon the Unit to absorb ever-increasing activity, uneven distribution of work within Units and a failure to manage workloads effectively.

4.2 Therefore, the expectation is that each Unit will use the principles set out in this document in order to consider the overall distribution of work, which can be reasonably managed within the available resources.

4.3 It is the responsibility of the Head of Unit to collect and monitor data relating to workloads and to discuss workload during PDR [section 2.3]. The Head of Unit should provide to all staff in the unit an overview of the allocation of workload within the unit, including the average workload of each full time member of staff. This should be revised annually.

4.4 All areas of relevant activity (ie teaching, including assessment and supervision, scholarship and research, administration and engagement) should be included in individual workloads whether performed within the Unit itself, the Faculty, at University level or externally.

4.5 Heads of Unit should ensure that all staff have a balanced and reasonable workload in terms of activities and overall contribution relative to all staff in the Unit. Heads of Unit should aim to make public the distribution of the workloads which should be reviewed annually.

5. Application of this policy to specific staff groups

All new academic staff, whether full time or part time and/or temporary, should have full account taken of the demands upon them in the first years of their appointment, including the requirement that they must undertake and satisfactorily complete the Newcastle Teaching Award (NTA) and the need to establish a programme of independent research. The workload relief required to complete the NTA (150 hours) and the time required to establish a research programme, must be subtracted from the normal annual working time for the relevant grade [paragraph 2.2] before beginning the process of workload allocation.

6. Review

6.1 Each Faculty will monitor annually the operation of workload planning models.

6.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years. During this period the University (Staff Committee) and Newcastle UCU will jointly monitor its operation and the volume and distribution of work in the institution.
7. Related Documents

HASS principles of workload management
Medical Sciences workload planning model
SAGE workload model
JNCHES guidance on work-life balance February 2008

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<td>Policy/Procedure Owner</td>
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