Academic Workload Allocation Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This policy guides the equitable distribution of academic workload at ACU, aligning with the university's mission and strategic priorities outlined in Vision 2033 and the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025. It emphasises stability, trust, accountability and the effective use of academic expertise, such that workload allocation supports staff members' career aspirations and wellbeing, as well as the university's commitment to excellence in Education, Research & Scholarship and Service & Engagement.

Section 2 - Scope/Application

(2) The policy applies to all academic staff covered under the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025. The policy focuses on the activities academic staff undertake and the time provided to complete that work. It does not address the university's approach to academic staff achievement, which is detailed in the Academic Staff Achievement Framework (in draft and as amended from time to time) and policies related to probation, progress planning, promotion, and performance management. The Academic Workload Allocation Policy also does not outline how academic career pathways are determined or changed (see Academic Workforce Policy; in draft and as amended from time to time).

(3) For the purposes of interpreting provisions from the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement (including Section 5.2.8), the Academic Workload Allocation Policy includes the Academic Workload Allocation Procedures and its Schedules.

Section 3 - Definitions

(4) Terms used in this Procedure are consistent with the Glossary of Student and Course Terms. The following specific definitions also apply:

Term	Definition
Activities	The work academic staff undertake in three broad areas (see below), aligned with ACU's Mission and supporting Vision 2033 and the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.
Area	three broad categories of academic activity, including (i) Education, (ii) Research & Scholarship, and (iii) Service & Engagement.
Education	includes all activities listed in Clause 5.2.3.1 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.
Research	includes all activities listed in Clause 5.2.3.2 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.
Scholarship	includes all activities listed in Clause 5.2.3.3 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.

Service	includes activities listed in Clause 5.2.3.4 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement that are primarily focused on internal workings of the university. These include leadership roles and other contributions to the university's administration.
Engagement	includes activities listed in Clause 5.2.3.4 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement that are primarily focused on the university's external-facing work. These include leadership roles and other activities with relevant community, Church, government, industry, and not-for-profit organisations.
Roles	a set of responsibilities assigned to a staff member. Roles vary in duration and scope depending on the needs of the organisational unit.
Workload Composition	the percentage of academic staff time planned for activities in each of the three areas of academic work.
Workload Allocations	the significant roles and activities that are assigned to an academic staff member and recorded in the workload allocation tool.

Section 4 - Principles

(5) Composition: ACU makes workload allocations that align with each staff member's career pathway.

(6) Education: ACU prioritises workload allocation that ensures effective use of academic staff time and expertise in the delivery of its curriculum.

(7) Expectations: The university establishes policies, procedures, frameworks, structures and processes that define the nature and standard of the work academic staff undertake, and guides allocation to ensure it can be completed.

(8) Stability and Continuity: ACU fosters effective planning and staff engagement through predictable workload allocations within each broad area.

(9) Flexibility: The university recognises the diversity of academic work across disciplines and contexts. It provides guidelines that allow workload to be modified such that allocations are reasonable and appropriate for the assigned roles and activities.

(10) Judgement: The university acknowledges that multiple factors influence the time required to complete activities. Allocations are underpinned by estimates of the time required for a capable staff member to complete the work. Evidence informs these judgements.

(11) Simplicity: ACU allocates workload using an efficient process, focusing on significant roles and activities. The university acknowledges that staff will also have smaller or more generalised responsibilities associated with each broad area of work they undertake.

(12) Consultation: ACU values staff input and allocates workload through a respectful, collegial process. Workload is allocated using a coherent process that ensures staff understand the rationale underpinning allocation decisions.

(13) Equity: The university takes reasonable steps to ensure that workloads are allocated fairly to provide opportunities for all staff, with regard for factors that include but are not limited to gender, employment fraction/work schedule, career stage, and academic discipline.

(14) Wellbeing: ACU commits to allocation processes designed to support and promote staff wellbeing, by considering the nature, volume, and timing of work.

(15) Trust and Accountability: Workload allocation at ACU is designed to support school leaders and staff to plan and

manage their responsibilities.

Section 5 - Review

(16) In line with the University's Policy Development Policy, this policy is scheduled for review every five years, or more frequently, if appropriate (e.g., to ensure compliance with the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement).

Section 6 - Roles and Responsibilities

Approval Authority (approves all new policies and major amendments to reviewed policies)	The Vice-Chancellor and President.
Governing Authority (endorses new policies and major amendments to reviewed policies; approves minor amendments to policy; approves procedures)	The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is accountable for the application of principles in this policy to ensure that its purpose is achieved.
Responsible Officer (oversees the development and review of policies and procedures; approves minor amendments to procedures; approves editorial amendments to policies and procedures)	The Deputy Provost is responsible for the framework that supports implementation of the policy.

Other Roles and Responsibilities	1. Staff – Staff participate collegially in the workload allocation consultation process. Roles and activities are described in the Roles and Responsibilities Policy (in draft). Once workload has been allocated, staff use resources available to ensure work is performed efficiently. If a staff member believes they cannot perform the activities to the required standard within the allocated time, they raise the issue with their supervisor. Staff meaningfully engage in university processes that involve planning and subsequent review of progress and achievements related to each aspect of workload allocation. 2. National Heads of School – Each National Head of Schooldirects the workload allocation processes within their School, adhering to the principles outlined in this policy. They are responsible for: employing data-informed judgement to fairly and consistently allocate workloads; maximising the effective use of academic staff time and expertise in curriculum delivery; overseeing consultative processes that empower staff and enhance wellbeing; and utilising data from the Provost's Office to inform, monitor, and refine their School's policy implementation. 3. The National Head of School is also responsible for making education allocations for staff based in a research institute or centre where the institute or centre's disciplinary focus aligns with the School. In such cases, workload allocations are made in consultation with the staff member and the relevant Institute or Centre Director. 4. Executive Deans – In consultation with the Institute or Centre Director, allocate Service & Engagement roles and activities to academic staff in research institutes and centres. Executive Deans are also responsible for monitoring and leading National Heads of School and Institute/Centre Directors to refine policy implementation across the Faculty. 5. The Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) – The Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic): provides staff and management with data to support policy implementation; responds to policy implementation enquiries from staff and management; coordinates relevant stakeholders and processes associated with workload allocation (including any allocation reviews); and provides business intelligence to support appropriate judgement, monitoring, and refinement of policy implementation. 6. The Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) provides the Provost's Office with access to data that may inform judgements about workload allocations required in research (e.g., external research grants and HDR supervision). 7. The Office of the Academic Registrar provides the Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) with access to data (e.g., timetabling) that informs workload allocations. 8. People & Capability supports the implementation of the policy by providing systems for the recording, viewing, managing, and monitoring of academic staff workload data. They ensure compliance with the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement and facilitate the integration of this policy with related human resource functions. 9. The Workload Advisory Committee considers staff and faculty leaders' input on matters related to this policy and its implementation. The committee also monitors policy implementation across the university and makes recommendations to the Provost.

Section 7 - Further Assistance

(17) For further assistance, please contact the Deputy Provost via the Executive Officer.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	10th March 2026
Review Date	10th March 2030
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Approval Date	10th March 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Julie Cogin Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager	Chris Lonsdale Deputy Provost
Enquiries Contact	Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

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