Academic Workload Allocation Procedure

Section 1 - Governing Policy

(1) This procedure is governed by the Academic Workload Policy.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) The policy applies to all academic staff covered under the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025.

Section 3 - Workload Composition by Academic Career Pathway

(3) The ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025 describes five academic career pathways. For staff on each pathway, the Academic Workload Allocation Procedures provide a consistent 'base' (i.e., minimum) proportion of workload that is allocated in each of three broad areas: Education, Research & Scholarship, and Service & Engagement. Each of these base workload values is within the parameters set by the Agreement (see Clause 5.2.4.7). Table 1 provides the base workload percentage for each broad area. A change in career pathway is typically required before a staff member's workload in an area may fall below the base in an area.

(4) The significant activities associated with each broad area are listed in Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines and align with definitions in the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025. The university also outlines the responsibilities associated with specific academic roles in the Academic Roles and Responsibilities Policy.

Table 1. Base and flexible workload composition by career pathway

Career Pathway	Minimum 'Base' Workload			Flexible Workload
	Education	Research & Scholarship	Service & Engagement	
Teaching-focused	65%	15%	10%	10%
Teaching & Research	40%	40%	10%	10%
Research-focused	20%	65%	10%	5%
Research only	5%	80%	10%	5%
Leadership & Service	NA	5%	Minimum 30%	Per staff arrangements (see Schedule 1, Section S1.6 for details).

Section 4 - Workload Allocation

4.1 Overview

(5) Typical workload allocations in each School are underpinned by a consistent assumption of the time required to perform work, as required by the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025 Clause 5.2.2.3.

(6) Workload allocation follows timing that is published on the Academic Workload Allocation Timeline each year (see website). The National Head of School may adjust the workload allocation timeline for an individual staff member (e.g., after a return from leave), ensuring the staff member is consulted about changes.

(7) Where practicable, Schools complete their annual workload planning process and the Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) makes these allocations available to staff prior to the University's Christmas shutdown period in the preceding year.

(8) Subsequent changes to a staff member's workload plan must involve consultation and, where practicable, are confirmed through automated electronic notification. In alignment with Clause 5.2.2.3 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement, adjustments to a workload plan are not made after the associated work has been completed, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

4.2 Base Wrorkload Allocations

4.2.1 Base Education Allowances

(9) The National Head of School oversees allocation of significant activities and roles within the broad area of Education (Unit Leadership, teaching delivery, and marking). Typically, this process involves a survey of all academic staff members' Education preferences, as well as input from members of the School's leadership team.

(10) Where allocations are made to staff outside the School (e.g., teaching by academic staff in an Institute, Centre, or another School), the National Head of School (or their delegate) seeks input from the relevant organisational unit leader (e.g., Institute/Centre Director or National Head of School) or their delegate.

(11) Each staff member's career pathway dictates their base workload composition (see Table 1) and the typical workload allocations for Education. The National Head of School uses Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines to ensure that their judgements about base allocations for Unit Leadership, teaching delivery, and marking are appropriately informed and equitable.

4.2.2 Base Workload Allocations in Research & Scholarship and Service/Engagement

(12) Each staff member's capacity to undertake allocations in Research & Scholarship and Service & Engagement as part of their base workload is determined by the staff member's career pathway (see Table 1). The National Head of School informs their decisions with Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines when allocating significant roles and activities (i.e., minimum 5% FTE for each allocation).

4.3 Expectations within Base Workload

(13) In support of academic discretion, the university typically provides a portion of workload in each broad area for academic staff to pursue activities they initiate. Staff are expected to use this time productively and would typically include some aspects of this work in their annual progress plan. However, these self-initiated activities and other minor roles and activities, which would fall into the category of "associated duties", are not intended to be captured within the workload allocation tool. Examples of these kinds of activities are provided in Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines.

4.4 Flexible Workload

(14) The National Head of School determines the composition of each staff member's flexible workload (i.e., what portion of the flexible workload will be allocated to each of the three broad areas). Allocations within an area are made in minimum 5% FTE increments. To begin, the National Head of School allocates flexible workload to the Research & Scholarship and Service & Engagement areas as outlined below.

(15) HDR supervision: Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines outlines the maximum amount of HDR supervision that staff on each career pathway are expected to undertake within their base allocation. When a staff member has been allocated HDR supervision duties that are above this level, the National Head of School may make an additional allocation (see details in Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines).

(16) External research or commercial contract obligations: When a staff member has external research contracts with approved time commitments that exceed the base allocation for their career pathway (see Table 1), flexible workload can be allocated. A similar approach is taken for commercial contracts, with flexible workload allocated within the Service & Engagement area. See Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines for details.

(17) Service & Engagement roles: The National Head of School (or Executive Dean for Institute/Centre-based staff) allocates workload for significant Service & Engagement roles (i.e., minimum 5% FTE). When making these allocations, they consider Schedule 1 Workload Allocation Guidelines.

(18) Other flexible workload: After the National Head of School has allocated flexible workload for the roles and activities above, they assign workload to any staff with remaining flexible allocation. See details in Schedule 1−Workload Allocation Guidelines. After flexible workload has been allocated, each staff member's workload composition must align with the ranges shown in Table 2.

(19) Note: Where the combination of HDR supervision and approved external contractual commitments cannot be fulfilled within the relevant composition range, a career pathway change may need to be considered.

Table 2. Workload Composition Ranges by Academic Career Pathway.

Career Pathway	Education	Research & Scholarship	Service & Engagement
Teaching-focused	65%-75%	15%-25%	10%-20%
Teaching & Research	40%-50%	40%-50%	10%-20%
Research-focused	20%-25%	65%-70%	10%-15%
Research only	5%-10%	80%-85%	10%-15%
Leadership & Service	0%-65%	5%-70%	30%-95%

(20) Notes:

a. A change in career pathway is typically required before a staff member's workload in an area may fall outside the associated range; and
b. The proportion of workload allocated to Service & Engagement varies according to career pathway. There is an intentional gap between the lower bound of the Leadership & Service pathway and the upper bound of the other pathways.

4.5 Workload Limits

(21) Workload allocations must not typically exceed 100% of a staff member's available work time, as defined in the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025. Where the National Head of School estimates that a staff member's total

planned workload for a calendar year will exceed this threshold, the additional time commitment may be:

a. Approved as additional paid work ('paid inside work'); or
b. Carried forward and included in the following year's workload allocation.

(22) A separate contract for casual work must not be created for an existing continuing or fixed-term academic staff member.

(23) In an exceptional circumstance that require workload allocations above 100%, the decision requires the agreement of the staff member (see Paid Inside Work Policy) and the endorsement of the National Head of School for school-based staff and by the Executive Dean for Institute/Centre-based staff.

(24) Allocations of 105% or 110% must be approved in advance by the Executive Dean. A maximum of 5% may be approved as paid inside work, with any remaining excess carried forward. Methods and rates of payment are set out in the Paid Inside Work Policy.

(25) Allocations above 110% require approval in advance from the Provost.

Section 5 - Workload Allocation Monitoring

5.1 Typical Allocations

(26) Each year, the Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) considers the available evidence regarding the appropriateness of typical allocations as described in Schedule 1. The Workload Advisory Committee reviews this evidence and the typical workload allocation values and makes recommendations to the Provost, as required. The Workload Advisory Committee may make suggestions to the Provost regarding the need to collect additional evidence.

5.2 Implementation

(27) At least twice per year, the Office of the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) provides reports to facilitate monitoring of average workload composition (i.e., % of workload allocated to each broad area of academic work), as well as specific allocation types (e.g., Unit Leader, teaching delivery, and marking allocations). These reports support Schools and Faculties to evaluate implementation consistency and identify areas for improvement, with specific attention paid to equity (e.g., across Schools, genders, career pathways, and career stage). These reports also inform the Workload Advisory Committee.

5.3. Staff and Supervisor Discussions

(28) Staff and supervisors are expected to engage in discussions at key points in the academic cycle to review workload allocations and confirm they remain reasonable and appropriate. These discussions typically occur as part of the staff progress planning process (e.g., during the workload allocation drafting period and again as part of a mid-point check-in). Additional discussions may be held if there are significant changes to a staff member's roles, activities, or circumstances. If a staff member or supervisor has concerns about whether the time allocated to a particular role or activity is sufficient, they should first meet to confirm they have a shared understanding of the responsibilities associated with that role or activity. Supervisors are guided by the Academic Roles and Responsibilities Policy and may refer to the Academic Workload Allocation (AWA) Implementation Handbook [link to follow] for resources to guide these discussions.

5.4. Associated Duties

(29) The university recognises the importance of self-initiated work in all three broad academic areas, as well as other

minor roles and activities that would be classified as “associated duties”. The university does not typically seek to monitor this type of work but supports staff to effectively manage their time (e.g., through the progress planning process). Where a staff member has concerns about their workload and balancing significant activities and roles assigned by the National Head of School with minor roles and activities, they are expected to consult their supervisor to clarify priorities and then reduce the lower priority, minor aspects of the work.

Section 6 - Policy Review

(30) In line with the University's Policy Development and Review 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).

(31) Updates are made to these procedures or the associated schedule when required. Circumstances that warrant an update may include but are not limited to the following:

(32) When a role or activity is removed from the Academic Roles and Responsibilities Policy, it is also removed from the Academic Workload Allocation Policy.

(33) When a role or activity is added (or the description is modified) in the Academic Roles and Responsibilities Policy the Workload Advisory Committee determines what changes (if any) are required in the Academic Workload Allocation Policy.

(34) Where it becomes clear the allocations in the procedure or schedule do not reasonably reflect the time, on average, that a competent staff member requires to complete the activity.

(35) Schedule 1 of these Procedures contains the template from which the Provost’s Office creates the Workload Allocation Guidelines for each School. In the situation that a School’s guidelines require revision, or additional specialisation due to changes in either composition of staff or underpinning assumptions, the National Head of School can request an update. The National Head of School first consults with the Deputy Provost about the nature of the required update, following which a formal request outlining the scope and reasons for further review is submitted to the Workload Allocation Committee. If endorsed by the Committee, the Provost reviews and approves, requests amendments, or rejects the request.

Section 7 - Further Assistance

(36) See Status and Details tab.

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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