

**REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**



**HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL  
P.O.BOX 6311 KIGALI**

**ACADEMIC WORKLOAD PLANNING NATIONAL  
POLICY AND PRACTICE**

## ACADEMIC WORKLOAD PLANNING

### Introduction

The primary responsibilities of the academic staff at HLIs are education, research and community service. For institutions to achieve their missions and visions the academic staff are required to do their best in:

- Ensuring effective teaching and learning of high quality
- Making scholarly contributions - research or creative work
- Consultancy, knowledge transfer and public service
- Play their part in the academic administration of the HEI and its programmes.

In this policy, academic staff workload is broadly conceived to refer to all academic activities that are related to professional duties and responsibilities. These include but are not limited to:

- Preparation for lecture delivery
- Lectures & tutorials
- Assessments [coursework, final exams, deliberations of exams]
- Laboratory/excursions/practicals
- Distance Education- face-to-face sessions;
- School or clinical practice/internship/supervision of placements
- Module writing/Programmes development/short courses
- Research project supervision
- Research
- Service Activities (Professional consultancy, delivery of workshops/seminars and conferences, participation on various institute standing and ad hoc committees, leadership in professional and civic organizations etc)
- Guidance and counseling
- Leadership/administrative responsibilities/academic administration

In addition, time must be allowed for personal and professional maintenance – answering emails and correspondence, talking to colleagues, filing, talking to students, professional reading and web use beyond what is needed for the revision of lectures, staff development, etc.

### **Applicability of the Policy**

This workload policy applies, in its entirety, to all full-time and probationary academic staff of HLIs. Part-time staff are employed for only limited duties, such as teaching specific courses or supervision of students doing research projects, and thus are under obligation to perform responsibilities only in those areas that are explicitly identified in their part-time contracts.

### **Workload responsibility guidelines**

All academic staff members are expected to pursue professional duties and responsibilities in each of the three primary domains of intellectual activity: imparting knowledge (teaching, managing students' learning activities), creating new knowledge (research, scholarship and creative activities) and transferring knowledge and skills to the community (service and consultancy).

### **Office hours**

All members of staff are required to have scheduled office hours that permit reasonable access by students and which must be approved by the Head of Department. Office hours should be conspicuously posted and filed with the Head of Department and the Dean of Faculty.

### **Professional staff development**

All academic staff are expected to continue with their professional development through research and scholarly activities in their areas of study and by updating and enhancing their teaching and management of student learning. Those who are yet to complete their higher degree studies must do so within reasonable time after their employment. Staff development through attending courses and workshops on aspects of teaching and learning is also encouraged.

### **Teaching Load**

The workload obligation of an individual staff member should reflect the agreed proportion of time to be spent on each of the four aspects that make up the institution's mission – teaching, research, consultancy/knowledge transfer and academic administration and leadership. Each staff member should negotiate workload with the Head of Department at an annual review meeting. Account may be taken at this time of the previous year's performance – time allowed for activities which did not produce the promised outputs, or extra work undertaken in the previous year for which compensation might be made in the current one. The Dean has also to review the overall distribution of teaching to ensure that the Faculty's commitments are being met; pending the expansion of staff, it may not always be possible to honour research allowances fully in a given year. 'Debts' of this kind should be carried forward, however.

The teaching workload obligation and its match to the teaching that the individual is actually delivering in a given year will be taken into account when considering whether the individuals can be permitted to supplement salary by undertaking teaching at other institutions. Where an individual's teaching load falls short of his or her computed obligation, outside work for additional payment will not be permitted; instead, the individual will be seconded to do teaching at the other institutions (with entitlement to refund of travelling expenses).

The Vice-Rector (Academic) is responsible for ensuring that workload distribution and its implementation are fulfilled in a timely manner. He/she exercises oversight to ensure that the collective, approved workload distribution within the institution results in a fair distribution of effort among academic staff members and that it promotes the efficient and timely completion of programmes of study by students and facilitates compliance with quality assurance and enhancement benchmarks. He/she is responsible for ensuring that reviews on workload policy are done and approved by Senate and consequently implemented and that staff resources are sufficient to cover the teaching load and permit time for other duties.

### **Workload Calculation Guidelines**

The calculation of workload must begin with the calculation of the total number of hours in a working year. A '**working week**' refers to a maximum period of **40 hours** - (8 hrs per day multiplied by 5 days per week) that is taken up by the activities or responsibilities that constitute the workload of an academic member of staff. A '**working year**' refers to a maximum **43 weeks** that are available for work. [52 weeks minus [( 2 weeks of public holidays) + (5 weeks of annual leave) + (1 week Easter holiday) + (1 week Icyunamo (Genocide week)] Available hours therefore equals 43 weeks x 40 hours = **1720 hours**.

These 1720 hours will be accounted for by a variety of activities for which a time allowance will be made. Some of them occur only during teaching weeks (two semesters each of 15 weeks – thirty weeks in all). Others occur each week, irrespective of whether students are present.

A transparent process would have each staff member filling in a form listing the work to be done. (See Appendix 1 for an example of such a form.) This is fairly easy where what is at question is the number of hours someone teaches over the year. Crude approximations can be used for things like lecture preparation (so much time per hour of lecture) and even personal research and scholarship (so much time a week). Administrative duties can probably be quantified, given experience of them – this committee typically takes up so many hours of time a month, this duty amounts to so

much time a week to carry out. Some things are exceptional – a particular research project which requires a block of time for fieldwork, a book to finish, a trip abroad – and people can ask for time to cover them on a one-off basis. Some things are very difficult to quantify – being the main source of research advice in a Faculty, for example – and here allowances will have to be negotiated between the person concerned and the Dean.

If allowance is to be made for research time and administrative duties, then such allowance will normally be tied to measurable output, in fairness to those who are teaching more as a result. Allowance may be made for proposals to be produced, articles and books to be written, fieldwork to be carried out, policies or procedures to be investigated, written and implemented, but the allowances are likely to be taken back in the next year if there is no visible output from them. There may even be an element of ‘strict liability’ – not just the formulation of proposals and the submission of articles, but getting grants for projects and getting articles published. Claims to undertake certain kinds of activity by those who have had such time in the past and not succeeded with it may be looked upon with a degree of scepticism.

### **A metric for planning**

There are roughly 1700 hours to be filled. The basis of calculation is 8 hours per day for 43 weeks, and this leaves no ‘slack’ whatsoever, so we need to cost in absolutely every kind of activity that an academic could reasonably be expected to undertake. Let us put figures to each of these activities.

This will not lead to a single ‘work allocation’ but to a basis for individual negotiation. This model assumes that each person fills in a form – or has a form filled in on his or her behalf – which lists the next year’s work as it is now foreseen. Sometimes this will be moderately simple and automatic. Sometimes the actual amount will be subject to negotiation, depending e.g. on just how onerous a given committee is.

The starting point is (a) teaching, (b) preparation for teaching (keeping lectures up to date, improving seminars, etc), (c) marking assessments and examinations, (d) student contact – ‘personal tutoring’, dealing with student module queries, perhaps commenting on formative drafts – (e) project supervision, (f) ‘personal administration’ – answering emails, filing, answering letters, filling in forms, (g) ‘networking’ – discussions with colleagues, departmental and faculty meetings – and (h) some general reading beyond the scope of particular courses. An academic who did no research, published no scholarly papers, did not represent the university to the outside world and took no great part in the administration of the university would still be expected to do all of this.

a) <i>Teaching</i> : assume, as a baseline, 18 hours of teaching per week for 24 weeks:	c. 430 hours
b) <i>Preparation</i> : one hour for every hour of face-to-face teaching	c 430 hours
c) <i>Marking, examination setting, invigilation</i> : allow 6 weeks per year as an arbitrary figure (a week in each semester for continuous assessment and two weeks in each semester for everything concerned with examinations)	240 hours
d) <i>Student contact</i> : four hours per week for 30 weeks (i.e. including the examination periods) (More hours might be advertised, but students do not necessarily take up all the advertised hours)	120 hours
e) ' <i>Personal administration</i> ' – 1 hour per day for 43 weeks	215 hours
f) ' <i>Networking</i> ' - 3 hours per week for 43 weeks	130 hours
g) <i>General reading</i> - 2 hours a week for 43 weeks	c. 85 hours
<i>Total</i>	<b><u>1695 hours</u></b>

How the teaching hours were made up would be a matter for negotiation. A lecture is one hour, but number of seminars etc varies with size of course, according to the agreed staff-student for the subject area (Appendix B). The 430 hours above acts as the maximum that anyone could be expected to teach, and anyone with a load higher than this needs to have some work re-allocated or the assistance of tutorial assistants/technicians/demonstrators. (However, some kinds of 'teaching' activity (e.g. visiting work or community placement locations) might not attract a preparation hour to go with them. Supervising tutorial assistants in taking seminars would not attract one hour per hour of seminar but would still need to be counted as some fraction of an hour.)

#### *Allowances*

Against this might be set a series of predetermined allowances (perhaps individually negotiated upwards in particular cases):

- Demonstrable research output – books/articles/conference papers/reports in production: half a day a week for 43 weeks? – c. 170 hours. (The academic would be expected to show that they had been produced by the agreed time. People who write papers but cannot get them accepted/published might cease to get this allowance after a while.)
- Research in progress: half a day a week for 43 weeks? – c. 170 hours. (Evidence of the project would be required, and a time for finishing it would be set).
- Planning research: putting together research proposals, grant applications etc. Where someone can argue they are doing this, we might allow half a day a week for one semester –  $4 \times 15 = 60$  hours. It would never be allowed again if the proposal did

not eventuate, and might not be allowed more than twice for proposals which were not funded in the end.

- Research/academic leadership: a numinous concept but part of the job description of even S/Lecturers and certainly of Associate Professors and Professors: 1 hour a week for S/Ls (45 hours), 2 for A/Profs (85 hours) and 3 for Profs (130 hours)?
- Membership of a University Committee or working Party (assuming one meeting a month plus reading the papers) -10 months \*4 hours = approximately 40 hours, or *pro rata* for Working Parties not expected to last a year. Where a Committee/Working Party was demonstrably more onerous than this, negotiation would ensue.
- Allowance is not offered for Deans and certain Directors, who receive additional allowances in money. Where the work involved is clearly out of scale with the monetary allowance, however, negotiation would be appropriate.
- Supervising an undergraduate project: half an hour a week for 26 weeks, plus six hours for reading drafts plus four hours for examination and defence, plus perhaps two hours of other activity (e.g. updating oneself in the area): 25 hours.
- Masters thesis supervision: full-time students: 5 hours a month for three months (meeting, reading drafts) + 3 for marking: 18 hours. Part-time, same allowance – less contact, but over a longer period.
- PhD supervision. Full-time: 50 hours, part-time 25 hours, for Director of Studies/main supervisor. Half this for other supervisors who can claim to be active in their supervision.
- Writing distance learning/self-study material – allow two hours for every hour that the student is expected to spend on the material.
- Other items that might be negotiated individually: attendance at national/overseas meetings, or whatever; membership of research networks; chairing networks/colloquia; work on own masters or PhD where this is seen as undertaken at least in part in the interests of the institution; staff development; etc; etc.

Basically these allowances can only come off teaching/preparation/marking time. This is made up of (430 teaching + 430 preparation + 240 marking). So each subtracted hour should reduce the teaching load by 0.4 hours as it also liberates 0.6 hours of preparation and marking).

### **Examples of reduced teaching load**

[Note: with 24 teaching weeks, two hours of teaching per week represent roughly 50 hours over the year.]

- A research-active lecturer currently doing fieldwork, an elected member of senate, who has negotiated five days to give a paper at a conference that will take up five

days (40 hours) to attend but not receiving allowance for actually writing the conference paper as well as doing the research:

Total allowances:  $170 + 40 + 40$  hours = 250 hours.

Reduction of teaching hours:  $0.4 * 250 = 100$  hours.

Teaching load: 330 hours.

- Professor, research active, member of Senate and one other committee, and has negotiated 10 days (80 hours) for involvement in an international research network on the web.

Total allowances:  $130 + 170 + 40 + 40 + 80 = 460$ .

Reduction of teaching hours:  $0.4 * 460 = 184$  hours

Teaching load: 246 hours.

- Senior Lecturer, research active (principal researcher on a funded project), also currently writing up (previous project), member of Senate, and has negotiated 5 days (40 hours) for a conference abroad.

Total allowances:  $45 + 170 + 170 + 40 + 40 = 465$ .

Reduction of teaching hours:  $0.4 * 465 = 186$  hours

Teaching load: 244 hours.

- Associate Professor, research active (principal researcher on a funded project), writing up a project, member of Senate, Director of Studies of two part-time PhD students (50 hours), supervising four u/g Projects and has negotiated 5 days (40 hours) for a conference abroad, and 10 days (80 hours) for organising and running an national research network.

Total allowances:  $85 + 170 + 170 + 40 + 50 + 100 + 40 + 80 = 735$

Reduction of teaching hours:  $0.4 * 735 = 294$  hours

Teaching load: 136 hours.

- Professor, research active (principal researcher on a funded project), allowance for writing a book, member of Senate and another committee, Director of Studies of two full-time PhD students and six masters students, supervising two u/g Projects and has negotiated 5 days (40 hours) for a conference abroad, 5 days (40 hours) for email collaboration on an international project, and 5 days (40) hours) for running formal staff development sessions.

Total allowances:  $130 + 170 + 170 + 80 + 100 + 108 + 50 + 40 + 40 + 40 = 928$

Reduction of teaching hours:  $0.4 * 848 = 371$  hours.

Teaching load: 59 hours.

**APPENDIX 1: WORKLOAD PLANNING FORM**

Fill in this form, as an estimate of/bidding position for your workload next academic years, and discuss it with your Head of Department (Use the electronic version of the form, and insert more rows if needed at any point, using the Tables menu)

**Name:**

**Faculty**

**Department**

**Year:**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Basis of calculation</b>	<b>Calculation rules</b>	<b>Hours</b>
<b>Teaching commitments (incl. preparation) – per module</b>	<i>Enter hours of face-to-face teaching per week (a)</i>	<i>Double (a) and multiply by 12 (or 24 if module covers two semesters)</i>	

<b>Marking</b>	<i>Sum of all modules. A standard load is taken as four modules with 100 students for which you do all the marking.</i>	<i>Standard load: 240 hours. Reduce or augment the standard load if you mark more than 400 or fewer than 300 module/students in a year.</i>	
<b>Student contact</b>		<i>Strike this out if you teach no modules and do no personal tutoring</i>	120
<b>Personal administration, networking, general reading etc</b>		<i>Set allowance: 430 hours</i>	430
<b><u>ALLOWANCES</u></b>			
<b>Research writing (see notes)</b>		<i>Set allowance: 170 hours</i>	
<b>Research in progress (see notes)</b>		<i>Set allowance: 170 hours</i>	
<b>Planning research (see notes)</b>		<i>Set allowance: 60 hours</i>	
<b>Research/academic leadership</b>	<i>Allowance by grade</i>	<i>S/L: 45 AProf: 85 Prof: 130</i>	
<b>University Committee work</b>	<i>Set allowance</i>	<i>Membership: 40</i>	
<b>Project supervision</b>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>@ 25 hours per student</i>	
<b>Supervising masters students</b>	<i>Number of students</i>	<i>@ 18 hours per student</i>	
<b>Supervising PhD students</b>	<i>Number of students: f/t, p/t</i>	<i>f/t: 50 hours p/t: 25 hour – half this if second supervisor</i>	



## APPENDIX 2: STAFF-STUDENT RATIOS

The costs of delivering different subjects in higher education institutions vary by discipline. The main areas where costs differ are in staffing, space, specialist facilities, equipment and consumables. Internationally it is recognized that subjects can be divided into a number of groups based on the different number of contact hours required to teach different subjects and the size of student groups that can be taught. Laboratory and practical subjects both require more timetabled class time and smaller groups than classroom-based subjects. Six groups of subjects are generally distinguished:

1. Classroom-based - Social Sciences, Humanities, Business Studies, Literature
2. High-Cost Classroom - Mathematic, Statistics, Education, (teacher training), Languages, Communication Skills
3. Part Lab/Part Classroom - Computing, Music, Physical Education/Sport, Dance, Built Environment, Creative Arts, Subjects Allied to Medicine, Psychology, Drama
4. Laboratory - Sciences, pre Clinical Medicine
5. High-cost Lab - Engineering
6. Clinical Medicine etc - Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Practice. Performing arts.

The starting point is the staff-student ratio of Subject Group 1 – Classroom-Based Subjects. An SSR of 1:25 would be appropriate, with tutorial assistants being in addition at a ratio of 1 tutorial assistant to every four academic staff and mainly engaged in supporting the delivery of teaching. The SSRs for the subject groups would then be:

1. Classroom-based - 1:25
2. High-Cost Classroom - 1:21
3. Part Lab/Part Classroom - 1:17
4. Laboratory - 1:15
5. High-cost Lab - 1:14
6. Clinical Medicine etc - 1:10

The staff required to teach a module is given by the number of students divided by the SSR student figure.