

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



**HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL
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**CALCULATING ACADEMIC STAFFING IN HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

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Class size is an important resource that needs to be regulated, in the interests of students but also in line with the cost of programme delivery. 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 these different needs. The differences in staffing levels is 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.

The Scottish Funding Group Model enables the construction of 6 groups:

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 Laboratory - Engineering, Agriculture
6. Clinical Medicine etc. - Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Practice
Conservatoire Music/ Acting

Using the Scottish funding ratios it is possible to determine the staff student ratio for each subject group. 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/ - 1:10
Conservatoire Music/
Acting

It is also necessary to agree the amount of face-to-face teaching students should receive a week and the numbers of hours that members of academic staff should be engaged in teaching. The Rwandan Qualifications Framework is based on the Scottish one, where a full-time undergraduate student undertakes 1,200 hours of learning effort a year spread over two semesters and a full-time postgraduate student undertakes 1800 hours in a calendar year. (This equates to roughly forty hours a week.) Students should spend time in lectures, seminars/workshops/labs/practical classes and private study. Students in classroom-based subjects should spend in total between 12 and 17 hours in the classroom (split roughly two thirds lectures and one third seminars/workshops), those in part lab/practical based subjects between 16 and 18 hours a week in the classroom (split roughly 50/50 lectures and practicals/labs/workshops) and those in lab based subjects between 18 and 24 hours in the classroom (split roughly 50/50 lectures and Labs/practice/workshops). All students' programmes in the first year should include credit rated training in the skills required for the discipline(s) they are studying.

Languages (French/English) should be additional to the credit required for the degree, with the teaching hours additional to the degree subject but compulsory, and with intensive language training in the first year. This training should be based on assessed need, with agreed learning outcomes that a student must achieve. Students who failed to reach the standard by the end of the first year would be permitted to progress to the second year (provided they had passed their other courses) but required to reach the required standard by the end of the second year. In the second, third and fourth years all students should take communication skills, and depending on competency and subject(s) studied, further language training. This could be provided by all students having two hours a week of scheduled communication skills classes plus 'remedial' sessions provided by an Effective Learning Service for those students who need additional training.

The teaching load of staff also needs to be agreed. The normal assumption is that one-hour of teaching, on average, generates one hour of preparation, marking and administration. On the assumption of a **notional** 36-hour working week then the starting point for determining teaching time is 18 hours a week for about 30 weeks a year. Allowances can then be made for

responsibilities and for research. A member of staff who is research active should be allowed a day a week for research clear of teaching and four hours teaching relief – reducing their teaching load to 14 hours. An associate professor/professor should be both engaged in research and providing research leadership. They should have a teaching load of between six and eight hours a week. Allowances should also be made for all administrative responsibilities including, for example, Examinations Officer, Head of Department, and Dean of Faculty. The exact amount of relief from teaching will depend on the size of departments and faculties but is likely to be around 4 hours a week for a Head of Department and eight hours for a Dean. This would mean, for example, that a Dean who was research active would teach for 6 hours a week. Tutorial Assistants should be providing support to academic staff, taking seminars, assisting in labs and assisting with marking student work, for example. They would be expected to attend the lectures on courses where they are assisting with seminars/labs etc and should in addition provide support by taking seminars etc for about 9 hours a week. Tutorial Assistants who could after they have attended the lectures on the courses on which they are teaching in subsequent years of employment assist with staff research or other academic administration.