



UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

DIVISION OF HUMANITIES

WORKLOAD GUIDELINES

This document provides a set of guidelines to Heads of Departments and Programmes to devise their own working models. It is understood that the unique natures of individual departments and programmes may necessitate different interpretations of this document; however, major deviation from the guidelines will require Pro-Vice-Chancellor approval. Workload models must be implemented at departmental level to enable teaching staff to plan and implement their teaching according to the six “Dimensions of Quality Learning” and the nine objectives as defined in the University of Otago’s Teaching and Learning Plan.

1. *Objectives: to provide guidelines to HoDs for determining*
 - a. the maximum teaching capacity of each staff member;
 - b. the number of papers and supervisions per staff member in comparison with the average within a department;
 - c. the minimum number of papers required to offer a particular programme (e.g. a Major, a Minor, or a BA Honours/Postgraduate Diploma);
 - d. a balance among an individual staff member’s research, teaching and service responsibilities;
 - e. research-informed teaching;
 - f. equity based on equalisation of effort among staff in a department, among departments, and across a number of years;
 - g. pressure points and (in-)efficiencies;
 - h. a record of departmental practice.

2. *Transparency and accountability*

Heads of Departments have responsibility for producing departmental workload models in a collegial and equitable manner, fully discussing and disclosing at the beginning of each academic year, the detail of the departmental working model. Departmental workload models for permanent teaching staff must be submitted in summary form to the office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor before the first semester. The preliminary enrolment figures supplied in February should be used to provide EFT-per-staff estimates.

3. *Proportional allocation of time*

A full-time lecturing position assumes a total of 1800 employed hours, normally rendered as a 40:40:20 ratio for teaching, research and service respectively (i.e. 720/720/360 hours). Significant deviation from this ratio requires PVC approval. HoDs are required to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for individual research and conference attendance for research-active academic staff. Part-time staff hours are calculated on a pro-rata basis.

4. *Teaching Units (TUs)*

It is recommended (but not essential) that teaching be allocated on the basis of Teaching Units (TUs) rather than the number of hours or papers. In normal

circumstances, one paper (or TU) is considered to be able to be conducted within 180 hours of a lecturer's time (including student contact, preparation and marking). Shared responsibilities for papers are accounted for on a pro-rata basis.

5. *Content of a single Teaching Unit*

A single Teaching Unit (TU) may be regarded normally as equivalent to one undergraduate paper or a number of supervisions. A sole supervision is generally regarded to be equivalent to 0.25 TU, which may be adjusted according to the proportion of supervision and stage of completion. Undergraduate supervisions should be calculated in comparison with postgraduate supervision responsibilities. The method of calculation is likely to differ among departments and according to student ability, and is best determined by HoDs in consultation with their staff.

6. *Maximum teaching loads*

Except where PVC approval has been given for a significantly different contract for a staff member, 4 TUs are regarded as the maximum workload (including supervisions as calculated above). However, it is in the interests of individual staff and departments to achieve a lower figure in order to release additional time for research.

7. *Variations*

It will be necessary in some disciplines, to modify the interpretation of a paper as being worth more than one TU, such as in the following situations:

- performance-based papers
- language acquisition papers
- papers requiring field-work
- papers with specific professionally defined needs
- distance taught papers
- different funding differentials
- papers taught in multiple streams
- multi-levelled papers

8. *Proportion of teaching to supervision*

In the Division of Humanities there is no typical teaching/supervision proportion per staff member, however, a balance needs to be sought. No teaching staff should be exempted from undergraduate teaching without PVC consent.

9. *Early-career academic staff* (i.e. first academic appointment)

Care must be taken so that newly appointed staff members are able to build all areas towards confirmation-path objectives and promotion opportunities. This might require HoDs to provide a lighter teaching workload for the first 12 to 18 months.

10. *Major administrative responsibility* (HoDs, Deans etc.)

Staff with major administrative responsibility require a modified workload. Divisional practice is that HoDs cover approximately a half-time teaching load, which, as for all staff, should cover undergraduate teaching and supervisions. However, the extent of teaching responsibilities for HoDs and Deans should be determined according to the size of department and administrative responsibility.

11. *Development and revision of new papers*

Staff responsible for the substantial re-development of a paper should be relieved of a significant proportion of a TU as deemed appropriate according to the degree of the revision.

12. Class size and EFT ratio

HoDs are responsible for ensuring that there is equity among staff in terms of class size and EFTs per staff member. Differences in class size need to be recognised in departmental workload models through the provision of tutorial and marking support while ensuring that lecturers monitor and review marking, especially of exam scripts.

13. Research-informed teaching

Research-informed teaching is an cornerstone principle of university teaching, and needs to be preserved when planning courses and assigning teachers to papers. HoDs should, where possible, work within these principles:

400-level:	subject directly related to lecturer's research outputs
300-level:	subject related to the lecturer's research interests
200-level:	subject within the lecturer's sub-discipline
100-level:	subject within the lecturer's discipline

Learning objectives for each level need to be related to these principles.

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