Workload Planning Review Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes – Thursday 26th May 2022

Teams Meeting

Attendees:
Karl Leydecker, Laura Benvie, Marion Campbell, Chris Collins, Debbie Dyker, Garry Fisher, Brian Henderson, Amanda Lee, Laura McCann, David Muirhead, Brian Paterson, Adam Price, Syrithe Pugh, Hulda Sveinsdottir, Ruth Taylor, Neil Vargesson, Sam Waldram (Clerk)

Apologies:
Sarah Duncan, Tracey Slaven

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1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING**

1.1 There was some discussion in respect of the contents of the previous minutes. It was confirmed that there were not enough PowerBI licences for members of the Group to have access to the Staff:Student Ratio modeller. It was agreed to change Item 8.2 from "peer reviews" to "learned society roles". It was also clarified that the personal tutoring discussed was in relation to postgraduate students in that instance rather than undergraduates, as personal tutoring for this group is currently being discussed for implementation.

2. **MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 There was discussion in relation to the wording of the agenda, in relation to the Workload Update for Professional Services. It was felt that the wording in relation to "especially Grades 5-9" gave the impression that the Grade 1-4 were not being looked at. It was confirmed that this was not the case, but the focus on the paper was in relation to Grades 5-9 as this was the group identified by the Staff Survey 2020 as having the highest work pressures within Professional Services.

3. **VERBAL UPDATE ON FEEDBACK FROM SENATE ON GENERAL WORKLOAD ISSUES**

3.1 It was confirmed that most of the feedback from Senate had been in relation to the Academic Workload Allocation Model. However, the report on the whole had been welcomed and well received.

4 **UPDATE ON WORKLOAD ISSUES FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES STAFF**

4.1 TS was on leave but had provided a paper to confirm what steps were being taken within Professional Services to address workload pinch points.

4.2 The fact that investment was being made in sustainability posts was welcomed. It was confirmed that staffing was continuing to be prioritised and the proposals would be going to PaRC within the next month. Any changes would be updated after that.

4.3 It was confirmed that PMO stood for the Project Management Office, which was newly formed within Planning and had been set up to ensure the quality assurance and good practice within internal projects.

4.4 It was confirmed that the Universal (No External Funding) related to mini festivals and fairs undertaken by External Relations.

5   CROSS OVER PROJECTS

5.1 The cross over project paper was presented for information. There was a commitment to keep this up to date and there were no further questions.

6   REVIEW OF CAREER TRACK ACTIVITIES

6.1 KL confirmed that there had only been a few items of feedback from Senate. The model itself had not been queried but there had been some discussion in respect of transparency and what that meant. This was clarified as staff being able to see their own workload allocation and that of others in their Dept/School on an anonymised basis. This information would need to be clarified in the report. The other feedback had been in respect of big research grants and how these were to be treated, which was already under discussion.

Action: KL

6.2 It was reiterated and agreed that any system introduced would have to ensure that it had an element of flex between the categories because some tasks may fit into more than one area.

6.3 The issue of REF was discussed. Within the promotions review there was an additional category which addressed issues related to Impact, Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise. There was nothing specific within the current workload model for this type of activity. With Impact being an area identified for improvement following REF this needed to be addressed and time should be allocated for projects that fitted into this space. It was suggested that one approach would be to incorporate into the model the ability to make a flexible discretionary allocation for this activity against an agreed plan of activity. KL agreed to discuss this further with P. Edwards.

Action: KL

6.4 It was agreed that it would be important to ensure effective communication of the flex elements in the model to the wider University community.

6.5 KL acknowledged the amount of work that had been put into finalising the list of tasks under each category. The fact that different tasks could fit under different categories was discussed further. It was recognised that staff members would be able to identify which category their task fell under and if there was dubiety this could be discussed with their Head of School.

6.6 It was suggested that the items under citizenship should be forwarded to the Regrading review group for information as it included tasks routinely undertaken by Professional Services staff, over and above their normal day to day job. This was agreed.

Action: BP

6.7 The separate items at the end of the Citizenship category were discussed. It was felt that most of the list were now covered by the items at the top of the category. It was agreed that Trade Union work would remain and that by adding some examples at the top of the category most items would then be covered. The list would have a final review by KL and SW prior to going out for the extended consultation process.

Action: KL/SW

7   UPDATE IN RESPECT OF MANAGEMENT RELATED TASKS IN SCHOOLS

7.1 It was agreed that there would have to be an element of flex with regard to the time allocation for most of the tasks identified, e.g. Athena Swan Leads would be busier during an award submission year, than they would be in non-submission years.

7.2 It was clarified that the list of tasks was specifically related to academic staff who had additional tasks requested of them rather than professional services staff who may have some of these tasks incorporated into their general job descriptions.

8   REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES – ACADEMIC WORKLOAD ALLOCATION

8.1 MC confirmed that the areas highlighted under Research covered all outstanding issues. It was agreed to discuss and review with P Edwards prior to finalising.   **Action: KL**

8.2 The Technical Review was discussed and it was agreed that the time academics spend mentoring junior technical staff was covered within the mentoring element under Citizenship.

8.3 RT confirmed that she did not anticipate any additional items being necessary under the Teaching category but she would continue to review and discuss prior to any extended consultation.   **Action: RT**

8.4 It was agreed to delete the last point under Other Issues.   **Action: SW**

8.5 The issue of the University being open on public holidays was discussed. On the recent 2nd May public holiday when schools and other childcare was closed the University was holding exams which meant staff had to be at work, causing childcare issues. RT agreed to take this away and look at the broader issues surrounding this in respect of the structure of the academic year, but also to see what could be done in the short term too.   **Action: RT**

8.6 The growth in PGT students, and the general growth in teaching throughout all part of the year was also discussed and RT confirmed that she was putting together a small group to look at this in conjunction with the structure of the academic year. It was confirmed that RT would happily receive any suggestions to help in this area.

8.7 It was confirmed that flying faculty and the added pressure on their time was captured in the first point under teaching which referenced international delivery. It was agreed that this is an area which needs to be looked at.

9   METHODOLOGY FOR ALLOCATION OF TEACHING

9.1 To be discussed at a future meeting due to time constraints.

10   PROCESS FOR WIDER CONSULTATION OF ACADEMIC WORKLOAD ALLOCATION MODEL

10.1   The work which still had to be done was agreed as follows:
  a) Lists of tasks to be finalised
  b) List of tasks under each category to be consulted on with the University community over the summer.
  c) Refine the interim report in light of the feedback received to produce a final report for consideration by SMT and Senate.
  d) Technical Implementation Group to be formed – this would be responsible for testing and piloting the model. They would also be responsible for looking at any applicable software applications. BH confirmed that funding for such a project had been earmarked by Digital Strategy Committee for 2023/24.

10.2   It was agreed that there needed to be a broad parity of application of the proposed model throughout the different parts of the University. It was confirmed that a pilot of the process would be used to check that the model would work as anticipated.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1   No other business was discussed.

MEETING CLOSED.

12 ACTIONS

Reference	Description	Action by	Action Date
02Mar22 Section 3.3	Develop roadmap of the next steps for further analysis of the Staff Survey data	K Leydecker	Ongoing
02Mar22 Section 4.5	Teaching Model Allocation within section 5.3 to be on next agenda.	S Waldram	Future Meeting
26Apr22 Section 6.2	Review of Sabbatical Leave process and application in Schools	M Campbell	Ongoing
26Apr22 Section 7.2	Discuss how to address the issue of identifying workload on an annual cycle.	K Leydecker T Slaven	Ongoing
26Apr22 Section 8.3	Further discussion on feedback regarding personal tutoring and where this element should sit in the Workload Model.	All	Include on agenda for future meeting.
26Apr22 Section 8.6	Wider consultation with Scholarship staff on duties which are undertaken.	R Taylor	Ongoing
26May22 Section 6.1	Transparency element of report to be clarified in respect of anonymity for other staff's allocations	K Leydecker	
26May22 Section 6.3	Updating of the Principles within the model to accurately reflect the ability to flex for undertaking strategic projects	K Leydecker	
26May22 Section 6.6	Make the Regrading Group aware of the elements contained in the Citizenship category.	B Paterson	
26May22 Section 6.7	Finalise the Citizenship category list	K Leydecker S Waldram	
26May22 Section 8.1	Review the Research element of the outstanding issues list with P Edwards	K Leydecker	
26May22 Section 8.3	Review the Teaching element of the outstanding issues list with a view to completion	R Taylor	
26May22 Section 8.4	Delete last item in the 'Other' element of the outstanding issues list	S Waldram	
26May22 Section 8.5	Review of University being open on a public holiday	R Taylor	
26May22 Section 10.1	Finalised outstanding documents to be presented to Senate and for wider consultation	All K Leydecker	