

Workload Planning Review Group Meeting

Meeting Minutes – Thursday 29th September 2022

Teams Meeting

Attendees:

Karl Leydecker, Marion Campbell, Chris Collins, Sarah Duncan, 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:

Laura Benvie, Tracey Slaven

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2. MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Section 2.3 of the previous minutes regarding the University being open on public holidays was discussed, in relation to the September public holiday when the University was open but Aberdeen City schools were closed causing some childcare issues. The differences between City and Shire public holidays were also discussed. It was agreed that currently on 'Closed Days' there was no teaching scheduled but on Public Holidays this was not always the case. R Taylor confirmed that this was a known issue and 2024-2025 timetables were currently being looked at, taking this issue into consideration. D Dyker confirmed that she would also take the issue to the Reward Working Group to discuss closed days versus public holidays and how they should be treated in respect of the harmonisation process. It was agreed that Heads of School and Line Managers should encourage staff to take their leave, and to take days off in lieu if they work on a public holiday. **Action: RT/DD**

3. UPDATE ON GENERAL WORKLOAD ISSUES

3.1 It was confirmed that the Staff Survey 2022 would be launched on 31st October 2022 and the results would provide an opportunity to review staff feedback on workload issues. It would also help to identify any areas with a potential stress problem which could then be the target of a deeper dive into the reasons behind it.

3.2 The issue of the Sabbatical Leave review was updated. There had been lots of discussion with Heads of School. The issue was being actively addressed but was not yet finalised, in part due to the large number of different arrangements throughout the University.

3.3 The lack of staff within the lower support grades was discussed following feedback from staff through their union representatives. Issues of lack of staff, workload and stress were being reported and the fact that professional services staff felt forgotten about. It was fed back that the WLPRG had looked at Academic issues but not much had been achieved for Professional Services staff.

3.4 K Leydecker emphasised that issues such as the above should be raised with Managers, the issues did matter and needed to be raised to ensure that they were addressed. S Duncan confirmed that the SAMs had been encouraged to submit business cases where they felt there were pinch points regarding staffing issues. These

had been approved and she felt that this was encouraging for moving forward. It was agreed that there might be a communication issue which needed to be addressed with Line Managers if they felt that they couldn't request additional staff if there was a need for them. **Action: KL/SMT**

4 UPDATE ON CAREER TRACK ACTIVITIES

4.1 It was confirmed that the career track activities were all but finalised following some additional changes to what was expected under each track. In addition, references to 'Teaching' had been replaced with 'Education'.

5 NEXT STEPS

Review of Report

5.1 It was confirmed that the draft report was very close to being finalised. It was hoped to review it during the meeting and finalise it prior to being submitted to Senate. Changes had been highlighted within the papers for ease of reference.

5.2 K Leydecker acknowledged that the University was experiencing growing pains due the increasing number and diversity of students. SMT were discussing this issue following the growth of overseas students in 2022/23 and this underlined the necessity of having a good Workload Planning action plan – such as Heads of School not scheduling staff for all year round teaching. T Slaven would be modelling what was needed within Professional Services.

5.3 In Section 3.7 it was felt that there should be more emphasis to confirm that the basic flexible model was the preferred option from the WLPRG. It was also agreed to amend the wording in relation to automated testing to draw the distinction between that and traditional human testing. This was to highlight the workload differences between the two different assessment types. **Action: SW**

5.4 It was agreed to expand on the points included in the next steps section of the report (3.8). **Action: SW**

5.5 It was agreed to add an additional point to Section 3.4 to incorporate high level management tasks as those in positions such as Head of School, would not be able to spend 45% of their workload on research, for example. **Action: SW**

5.6 It was agreed to add additional wording to underline that any workload model should be developed in line with the principle that any hours worked should reflect an employee's contractual requirement. **Action: SW**

5.7 It was agreed to circulate the final report with the agreed amendments prior to submission to SMT, PNCC and Senate. **Action: SW**

Implementation Group

5.8 K Leydecker confirmed that the next stage in the process was the formation of an implementation group to take forward the proposals once they were signed off by Senate.

5.9 It was agreed that the Implementation Group would need to have some cross over of membership from the WLPRG to ensure continuity. K Leydecker confirmed that he would not Chair the group and as such would be looking for suggestions. Group members were asked to forward their information to K Leydecker or S Waldram if they were interested in participating in the Implementation Group.

5.10 It was confirmed that the Implementation Group would report to the main WLPRG.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 No other business was discussed.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.1 It was agreed to hold a meeting of the full group following the publication of the Staff Survey 2022 results.

Action: SW

MEETING CLOSED.

8 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. To be reviewed following SS 2022.
02Mar22 Section 4.5	Teaching Model Allocation within section 5.3 to be on next agenda.	S Waldram	Complete
26Apr22 Section 6.2	Review of Sabbatical Leave process and application in Schools	M Campbell	Ongoing external to WLPRG
26Apr22 Section 7.2	Discuss how to address the issue of identifying workload on an annual cycle.	K Leydecker T Slaven	Ongoing external to WLPRG
26Apr22 Section 8.3	Further discussion on feedback regarding personal tutoring and where this element should sit in the Workload Model.	All	Complete
26Apr22 Section 8.6	Wider consultation with Scholarship staff on duties which are undertaken.	R Taylor	Complete
26May22 Section 6.1	Transparency element of report to be clarified in respect of anonymity for other staff's allocations	K Leydecker	Complete
26May22 Section 6.3	Updating of the Principles within the model to accurately reflect the ability to flex for undertaking strategic projects	K Leydecker	Complete
26May22 Section 6.6	Make the Regrading Group aware of the elements contained in the Citizenship category.	B Paterson	Complete
26May22 Section 6.7	Finalise the Citizenship category list	K Leydecker S Waldram	Complete
26May22 Section 8.1	Review the Research element of the outstanding issues list with P Edwards	K Leydecker	Complete
26May22 Section 8.3	Review the Teaching element of the outstanding issues list with a view to completion	R Taylor	Complete
26May22 Section 8.4	Delete last item in the 'Other' element of the outstanding issues list	S Waldram	Complete
26May22 Section 8.5	Review of University being open on a public holiday	R Taylor	Complete
26May22 Section 10.1	Finalised outstanding documents to be presented to Senate and for wider consultation	All K Leydecker	Complete

20Jun22 Section 4.2	Change REF language in first point under Research in Activities list	K Leydecker	Complete
20Jun22 Section 4.5	Finalise next stages of the consultation process	K Leydecker	Complete
20Jun22 Section 4.7	Ensure Citizenship Activity list is consistent with the Promotions one	S Waldram	Complete
20Jun22 Section 6.3	More clarity to be provided in respect of the Promotions list - Engagement, Innovation & Impact.	P Edwards	Complete
20Jun22 Section 7.3	Review the Methodology for Allocation of Teaching paper and provide feedback to KL and SW.	All	Complete
20Jun22 Section 10.1	Next meeting to be arranged for after the summer break.	S Waldram	Complete
29Sept22 Section 2.1	Continue review of academic staff working on a public holiday versus a university closed day and the associated procedures.	R Taylor D Dyker	Ongoing
29Sept22 Section 3.4	Review the need for additional comms in relation to business cases being submitted for additional staff, especially PS staff.	K Leydecker SMT	Ongoing
29Sept22 Section 5.3	Amend wording in report in Section 3.7	S Waldram	Complete
29Sept22 Section 5.4	Amend wording in report in Section 3.8	S Waldram	Complete
29Sept22 Section 5.5	Amend wording in report in Section 3.4	S Waldram	Complete
29Sept22 Section 5.6	Amend wording to underline any WL Model should conform to staff's contractual working hours	S Waldram	Complete
29Sept22 Section 5.7	Circulate amended final report to group members	S Waldram	Complete
29Sept22 Section 7.1	Arrange next meeting once Staff Survey 2022 results are published	S Waldram	Ongoing