

The quest to make WAMs acceptable to colleagues and consistent across STEMM disciplines

A twelve year struggle as Head of Department and Dean

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Athena Forum Work Allocation Models Workshop
RAE 17th September 2018

Why have a WAM (my view)

To ensure the HoD has the necessary information to allocate tasks to staff

So staff can see how their work allocation compares to others and the reason why

As a record in case of future performance concerns

Why have a WAM (my institutions view)

Workload modelling has been identified as a mechanism to address a number of strategic priorities for the institution, including addressing staff concerns about over work volume and fairness, ensuring academics have sufficient time to engage in world-class research and learning and teaching and improving approaches to planning and resource allocation.

The early days (I)

Even the name can be contentious!

Contribution model

Work allocation model

Workload model

The early days (II)

Arguments over units

Hours

Points

SMUs

Beans

Argument over whether research should be included

Arguments over who should see what

Arguments over how much effort each task takes

First efforts to standardise

All departments to develop and publish transparent workload models which have been developed through consultation with colleagues in the department.

Workload models should cover all academic staff and may also be applied to research only staff if appropriate.

The unit for workload allocation should be hours.

Any activities undertaken by individuals which are expected by the department should be reflected in the workload allocation for the individual within the broad categories of Research, Teaching, Scholarship and Citizenship.

A word on transparency

Staff get to see their own contributions listed and quantified

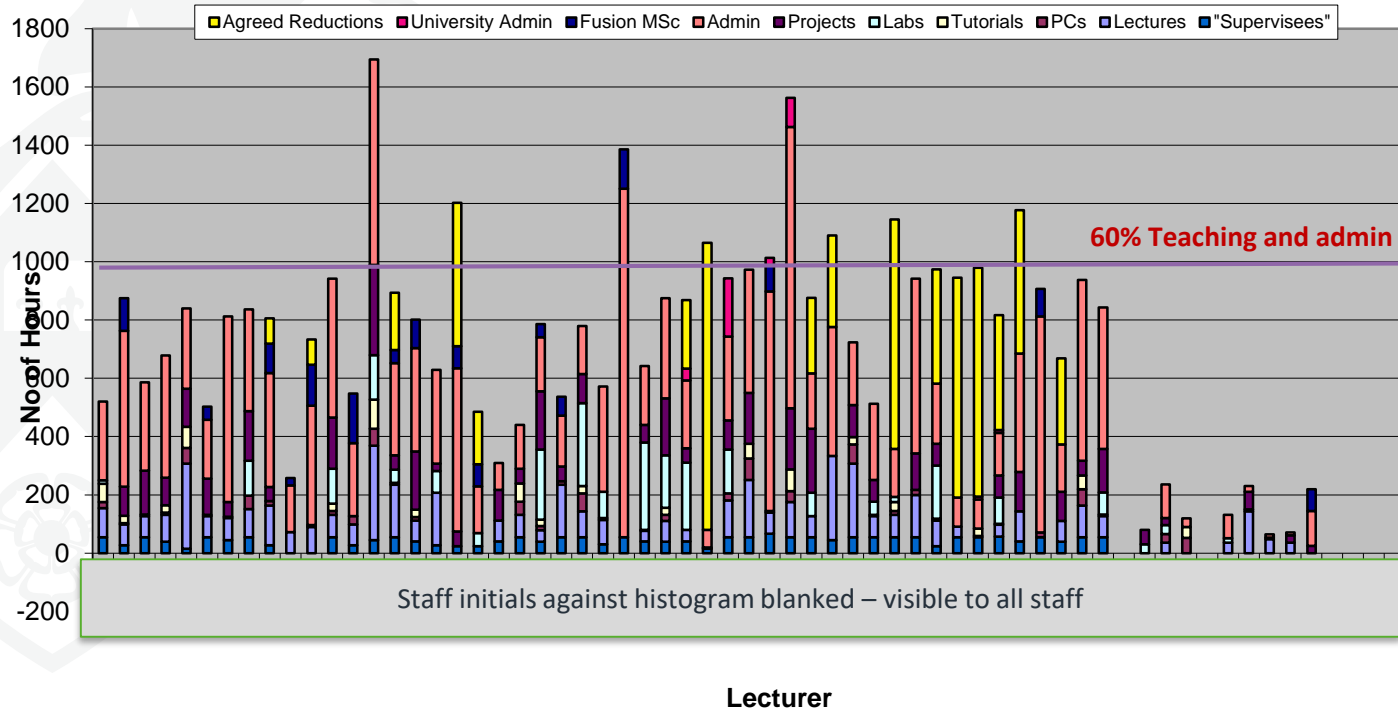
Staff get to see their own contributions listed and quantified, plus an anonymised histogram showing all staff from which they can see where they fit

Staff get to see their own contributions listed and quantified, plus full details for all other staff members as well

My personal experience is that three is by far the better and eliminates almost all hassles

Department A (aim for 40% research time)

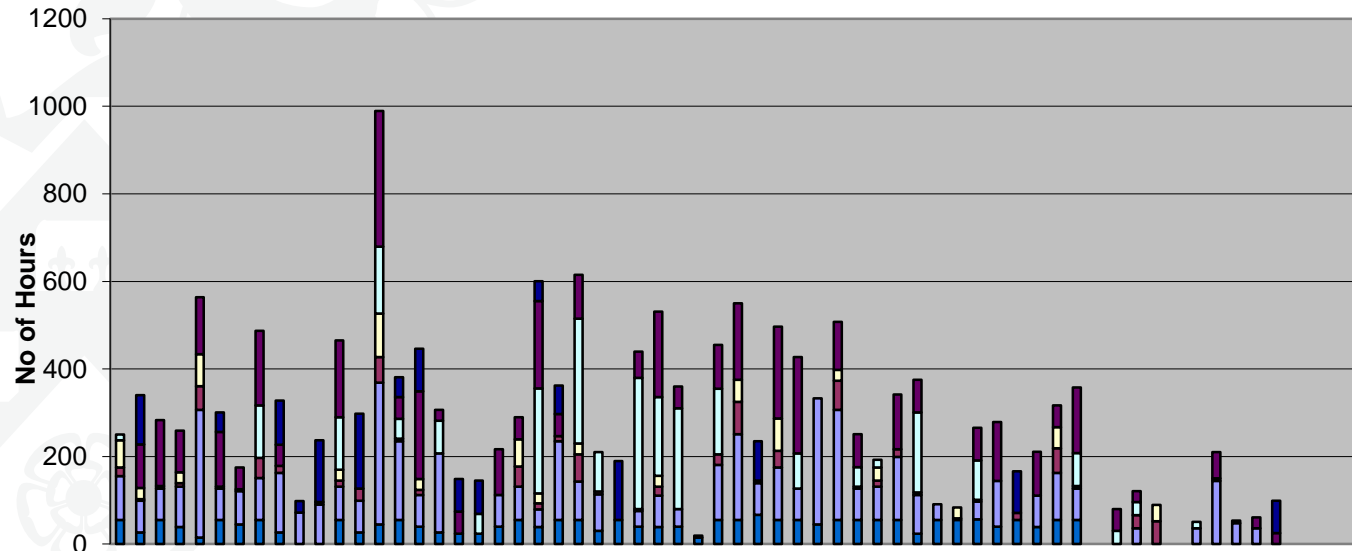
Cumulative totals



Department A (aim for 40% research time)

Teaching Hours

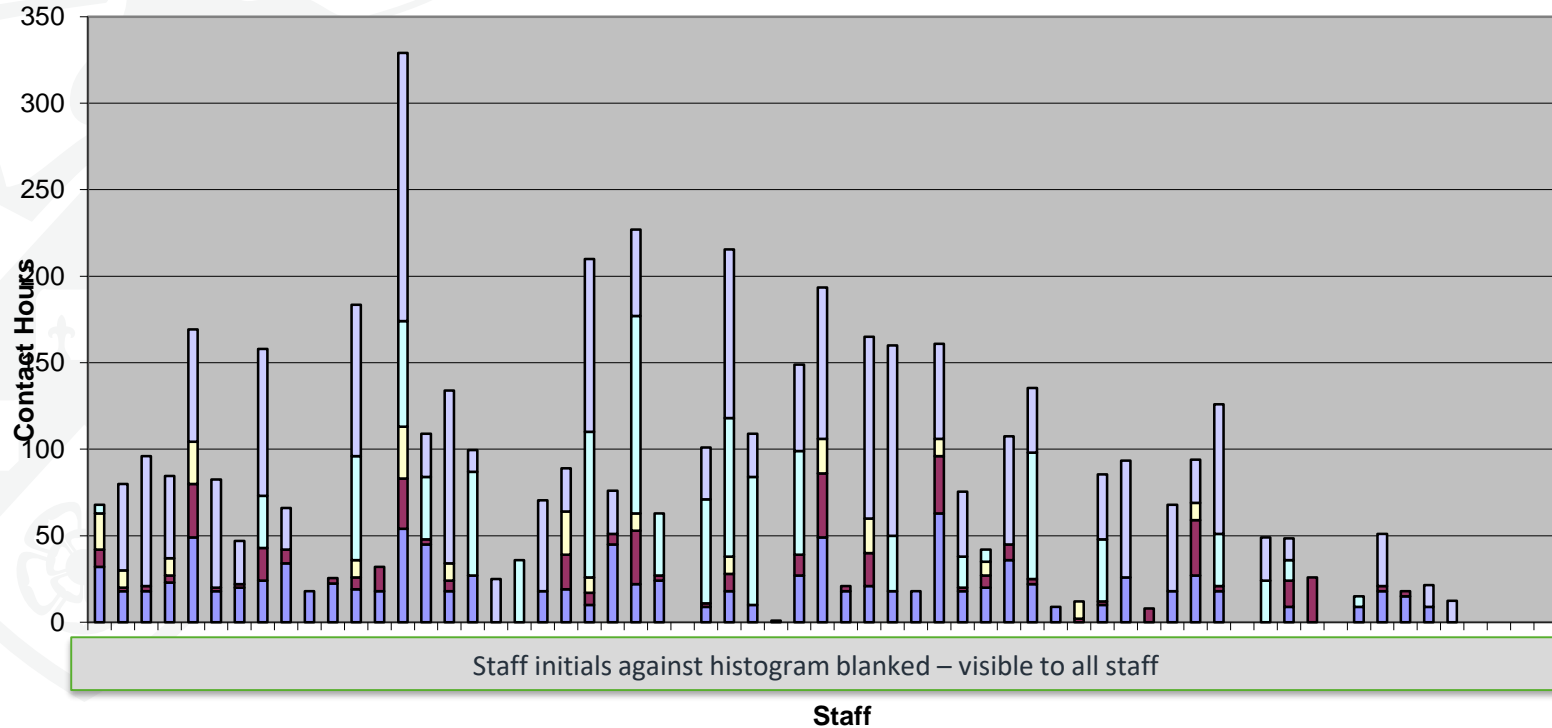
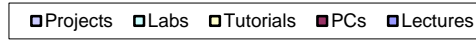
■ Fusion MSc
 ■ Projects
 ■ Labs
 ■ Tutorials
 ■ PCs
 ■ Lectures
 ■ "Supervisees"



Lecturer

Department A (aim for 40% research time)

Contact Hours



Department B (include research time)

Seven main criteria are considered. (i) The number of PGR students (PhDs, MScs), (ii) The number of PDRAs, (iii) Applications for external research funding, (iv) Awards for external research funding, (v) Number of papers written, (vi) Quality of papers written, (vii) Contribution to the discipline.

There is a maximum threshold of points that can be accrued in each category (i.e. the scale is not linear). Points accrued over the threshold value for each category are summed and count towards the “Over upper threshold” category.

The research workload model necessarily looks at past data since papers, grant applications and contributions to the discipline can only be accounted for after the event. The period used is 3 years (“census period”). This is short enough to allow staff to affect their research allocation over a relatively short period of time but provides some smoothing over annual changes. Note that major changes (awards of e.g. very large grants) can and will be factored in should they occur.

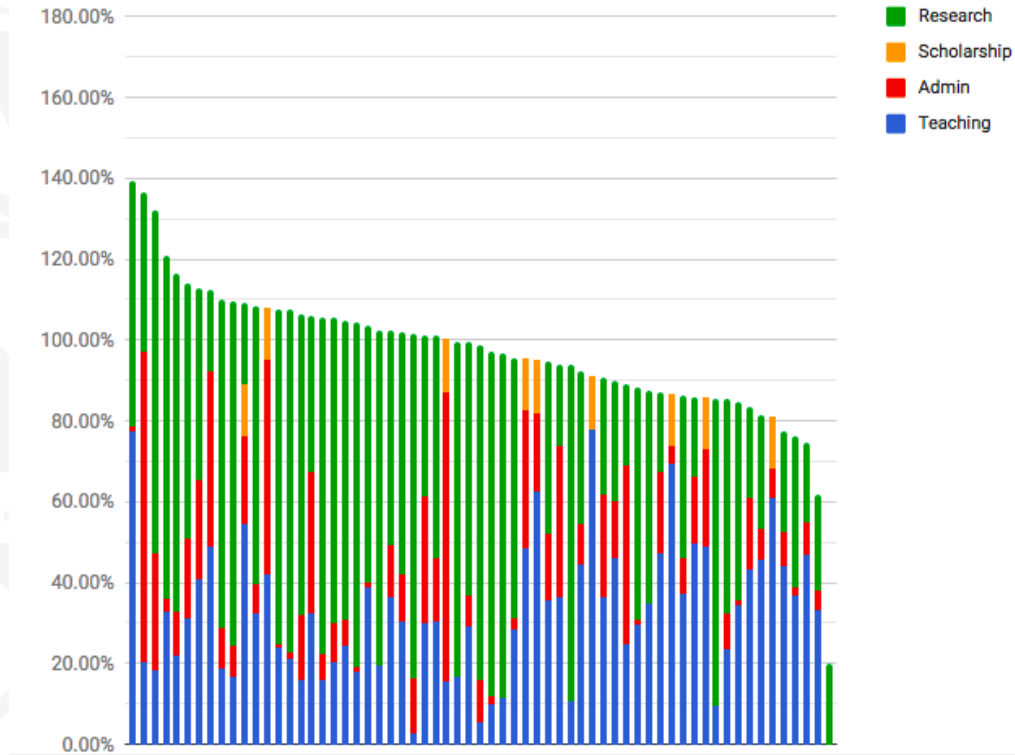
Note that scores over 85 are capped at 85 and those below 20 are rounded up to 20; scores between this range stand as they are.

Department B (include research time)

1	WORKLOAD ALLOCATION	2018-2019				
2	FTE:	100 %				
3	Full working hours:	1643 hours				
4	General admin allocation:	10 %				
5	Remaining working hours:	1478.7 hours				
6						
7	SUMMARY	WORKLOAD, hours	WORKLOAD, %			
8	Teaching	602.825	40.77%			
9	Admin	365	24.68%			
10	Scholarship	0	0.00%			
11	Research	697.1067119	47.14%			
12	TOTAL	1664.931712	112.59%			
13						
14						
15		ADMIN WORKLOAD				
16	Job title			Tariff, h	Your contribution	Allocated workload, h
17	Chair of Board of Studies			250	100.00%	250
18	Deputy Safety Officer			20	100.00%	20
19	Subject Convener for Teaching (Organic)			15	100.00%	15
20	Executive Strategy Group			30	100.00%	30
21	Biology Chemistry Planning Group			10	100.00%	10
22	Departmental Teaching Committee			20	100.00%	20

Spreadsheet has 80 lines and this is just for one staff member!

Department B (include research time)



Challenges

Huge work involved in compiling database – get from central systems?

Some colleagues work less efficiently than others – how to cope if taking longer than allocation?

Are research students a “cost” or a “benefit”?

Achieving averaging (smoothing) over a reasonable timeframe

The fiction of the 37.5 hour week

If fully allocate research, and as a result require others to carry very high teaching loads, does this ultimately damage research capacity?

Next steps

Exploring the degree of conformity across the STEMM departments

Should a similar role in different departments carry the same allowance?

Should study leave periods (sabbatical periods) be dealt with in a common way?

Can we move to full transparency in all departments?

Can we agree on how to deal with research?



Another twelve years of work?