

Academic and Teaching Year Policy

1. When determining the allocation of lecturers' duties, Schools should ensure that duties within the categories of scheduled teaching, teaching related and academic management and administration normally occupy no more than 38 weeks of the academic year. Schools should also refer to the employment contract and section 1 of the Lecturing Staff Handbook which includes a local agreement on the Determination of Duties.
2. The standard employment contract for lecturing staff identifies a 38 week teaching year which includes 2 weeks for teaching related administration. The majority of the University's courses are currently taught over 30 weeks, while the wider range of lecturers' responsibilities takes place over 38 weeks.
3. The University, and the trade unions, recognise the benefits to staff and students alike of achieving flexibility within the academic year, i.e. 1 September to 31 August. The pattern of an individual lecturer's teaching year, which need not be a continuous period of 38 weeks, should be agreed and documented at the time the duties for the forthcoming academic year are determined. All Schools must ensure that the process by which duties and allowances are agreed is open and transparent and that outcomes are published.
4. Lecturers' scheduled teaching duties, teaching related duties and academic management and administration should, as stated above, normally occupy no more than 38 weeks. Leave and research and scholarly activity would normally take place outside these weeks, but if taken during them would have the effect of delaying their completion by the equivalent period. A lecturer's request to take up to six weeks' leave in one continuous period shall not be refused unreasonably. The academic year will allow for a period of five weeks research and scholarly activity that should be negotiated through the appraisal process. Consultation with individual lecturers on the timing of the 38 week teaching year, research and scholarly activity and leave should commence in the previous academic year and should normally be finalised by Christmas of the year in question.
5. Formal Scheduled Teaching Responsibilities must not exceed a total of 550 hours in any teaching year or 18 hours per week. The hours shall be made up of scheduled teaching duties and factors to be taken into account arising from academic management and administration. These factors may be calculated on a weekly or occasional basis. Whilst it is recognised that all lecturers will be carrying out research and scholarly activity, in some instances this activity will be undertaken, alongside, or in place of the above categories.
6. Whilst the majority of the University's courses are taught over 30 weeks, it is recognised that some of the activities falling within scheduled teaching duties and all of the activities within teaching related duties and academic management and administration, may take place during the 38 week teaching year. Schools should therefore ensure that there is an understanding about the period over which certain activities take place, and that an appropriate time for these is allowed when lecturers' duties are determined. This should help to ensure that lecturers are not expected to undertake Formal Scheduled Teaching Responsibilities in excess of 550 hours per annum.