INTERNAL SERVICE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS FOR ACADEMIC STAFF
2014

1 Internal Service as a Category of Academic Work

The University of Tasmania identifies three priority areas of academic work, research, learning and teaching and community. Beyond these priority areas, internal service to the University (sometimes referred to as ‘administration’) remains a necessary contributor to institutional success and, done well, to the performance and career development of staff. Virtually all academics will make some contributions of this kind and, for a minority, they will form a major component of their work. However, the focus must be on efficiency and effectiveness – producing outcomes to support the fulfilment of the University’s mission and objectives as economically as possible – to avoid any sense of internal service becoming an end in itself. Key considerations must be excellence, significance/impact and leadership, informed by a scholarly appreciation of institutional priorities, disciplinary norms and good business practice.

For the purposes of these performance expectations, in-scope internal service activities are those which 1) have been agreed with the staff member’s academic line manager in formal workload discussions and 2) are distinct from activities categorised as belonging to one of the three priority areas of academic work, namely research, learning and teaching and community.

The expectations outlined here are modelled on those for an academic staff member with a ‘standard’ workload mix (40% research; 40% teaching; 20% a combination of community and internal service).

2 The Nature of Internal Service

Internal service is taken to refer to contributions – other than those identified as contributions to research, learning and teaching or community – to institutional operations and objectives, direction setting and planning, development and capacity building, line management and governance. Some examples of activities in each of these categories follow, but these are purely illustrative and certainly not definitive or comprehensive. There is no expectation that an individual staff member will make contributions in all of the areas listed and there will be a wide variety in the mix of activities undertaken and contributions made.

Institutional Operations

- Contributions to marketing, student recruitment and events such as Open Day
- Contributions to the student experience for example through mentoring, pastoral care and support
- Membership of committees and working parties
- Roles in fostering cross-disciplinary linkages
- Serving as a Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officer
- Serving as a Work Health and Safety Continuous Self-Assessment (CSA) Audit Assessor
- Serving as a Faculty/Institute Work Health and Safety Representative
- Participation in reviews, evaluations and other quality assurance and improvement activities
- Serving on staff selection committees
- Leadership of student employment or placement programs

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1 For example, in Opening UTAS to Talent: The UTAS Academic, 2012.
Direction Setting and Planning
- Contributions to policy development
- Contributions to operational and strategic planning

Development and Capacity Building
- Mentoring of staff
- Contributions to staff development programs
- Contributions to cultural diversity or equity goals
- Contributions to developing cross-cultural competencies of staff or students

Line Management and Governance
- Service as a Head of School, Head of Discipline, Associate Dean or similar
- Service as a Director of a Research Centre

3 Allocating Service Contributions to Categories of Academic Work
The Academic Staff Promotions Committee (ASPC) encourages academic staff to consider the outcomes of their internal service work in terms of their impact on the core academic mission of the University. So, rather than thinking about the time contributed as, for example, a Head of School or an Associate Dean, staff are urged to “reflect on the differences [their] work has made, particularly the effect on the core academic activities of research and learning and teaching”\(^2\). The same approach should be taken in working with performance expectations.

As a Head of School or Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching), a staff member may make a significant contribution by driving curriculum reform or leading the introduction of new delivery methods. Similarly, they may lead the development of new programs or the implementation of more effective quality assurance methods. These achievements could be documented as contributions to learning and teaching – perhaps as evidence of leadership under the TPES – or as internal service contributions, but not as both.

If we think about casting the outcomes of internal service as contributing to the RPEs, TPES or CPEs, then we are better placed to think clearly about the distinction between purely administrative work and activities with a scholarly outcome or contribution. Internal service/ administrative activities also have impact and outcomes. However, these outcomes are not normally scholarly in nature.

We can therefore make useful judgements about what we choose to classify as internal service and what we regard as research or teaching. Note that while staff may choose the category of activity in which a particular contribution is counted, it must only be included in one such category.

4 Why Do We Need Performance Expectations for Internal Service?
The intention of these performance expectations is to provide a career development framework for those who have internal service activity as part of their workload, and to provide a context around which useful Performance and Career Development Conversations can occur. More generally, they provide a framework for assessing performance – that is achievements as opposed to time allocated – and a basis for stating and assessing claims for promotion.

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\(^2\) UTAS Academic Staff Promotions: Advice for Applicants and Heads April 2013.
Being able to plan for high-impact internal service outcomes requires that managers remain accountable, take on a mentoring role and are able to discuss these outcomes strategically with the staff member in terms of what they mean for their individual career and what they mean for the school, faculty, institute and institution as a whole.

Career decisions relating to internal service, such as choosing to accept membership of a committee, or undertake a formal mentoring role, should be judged in terms of their future potential positive impact and benefit to:

- The individual staff member, in terms of their own career progression
- Other members of the University community and
- The school, faculty, institute or University, in terms of meeting their goals and strategic priorities.

The impact of internal service should therefore be evaluated through three lenses: 1) positive impact on the individual’s career progression; 2) positive impact on other staff members; and 3) positive impact on the school, faculty, institute and University itself, including its students.

### 5 Service Activities, Outputs and Impacts

As with other categories of academic activity, when it comes to internal service, what matters is what contributions you have made, what outcomes you have achieved – what difference you have made by participating in the activity.

Performance in the internal service domain is measured in terms of its outcomes – its impact on the individual, on other staff and on the institution, including its students, rather than on sheer numbers of inputs (activities) or even of outputs. A busy service schedule does not necessarily provide greater benefit to the staff member, other staff, students or the institution. It is the anticipated impact of an activity that should be used as the basis of judgements about workloads, career planning and promotion.

It is important to reflect on sustained personal effort, whether acting individually or as a member of a team (e.g. a committee). As a result of these efforts, it should be possible to point to constructive achievements in useful (and, possibly innovative) directions. Staff also need to show continuity of involvement in the service role, the result of sustained efforts (in one or more directions), generally over some considerable period of time. There should also be major responsibility for the outcomes of the events claimed as achievements.

In short, you should focus much less on what you have done and much more on what you have achieved and why it matters.

### 6 Internal Service Expectations

Indicative performance expectations for each of the academic levels are specified in the table below. These are the kinds of things that might be discussed in Performance Development and Career Conversations around the internal service portion of an academic workload. The table is by no means prescriptive, and is certainly not exhaustive.

The table is intended not only to provide guidance, but also to express the following four quite general, but very important, points about these expectations.
6.1 Increase in Level of Leadership

First, the table illustrates the expectation that there should be an increase in the level of leadership associated with internal service as the academic career progresses. It is expected that the staff member’s role in leadership will become greater over time.

Senior academic staff are expected to make a significant contribution to the leadership of their discipline, the organisational unit and the University. This responsibility for greater leadership applies across research, teaching, community engagement and internal service.

Individuals often make a particular contribution in an area of strength which may change during a career and in response to needs and opportunities within the institution.

In general, the expected quality of internal service work will increase with experience. The amount of shared output may also increase where larger teams are associated with more senior staff. However, these relationships vary substantially according to individual circumstances and they are not necessarily linear or uniform across all areas of academic activity.

In 2012, Academic Senate adopted a paper on the role of professors. This provides a useful reference point in documenting leadership and other expectations of senior academics. The paper is available at http://www.utas.edu.au/provost/professor and is included in the first section of Opening UTAS to Talent: The UTAS Academic.

6.2 Broadening of Organisational Scope

In general, we might expect that with increasing seniority an academic might contribute to the work of a school (or equivalent) perhaps initially through an immediate work group, go on to contribute at the faculty or institute level and then, in many cases, to University-level activities.

6.3 Increase in Diversity of Activities

The table illustrates the expectation that there may be an increase in the range of activities undertaken as the academic career progresses. A professor will, all things being equal, make internal service contributions in more ways than a more junior colleague.

6.4 Deepening of Impact

Finally, the table also illustrates the expectation that there should be an increase in the depth or significance of impact associated with internal service as the academic career progresses. It is expected that the impact of the staff member’s service activities and outcomes will increase over time. This includes a positive increase in the impact on the individual’s career, the University’s goals and members of the internal University community.

6.5 Internal Service Performance Expectations across the Academic Levels

The following performance expectations draw on academic promotion criteria at the Australian National University.
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<th>Level</th>
<th>Expectation</th>
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<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>A Level A academic staff member is expected to work at the school level with support and mentoring from more senior academic colleagues. He/she is expected to develop his/her expertise in and contributions to research and learning and teaching, and will progressively gain an increasing degree of professional autonomy, within the framework of institutional and organisational unit priorities and performance expectations. Internal service activity is likely to emphasise operational activities and will often be done in partnership with more senior staff members.</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>In general, Level B staff are not expected to have developed a substantial record of internal service contributions and will usually contribute at the local level only.</td>
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| **C** | In general, Level C staff are expected to make effective contributions to activities at the discipline/school and perhaps faculty/institute level and undertake broad administrative responsibilities above the normal expectation for level B. For instance, at Level C a staff member could be expected to, for example:  
  - Contribute to the leadership and/or supervision of other staff including mentoring and professional development  
  - Carry significant and sustained responsibilities in administration e.g. as chair/convenor of committees and working parties  
  - Provide leadership in the development of initiatives for the benefit of the local area or the University  
  - Assist other staff in their own professional and academic development (i.e. through mentoring). |
| **D** | In general, Level D staff are expected to make effective contributions to activities at the discipline/school/faculty/institute levels and for some there will also be University-level responsibilities. Service contributions can be expected to be above those achieved at Level C. At Level D a staff member could be expected to, for example:  
  - Provide effective academic leadership and/or supervision of other staff including mentoring and professional development  
  - Make contributions which involve significant service to the University such as  
    - representing the local area on University committees  
    - Carry substantial and sustained responsibilities in the administration of centres, institutes or schools  
    - Provide significant leadership in the development of initiatives for the benefit of the local area or the University. |
| **E** | In general, Level E staff are expected to be involved in several of the following, over and above the performance expectations at Level D: |
• Provide effective academic leadership and/or supervision of other staff including mentoring and professional development
• Make extensive and effective contribution to University governance and management
• Display scholarly vision and leadership, as demonstrated by contributions at University level
• Foster excellence in professional activities and policy development in the school, faculty, institute and University
• Chair, or make major contributions to, core committees or working parties
• Provide effective resource management

More detail is provided in Academic Senate’s statement on the role of the professor at UTAS.