

Request for nominations to workload focus groups

The Joint Academic Workload Task and Finish Group is jointly chaired by Allan Pacey (Acting Dean FBMH) and Simeon Gill (UMUCU). It has met seven times since Nov 2023.

The group is charged with investigating the workload challenges for academics and to agree an action plan for sustainable change; in particular, it is to establish the drivers of workload challenges and control them.

There will be a series of focus groups in 2025.

- 29 January 15:00 – 17:00
- 5 February 13:00 – 15:00
- 12 February 13:00 – 15:00
- 19 February 13:00 – 15:00
- 26 February 14:00 – 16:00
- 5 March 13:00 – 15:00

We have agreed that the membership of the focus groups should reflect career stages across the academic population. We are aiming for 12 participants from each of the three faculties comprising six people nominated by UCU and six people nominated by the Faculty. The make-up of each group of six should ideally be:

- 1 x Fixed Term Contract
- 1 x L/SL mixed contract type (T&S, T&R, R)
- 1 x R/P mixed contract type (T&S, T&R, R)
- 1 x L/SL/R/P mixed contract type (R)
- 1 x L/SL/R/P mixed contract type (T&R)
- 1 x L/SL/R/P mixed contract type (T&S)

UMUCU would like you to nominate two people and a reserve in each category from each faculty so we can populate the six focus groups. It would be good to have a diverse cross-section from schools and divisions.

The groups will meet in person and will be facilitated by two members of the ER Team. The meetings will be semi-structured around a bank of five questions::

1. **Workload and time management**

What are the time management challenges that make it difficult to achieve the expectations of your role?

2. **Tasks and processes**

Are there tasks that are overly time-consuming or that could be handled more efficiently by other teams or departments?

3. **Workload reduction Ideas**

Do you have any suggestions for how the university could help reduce academic workload?

4. **Technology integration**

Can you think of ways technology could be used to automate tasks or make administrative processes more efficient?

5. **Autonomy**

How much autonomy do you have over your workload and how can your work be made more rewarding and fulfilling?

Next Steps

Please could you register your desire to attend for UMUCU by filling out a form at <https://forms.office.com/e/vDWxXmjzxC>
Or by emailing ucu@manchester.ac.uk with the subject **Workload Focus Groups**, before Dec 2024.

Additionally, employee relations are happy to receive comments from individuals who have a view but may not be able to attend the focus group. Comments can be sent to the employee relations mailbox employeerelations@manchester.ac.uk clearly marked **AW Focus Group Comments** in the subject field.