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SPACE ALLOCATION POLICY DOCUMENT
Revision May 2018

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1.   Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out policy guidelines for the allocation of university space. The policy was initially accepted by UMG in 2004 and the Buildings Committee/Governing Body in June 2004. Revision 1 was approved by the UMT(O).

2.   General Principles

Space is an expensive resource to provide in the first instance and subsequently to maintain (heat, etc.). Space must be used efficiently, allocated fairly, shared as appropriate and used for the maximum benefit of the University as a whole.

The issue of space "ownership" is clarified as follows:

All space is owned by the University, not by individual Colleges/Schools Departments/Centres/Units. Space is allocated to Colleges/Centres/Units based on needs at a particular time. All allocations are therefore "conditional" in the sense that they are subject to review should circumstances change. Space allocation will be monitored on an on-going basis and allocations will be based on up-to date needs only and not on historical allocations.

The allocation of space will be based not only on space norms but also on other space indicators, (e.g. office space/staff FTE, research output) and a room by room assessment of the needs of individual departments.

3.   Process of Space Allocation

Space allocation is the responsibility of the UMT(O). The UMT(O) are assisted in this task by a Sub-Committee of UMT(O) that focuses on space policy, the overall efficient use of space, new capital projects and one-off requests for allocation of space.   The terms of reference and membership of the Space Sub Committee and general principles underlying space management are attached (*See Appendix 1*)

The Space Sub Committee is chaired by the Deputy President & Registrar and involves the Heads of College to ensure strong academic representation and ownership of decisions.

The Head of College/Senior Officer has overall responsibility for the efficient utilisation of the space allocated to the College/Unit. The Head of College/Senior Officer may devolve the day to day allocation of space within the College/Unit to the Head of the individual academic department/school/administrative unit.
Requests for additional space and requests for change of use of space from academic units must be through the relevant Head of College and from other units through the relevant Senior Officer. This should ensure that all options to resolve the issues locally are exhausted prior to reaching the Space sub Committee

3.1 New Building Projects

The briefing process, funding availability and relevant norms inform the allocation of space for new projects. Space schedules for new building projects will be assessed by the Space Sub-Committee, as part of the briefing process of the project design team. It is desirable that new projects, where possible, should provide some benefits (e.g. lecture theatres) to the University as a whole.

4. Specific Policies

4.1 The Central Allocation of Teaching Rooms

There is significant pressure on the existing 151 centrally allocated rooms (typically booked more than 90% of hours 9.00 – 18.00 daily). This has led to problems with finding space for tutorials/one off bookings and has pushed a lot of teaching to peripheral areas of the Campus. In order to maximise the use and ensure room are booked transparently through the room booking (Syllabus +) system, **all** teaching rooms must be centrally allocated. Priority booking may in certain circumstances be given to centrally booked rooms within Colleges/School areas

4.2 Booking of Centrally Allocated and Departmental Space

At present, teaching rooms (i.e. teaching/tutorial) are "centrally allocated" by the Buildings & Estates Room Bookings Office. This has resulted in very efficient utilisation of space on a completely transparent basis (e.g. the web site allows departments to view current timetables and facilitates requests for one off booking when needed). The room timetables are currently posted outside lecture room doors, on a weekly basis, for student/staff information.

Some non-centrally allocated rooms are currently on the Syllabus+ system. Schools/Departments in certain areas provide information on room booking for these rooms mainly to allow students to print a complete timetable. The part population of timetables for departmental rooms is unsatisfactory and there is a lack of transparency in the overall usage of these rooms.

It is recognised that the booking of School/Department rooms should remain with the departments but that other areas could benefit from these rooms when not required by the home School/Department. It is proposed, therefore, that all current non-centrally allocated rooms (i.e. Teaching laboratories /PC laboratories but excluding offices/dedicated Research laboratories etc.) are booked by each home School/Department using Syllabus +. The system is designed to allow limited access for booking sets of rooms by home department timetablers. Training of each department timetabler will be provided by Room Booking Office. This strategy would result in a more consistent approach to timetabling/room booking. It would then be possible for to print the timetables (as for centrally allocated rooms) to allow easy identification of activities planned for each room. Considerable student benefit will result if this approach was adopted (timetables/web-access, etc.). This approach will also facilitate a process of utilisation surveying to ensure that rooms are well used.

4.3 Staff/Resource Rooms

It is recognised that Schools/Departments/Units often require a dedicated room for staff meetings/presentations /ad hoc meetings etc. These rooms will be limited to one room for a large Schools/Department/Units (where this facility currently exists) and otherwise shared between Schools/Departments/Units, in as far as is practicable.   A room of a maximum of 25–30m^2 is considered sufficient.   All rooms with specialist video conferring facilities must be made available to the university community through the Building and Estates website.

4.4 Paper Based Storage Rooms

Given the considerable demand for rooms generally, rooms on campus should not be dedicated for paper storage.

A rigorous approach to the disposal of materials needs to be adopted and any excess storage should be located off site in specialist facilities. The Procurement Office has in place specialist off-site storage facilities which can be accessed at relatively low costs. Storage required under the Records Management Policy should be accommodated in school/department/unit secretariat offices.

4.5   Postgraduate/Research areas

Provision of space for postgraduate students is challenging due to overall space constraints. The requirements of full time research postgraduates will vary for laboratory and non-laboratory based students. For non-laboratory based students it is recommended that shared space be provided at a College or School level. Priority in the allocation of space should be given to senior Research Staff such as Post Doctorate Fellows. Offices should be set out on a minimal regime on a 'hot desk' basis and there should be interdepartmental sharing of space where possible. For laboratory based schools/departments, the research postgraduates will be mainly laboratory based. However, for health and safety reasons, separate write up areas should be provided on the same basis as above.

4.6   Computer Laboratories

The balance between the extent of dedicated and shared Computer Laboratories will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the context of the investment required to sustain and upgrade these laboratories. The University will progressively move to maximise provision of wireless access for laptop use and reduce reliance, where possible, on fixed computer laboratories.

4.7   Provision of office space

The current practice in the University is single occupant office space for full time permanent academic staff. The use of shared space for office accommodation is

becoming more popular internationally. The University will continue to explore efficient ways of meeting the office needs of all staff.

All staff will vacate their office on retirement. Schools/Departments can allocate some shared space under their remit to retired staff in exceptional circumstances subject to ongoing teaching/research activity and approval from their respective College.

Offices of staff on sabbatical research leave should be made available for re-allocation for the duration of the sabbatical except in exceptional circumstances.

4.8 Photocopying Room

It may be required to locate photocopier/printing facilities in separate rooms. In larger buildings, these rooms must be shared by Schools/Departments/Units etc.

4.9 Space Data

The Buildings & Estates Office will maintain a database of all university space. This will record the location and size of space and details of the current allocation. The Buildings & Estates Office will make this information available as required by Colleges/Schools/Departments/Units etc. It will also provide data for use in the Resource Allocation Model which distributes estates costs based on space occupied.