

Space Utilisation Strategy

2017-2023

Introduction

The University manages space via a space policy, the policy is reviewed periodically and approved by UPARC at each revision. The policy dictates the agenda around how space is allocated, rather than how specifically space is operated by any Faculty, School or Division.

Supporting the space policy are standards documents, these are drafted to describe allocations of space required to support university activities and provide opportunity to improve space utilisation, within that specific area.

Aim

Space Utilisation – Finding better ways to utilise our built environment will help reduce environmental impact whilst improving staff and student welfare.

Scope

This strategy covers all space within University owned and leased buildings, excluding residential and external space.

Objectives

1. Academic space standard approved and published.

Academic office space makes up around 20% of total university non-residential useable space, its provision enables the university to house staff working to carry out teaching and research activity. As the university grows it has become apparent there are disparities across the institution, the standard aims to ensure clarity, fairness and reasonable allocations of space to allow teaching and research to take place.

The standard aims to provide a norm level of space allocation and guiding principles to enable resource managers to better manage their space and allow the university to understand the context behind bids for further academic space. It will not necessarily yield immediate space efficiency, but it will enable planning and future growth to take on board current space allocated per FTE staff member.

It is applied to the allocation of space to Faculties and Schools for use as office space to support academic functions, including allocations of space for post-graduate researchers.

Targets

- i. Reduce provision of over-sized, 15m² or larger, single occupancy academic offices through introduction of greater sharing of space as and when opportunities arise.
- ii. Ensure that post graduate workplaces are compliant with workplace regulations (11m³ per workstation).

- iii. The planning of new major academic buildings to feature greater shared, open plan and flexible space, and allowances for single occupancy offices to be defined (and those offices allocated a reasonable level of space).

Timescales

The standard will be tabled for approval by October 2017, implementation of the standard will be continuous until the standard is reviewed. Periodic review of the current policies and standards typically falls into a 3-5-year cycle.

2. Agile Working Implementation across Professional Services

Following approval by Professional Services Leads, a programme of workplace change has been implemented. The New Ways of Working Programme aims to introduce agile working practices across the Professional Services office estate. Driven in part by the expansion of the university and aims contained within the Vision & Strategy much of the current office space allocated to Professional Services is to be relocated to academic and student facing use. In introducing new office accommodation away from the main University City campus there is an opportunity to review ways of working to promote greater effectiveness and efficiency.

The programme, in terms of space utilisation only, aims to reduce the total amount of space allocated per FTE professional staff member. Additionally, once the programme is fully rolled out, there will be greater ability for staff to work from any location, enabling opportunities for working from home, accessing work from satellite locations and being able to attend meetings using technology

Targets –

- i. Reduce total office space allocated per FTE Professional Services staff below 10sqm per FTE by 2020.
- ii. Implement agile working practices across 3 major professional services buildings (Augustine's Courtyard, 31 Great George Street and 1-9 Old Park Hill) by January 2019.

3. Maintaining sufficient teaching space capacity

Teaching space capacity is placed under considerable constraints as the university grows and cohorts of teaching programmes change, whilst the development of the university will mean new teaching spaces will be developed, it is important to keep the level of accommodation provided appropriate.

Utilisation of teaching space is the expressed rate of frequency of bookings and occupancy levels of rooms. Management of utilisation ensures that steps are taken to best match up the needs of the university timetable in scheduling and the observed usage of those rooms. The university undertakes an audit of the centrally managed teaching space annually and reports on its usage.

Targets –

The target level of utilisation for any single year is 35%, composed of an overall frequency of 70% and an occupancy level of 50%. As the estate changes, it might be that this level is exceeded or undershot from time to time, as new buildings are brought on stream and student numbers are increased on programmes.

Target utilisation is 35%, the outcome of the annual audit of teaching space is currently reported to the Higher Education Statistics Agency as a part of the Estates Management Return. Over any period, the target will be 35%, variations from the observed reported target will be reflected on in terms of the changing estate.