

Interim Space Allocation

Introduction

1. It has become clear that the absence of any formal space allocation policy is causing considerable concern across the University. Deans of School, Deans of Students, Directors of Resources Administration and Campus Facilities Managers have requested a formal policy to determine space allocation in an equitable and transparent manner, with an equally transparent methodology which can be utilised in consultation with staff.
2. The development of a full space allocation policy will take time and will demand that best practice in other Universities and commercial operations is investigated and that a policy which suits Middlesex University specifically is evolved.
3. This interim policy therefore sets out:-
 - The principles and direction the full policy will take once developed;
 - The current space allocation principles; and
 - Responsibilities and authorities for space allocation within Estate and Facilities Services.
4. Both the full and interim policies must start with the key principle that all space is owned by the University and management of this space is administered on behalf of the University by Estate and Facilities Services. There is no school or service owned space.
5. This paper sets out to identify space allocation practice, not to determine the quality of spaces. This will be determined within the University's Estate Strategy and there will obviously be a strong correlation between available resource and the time taken to upgrade the whole estate to a consistent quality.
6. It is also important to recognise that space is a finite resource and every demand for additional space, new staff offices or changes to space may not be able to be met. Funding constraints and the inevitable time delays mean that forward planning will be essential and all Deans of School and Heads of Service should recognise this and liaise with Campus Facilities Managers to assess what space is available in developing their staffing strategies.
7. Finally, the outcome of all the space monitoring, auditing and allocation work by the Campus Facilities Managers and the central timetable team will enable for the first time an empirical basis upon which to assess priorities and inform the capital programme.

Full Policy Principles and Development

8. In a time of ever declining units of resource, it is imperative the University makes the best use possible of all of its assets, including its estate which is valued at £110m. New building is expensive compared to re-modelling existing space. Optimising the use of existing assets should mean reduced capital expenditure and reduced revenue costs through not heating, cleaning, paying rates on, insuring and maintaining new space.

9. The implementation of a strict space allocation and management policy will enable the University to adequately house all non-student based activities in well serviced office accommodation and generate the maximum possible amount of space for teaching and student support areas.

10. All of these objectives will take time to achieve and will be dependent on available resource.

11. The full space allocation policy will draw together the factors set out below to determine space available to central school administration and staff offices and corporate services. Centralised timetabling using full scheduling will ensure equitable and more intensive use of teaching space. The factors arriving at staff office and central administration space allocation will be:-

- School and service staff levels and number of fractional appointments (minimum one desk space per four fractional appointments even if fractions less than 1.0 FTE, otherwise one desk space per 1.0 FTE);
- Any activities which have exceptional space demands;
- School research activity;
- General space availability and intensity of use on each campus;
- Adjusted school credit point loading per campus (to take into account demands of subjects which require technician or other specialised support which would not be representative if office space were allocated purely by unadjusted credit point loading);
- University set space norms and targets;
- School/Service future development plans;
- Policy on office sharing;
- Corporate services tending towards open plan and centralisation on one campus;
- A desire to achieve approximately equal intensity of use across all campuses;
- Space use for external agencies and income generating activities eg. conferencing;
- Any special circumstances agreed by the Head of Estate and Facilities Services; and
- Continually reviewing the need for and potential benefits of charging for space and introducing space charging if it is felt appropriate.

12. The general principle surrounding the allocation of teaching space will be that all activity which can reasonably be centrally scheduled through the timetable systems will be. It is acknowledged that some space will be either so intensively used by a school or be for such a specialised use that it can sensibly be managed by a school or service. In all cases records of use should be maintained by the school or service and once the new *ad hoc* room booking system is introduced, bookings should be recorded on this.

13. It should also be borne in mind that available hours extend from 8.30 am to 9.30 pm Monday to Friday and will almost certainly in future extend into the weekend. Future policy will be to ensure that all options of better utilisation of available teaching hours have been explored before any new building takes place.

14. *Ad hoc* room bookings for all space will be controlled through the Campus Facilities Manager's office on each campus. No school or service owned meeting rooms will be permitted, unless specifically indicated by the Head of Estate and Facilities Services. This will include teaching and meeting rooms within Learning Resources Centres.

15. Full space audits of room use will be carried out randomly by Estate and Facilities Services.

16. The total allocation of teaching space to schools, including agreed school managed timetabled space and *ad hoc* room bookings will be analysed against space norms which will be set and informed by:-

- Historically set HEFCE space norms;
- Evidence of space standards for directly comparable activities in other Universities;
- Head of Estate and Facilities Services approvals to variances for quality improvements, acknowledged differentials achieving excellence or any other ‘special pleadings;’ and
- Occupation rates revealed by space audits.

17. A full policy will be set by 31 August 1999 and reviewed every three years.

Interim Space Allocation Principles

18. The absence of a formal policy requires interim measures against which space allocation, especially of staff offices for schools and services, can be undertaken and the following methodology. All interim policy should follow the broad principles and objectives set out above.

- No staff member should expect an office and may be required to ‘hot desk’ where such facilities are available. This may be modified where Deans of School define an intensively research active member of staff for whom office facilities are required;
- All staff should expect to share an office where office size permits;
- Office allocation for schools on each campus will be based on their percentage of the total adjusted credit point load delivered across the campus;
- The tendency for corporate services will be for open plan accommodation. The Head of Service only (or head of sub-service elements in larger services) may have an expectation of their own office;
- In open plan space, a target occupancy of not exceeding 8 square meters per person will be set;
- Changes to the use of teaching space will be judged on a case by case basis until the full policy is approved and implemented; and
- There will be no school or service owned meeting rooms, all rooms to be booked through the Campus Facilities Manager’s office.

Responsibilities and Authorities Within Estate Services

19. Campus Facilities Managers will be responsible for:

- Space allocation in accordance with policy;
- Balanced and equitable use of space across the campus;
- Zoning campus office space and teaching space in a rational system which reflects the organisational structure of staff activities;
- Questioning perceived inefficient use or under utilisation of space or office occupation not complying with policy;
- Provision of adequate quality space for all activities, especially teaching space, within resource constraints;
- The provision of furniture and equipment for classrooms and staff offices within resource constraints and provision of advice on purchasing and legislative compliance for furniture where others are purchasing it;
- Planning the accommodation of new staff with schools and services; and
- Liaison with the Head of Estate and Facilities Services over any Minor Works necessary to accommodate improved space utilisation.

20. The Accommodation Systems Manager will be responsible for:-
- Developing and reviewing the full space allocation policy;
 - Collating and managing central space use statistics for the University, and where applicable information gathered from other institutions;
 - Taking an overview on the information these statistics produce and informing policy decisions; and
 - Providing information to Campus Facilities Managers as requested to assist in their duties as described above.
21. The Head and Deputy Head of Estate and Facilities Services will be responsible for:-
- Informing the strategic direction of the space implementation policy;
 - Resolving disputes over policy implementation by Campus Facilities Managers;
 - Ensuring equitable and transparent space allocation practices across all campuses;
 - Ensuring that space allocation issues for both office and teaching space inform the capital and maintenance expenditure programmes; and
 - Monitoring and implementing opportunities for improved use of space, enhanced or shared facilities with associate colleges, schools and other partner organisations where practicable, appropriate and cost effective.

This policy statement was approved by Management Team at its meeting on 15 June 1998. It is due for review in August 1999.

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