School of Environment, Education and Development [SEED]
Core Hours Policy

The School of Environment, Education and Development has a core hours policy which is applicable to all staff, including PGR students in their role as Teaching Assistants.

Summary

- Where practicable all Departments and Professional Services [PS] teams will adopt a core hour policy of 10am-4pm. All 'Core' activities (as defined below) should be arranged to take place within this period.
- When scheduling core meetings and events consideration should be given to school holiday periods, where practicable.
- Where activities are not 'Core', organisers should still endeavour to promote inclusivity insofar as is practicable, including checking participant availability prior to setting a time and date and not scheduling recurring meetings/events routinely on the same days of the week.

What are the aims of a Core Hours Policy?

- Having a core hours policy ensures core meetings and engagement events (forums, boards, research seminars, standing committees, team meetings) are held at times of day that can accommodate differing working schedules and caregiving responsibilities.
- The aim of the policy is to reduce barriers to involving all staff and avoid the systematic exclusion of those with caring responsibilities.

What constitutes 'Core' activity?

- 'Core' activity refers to meetings, activities and events that take place at the level of an organisational unit. Examples of such a unit may include Research and Scholarship Group meetings/seminars, Departments (e.g. fora or working groups), and the School (e.g. committee and PS team meetings).
- 'Core' activity does not include teaching activities that can take place between 9am and 6pm (e.g., lectures, seminars or the supervision of PGR students). 'Core' activity does not include large events that occur infrequently and are arranged in some cases outside of the school (e.g., away days, annual lectures, celebration events or graduation ceremonies). Nevertheless, we recommend that care is given to ensure these are as inclusive as possible even when not 'core'.
- 'Core' activity does not include meetings between colleagues that do not take place at the level of a formal organisational unit (e.g., meetings between colleagues to discuss the preparation of a grant application or teaching preparation for a particular module, PGR supervisory meetings that should be decided on collaboratively between supervisors and students around all of their availability).
- This policy does not change the PS flexi-time policy (for those on Grade 5 and below) if applicable.

How should this policy be applied?

- When arranging a meeting, consideration should be given as to whether it constitutes 'Core' activity (as described above). If so, then the meeting should be arranged so that the entire duration falls within the hours of 10am-4pm.
- If the meeting does not constitute 'Core' activity it is fine to arrange this either within or beyond core hours. However, staff arranging such meetings should still be mindful of the impact that timing may have on colleagues. Those arranging meetings should check availability prior to setting meeting times (e.g. with a Doodle Poll) to avoid those with caring responsibilities having to raise the issue after arrangements are in place.
- Large, infrequent events (e.g. inaugural/annual lectures) that are not classed as 'Core' activity, and cannot take place between 10am and 4pm, should be announced with at least 6 weeks' notice so that colleagues can arrange replacement care, etc. as required.
- Consideration should also be given to part-time staff, or those who for disability related reasons require reasonable adjustments, who are unable to attend meetings/seminars even when scheduled within core hours, and how they will be included in discussions or receive the information. Systematic exclusion must be avoided. For example, organisers might vary the time and/or day on which departmental meetings or seminars are held so that individual part-time staff do not miss out every time.
- On occasions when seminars are held outside of core hours for purposes of taught student engagement, approval must first be sought from the relevant Head of Department, with a clear justification indicating that the core policy has been considered.

Document control box	
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Related Documents	SEED guidance on email use: Guidance on sending emails, Teams messaging and work-life balance (The University of Manchester)
Related guidance and or codes of practice:	PS Flexitime Guidance: Flexitime and Annualised Hours Schemes Guidance (The University of Manchester) SEED Tips for inclusive meetings
Related information	Academic Flexible Working [in conjunction with timetabling]: Flexible Working Arrangements | Collaborative Timetabling | StaffNet | The University of Manchester Teaching Availability Arrangements | Collaborative Timetabling | StaffNet | The University of Manchester
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Lead contact:	Director of School Operations