

Academic Currency and Professional Development Policy for Associate Lecturers

1. Principles

The University recognises that it is critical to the delivery of student learning that Associate Lecturers keep up to date with developments in their academic fields and stay current with the curriculum content. Associate Lecturers will therefore be granted time for Academic Currency and Professional Development. Time must be used in the year it is granted and may not be carried over into the next year.

Academic Currency refers to time allocated in an Associate Lecturer's (AL) workload allocation to allow them to maintain their academic currency, understood either as discipline or pedagogic knowledge/skills, or development required for other elements of the wider AL role. This time divides into two kinds:

- Associate Lecturer-led academic currency
- Agreed academic currency and professional development

Any changes to this policy will be agreed with OUBUCU.

2. Associate Lecturer-led Academic Currency

Use of this time is self-directed by the AL, and may include reading around their subject, keeping up with the latest developments in their field, following up on independent study carried out by students following up on subject-related student queries, developing and updating their teaching strategies and tutorial materials, etc.

ALs will be allocated six days per annum (pro rata) AL-led academic currency time

3. Agreed Academic Currency and Professional Development

Use of this time is agreed annually by an AL and their line manager. It may cover, for example, attending a faculty development day, a general staff development day, preparing to teach a new module in one's field, preparing for involvement in new curriculum areas or reasonable development for other elements of the wider AL role.

ALs will be allocated one day, plus five days pro rata, per annum for Agreed Academic Currency/Professional Development time.

4. Compliance Training

This refers to time for professional development and training falling outside of the maintenance and development of subject-related and HE pedagogic expertise. It may cover external compliance training (e.g. GDPR, Prevent), and internal IT systems training (e.g. eTMA system training, essential Adobe Connect training).

Time for these activities will be allocated in one of two ways, either:

- (a) within an AL's contracted hours if the AL is below their FTE on their core teaching duties (e.g. if they have below average student numbers on a module) or if they are below their contracted FTE because one of their regular and recurring 'additional duties' (eg. such as monitoring or exam verification), included in their FTE, will not be needed in a particular year; or
- (b) additional to an AL's contracted FTE, with additional payment if the AL has no spare capacity in their allocated teaching duties.

5. Practice Tuition

ALs will be allowed two days additional staff development time per year if carrying out practice tuition work. An additional payment or hours allocated within FTE will be required for this in each workload year.

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Policies are inclusive of all Open University staff, regardless of age, care experience, caring status or dependency, civil status, disability, family status, gender, gender expression, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnership, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or trades union membership status.