
BIOLOGY WORKLOAD CREEP REPORT

Biology Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee | University of St Andrews

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SUMMARY

1. This report summarises findings from the Biology Workload Creep Survey of staff undertaken in November 2022. It explores staff perceptions of their workload, including how it has changed over time and the impact of those changes on their well-being. It also considers whether workload imbalances arise from protected characteristics and makes specific recommendations to improve working conditions within the School of Biology.
2. The survey comprised 10 questions of which 2 invited free-form reflections on the causes of undesirable workload and suggestions for streamlining workload. There were 70 respondents (31 woman, 32 man, 7 not disclosed). Three quarters of respondents were academic staff and the remaining were professional support staff.
3. The overwhelming majority of respondents report increased workloads over the last three years (87%). Nearly all respondents (also 87%) worked over their contracted hours. A non-trivial fraction (27%) report working extreme hours (>55 hrs/wk or part-time equivalent).
4. Adverse health consequences arose from increased workload for 90% of respondents, leading to formal sick leave for 7 members of staff (10%). Two thirds of staff experiencing serious health consequences from workload do not take formal sick leave, suggesting the possibility of sick leave might be underappreciated by staff and/or line managers.
5. A majority of staff (60%) answered that they “virtually never” take their designated annual leave (i.e. holiday).
6. Only 10 staff identified with protected characteristics apart from gender, precluding formal analysis. After extensive statistical analysis, the survey identified no statistically significant gender disparities in workload, working patterns, or adverse health outcomes arising from excess workload. The findings are discussed in the context of the School of Biology’s specific structure, culture, and survey methodology.
7. We make specific recommendations to alleviate unnecessary overwork. Our guiding principle is that excess work must be controlled using subtractive, not additive, actions. These focus on actions that can be implemented at the School level, but we also make University-level recommendations.
8. The considerable, and increasing, overwork reported by Biology staff has a clear negative impact. Despite similar outcomes across genders, we cannot exclude the possibility that current workloads risk exacerbating disparities related to protected characteristics in the workplace given the low statistical power of our analyses. A key take-away is that the subjective experience of excess work appears intimately linked to increases in *non-meaningful* work. While some level of such work is inherent to any role, the unchecked proliferation of such tasks exposes the School and University to avoidable risks: stress-associated adverse health outcomes decrease productivity and can result in medical leave. Retention of experienced staff is jeopardised by the working patterns we report, and we advocate addressing underlying factors eroding staff morale to continue delivering high-quality teaching and research in our committed, talented workforce.

TERMINOLOGY

Acronym	Definition
BEDI	<i>Biology Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion committee</i>
FET	<i>Fisher's exact test</i>
PC	<i>Protected characteristic</i>
PSS	<i>Professional support staff</i>

Term	Definition
Bureaucracy	<i>"A system of administration marked by officialism, red tape, and proliferation."¹</i>
Non-meaningful work	<i>Work that is peripheral to an employee's main role, which detracts from achieving their career goals, underutilises their qualifications and skills, or is not essential for delivering high-quality teaching and research.</i>
Extreme overwork	<i>Work patterns associated with the most severe categories of response in survey questions, e.g. >55 hrs/week on a full-time contract; virtually always working holidays, weekends, or evenings; virtually never taking full leave allowance.</i>
Moderate overwork	<i>Working between 37.5 - 45 hours/week on a full-time contract or FTE equivalent on a part-time contract.</i>
Substantial overwork	<i>Working between 45 - 55 hrs/week on a full-time contract or FTE equivalent on a part-time contract.</i>
Workload creep	<i>A progressive increase in workload</i>
Workplace norms	<i>Explicit or implicit expectations that govern what is perceived as acceptable behaviour and what are perceived as valued working patterns and outputs.</i>

Initials	Person
NWB	Prof. Nathan W. Bailey (current BEDI Director)
CES	Dr Carol E. Sparling (Deputy BEDI Director)
AJB	Dr. Andrew J. Blight (BEDI Staff Wellbeing Officer)
KNL	Prof. Kevin N. Lala (former BEDI Director)
SKH	Prof. Sascha K. Hooker (former BEDI Director)

¹ Langenscheidt's New College Merriam-Webster English Dictionary. 1998. Langenscheidt KG, Berlin and Munich.

MOTIVATION

A healthy and motivated workforce is vital for a university school's bottom line: high-quality teaching and research. The key deliverables of a university involve generating and transmitting new knowledge and as such cannot be treated as commodities in a university command economy. Upon emerging from Covid-19 pandemic disruptions at the end of 2022, the lead author of this report was installed as the School of Biology's new Director of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. In informal conversations set up with colleagues to learn about staff views of positive practices vs. current challenges with respect to EDI, a common theme emerged. Across all role types, Centres, career stages and personal characteristics, colleagues in private conversation reported crushing workload demands and a recent proliferation of administrative tasks, resulting in de-motivation, stress, mental health concerns, lowered productivity, and with detrimental effects to personal and family life outside the workplace.

Outcomes such as the above can contribute to burnout, which has profound and well-understood costs both to workers and the organisations that employ them.² The organisational and economic costs are particularly well-studied in medical settings.³ For example, estimated yearly economic costs in the United States range from US\$ 2.6 - 6.3 billion.⁴

Concurrently, an unusually high staff turnover was noted over the preceding year (2022), particularly involving technical and professional support staff, arising through staff leaving for alternative positions, taking early retirement, or through deaths in service. Sensing a structural issue that could underpin a variety of EDI-related disparities in career progression and outcomes, the decision was taken to examine the issue of workload formally, qualitatively, quantitatively, and anonymously.

Our goal is to implement genuine improvements in working conditions should this exercise reveal a need for such improvements. An anonymous survey was designed by NWB, KNL and SKH, with advice and feedback from Karen McGregor (university central EDI team), and Prof. Gillian Brown (EDI Faculty lead for Science and Medicine). The survey comprised 10 simple questions, and responses from Biology staff were solicited. Staff engaged well with the exercise. There were 70 respondents and a great deal of consideration went into free-form comments to identify causes of *workload creep* - which we identify as a progressive increase in non-meaningful work - and potential remedies. We express our gratitude for the time and effort 70 respondents to the survey contributed to this report. Our findings and recommendations are presented below.

² Maslach C *et al.* 2001. Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 52:397-422.

³ West CP *et al.* 2018. Physician burnout: contributors, consequences and solutions. *Journal of Internal Medicine*. 283(6):516-529.

⁴ Han S *et al.* 2019. Estimating the attributable cost of physician burnout in the United States. *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 170(11):784-790.

METHODOLOGY

A voluntary survey of 10 questions, 2 of which invited free-form responses, was administered from 14 - 25 November 2022. Participation was sought via advertisements in the weekly School of Biology Newsletter and direct emails to School of Biology staff email lists. The full survey is available in Appendix A.

The survey invited self-reported assessments of weekly working hours and habits (Q1-Q3), workload dynamics over time (Q4), and health impacts (Q5). Using Fisher's exact tests (FETs)⁵, we statistically evaluated gender differences in responses to the above questions using the subset of participants who identified as man or woman. Due to the low number of staff identifying with protected characteristics (PCs) outwith *gender* (13, of which 3 responded "maybe"), quantitative analysis of survey results focused on *gender*.

Reflection on causes of change in workload were invited (Q6) as were recommendations for streamlining (Q7). Individual characteristics were evaluated insofar as we felt capable of preserving anonymity in the event of few respondents. We cannot exclude that working hours were under- or over-estimated or that such skew could associate with PCs or other respondent characteristics. However, there is published evidence supporting the validity of self-reported working hours in corporate and medical contexts.^{6,7}

After detailed consideration during a general BEDI meeting on 01 March 2023, the decision was taken to redact all free-form comments from the public-facing version of this report. This is because participants were invited to provide feedback anonymously so had an expectation every reasonable effort would be taken to preserve that anonymity, but the nature of some of the comments potentially made it possible to personally identify individual members of staff. The aim of soliciting genuine feedback through anonymity was therefore balanced against the desirability of transparency to minimise any risk of retaliation. Where warranted and anonymity could be unquestionably preserved, *verbatim* quotations are highlighted in this report. An un-redacted version of the full report is maintained by the BEDI Director and HoS.

⁵ Fisher's exact tests performed using GraphPad online calculator on 12.01.23 (www.graphpad.com)

⁶ Imai T *et al.* 2016. Validity and reproducibility of self-reported working hours among Japanese male employees. *Journal of Occupational Health*. 58(4):340-346.

⁷ Kronstrom M *et al.* 1999. Congruence between self-reported and actually provided prosthodontic services among Swedish dentists. *Acta Odontologica Scandinavica*. 57(1):9-15.

KEY FINDINGS⁸

PART I: WORKING HABITS

There were 70 respondents. Approximately three-quarters were academic staff and the remainder were professional support staff. Of these, 32 identified as men, 31 as women, and 7 did not disclose gender. Ten identified with PCs apart from gender, e.g. *person of colour*, *LGBT+*, and *disability*, 3 reported “maybe” for this question and 5 did not answer.

Almost all respondents (87%) reported working longer than their contracted hours (Figure 1).

There was no gender difference in reported overworking (FET: $N = 63$, $P > 0.99$). In this report, we identify *extreme overwork* as a full-time employee exceeding 55 hours/week, and a part-time employee exceeding 10 hours/week over their contracted hours. Nearly a third of respondents (27%) fell into this category; among overworking staff, the genders did not differ in reporting extreme overwork (FET: $N = 56$; $P = 0.77$). Over a third of overworking colleagues ($n = 22$) reported *substantial overwork* between 45-55 hours/week or FTE. Again there was no gender difference (FET: $N = 56$; $P = 0.10$).

Almost all staff reported working on evenings, weekends or holidays at least sometimes (91%) (Figure 2a). However, nearly two-thirds (63%) show extreme patterns of holiday working, reporting working on evenings, weekends or holidays “very often”. There was no apparent gender difference in overall holiday working among staff reporting gender identity (FET: $N = 63$, $P = 0.67$). Among those holiday-working staff, there was no gender difference in extreme holiday working (FET, $N = 57$, $P = 0.41$) (Figure 2a). Similarly, 89% of staff do not take their full annual leave allowance, with 60% virtually never taking it (Figure 2b). There was no gender difference in staff who always took full annual leave (FET: $N = 63$, $P > 0.99$), and of those staff not taking all allocated leave, men were marginally more likely to virtually never take their designated leave, though the effect is unlikely to be meaningful (FET: $N = 55$, $P = 0.05$). Nearly all staff (87%) reported increased workload over time, with no gender difference (FET: $N = 63$, $P = 0.47$) (Figure 3b).

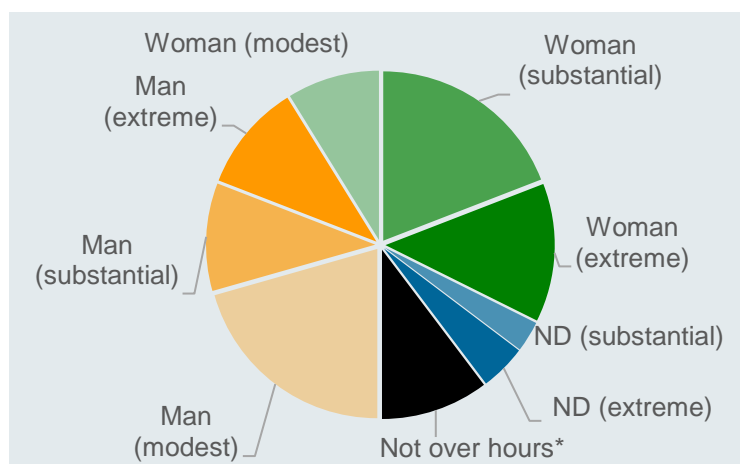
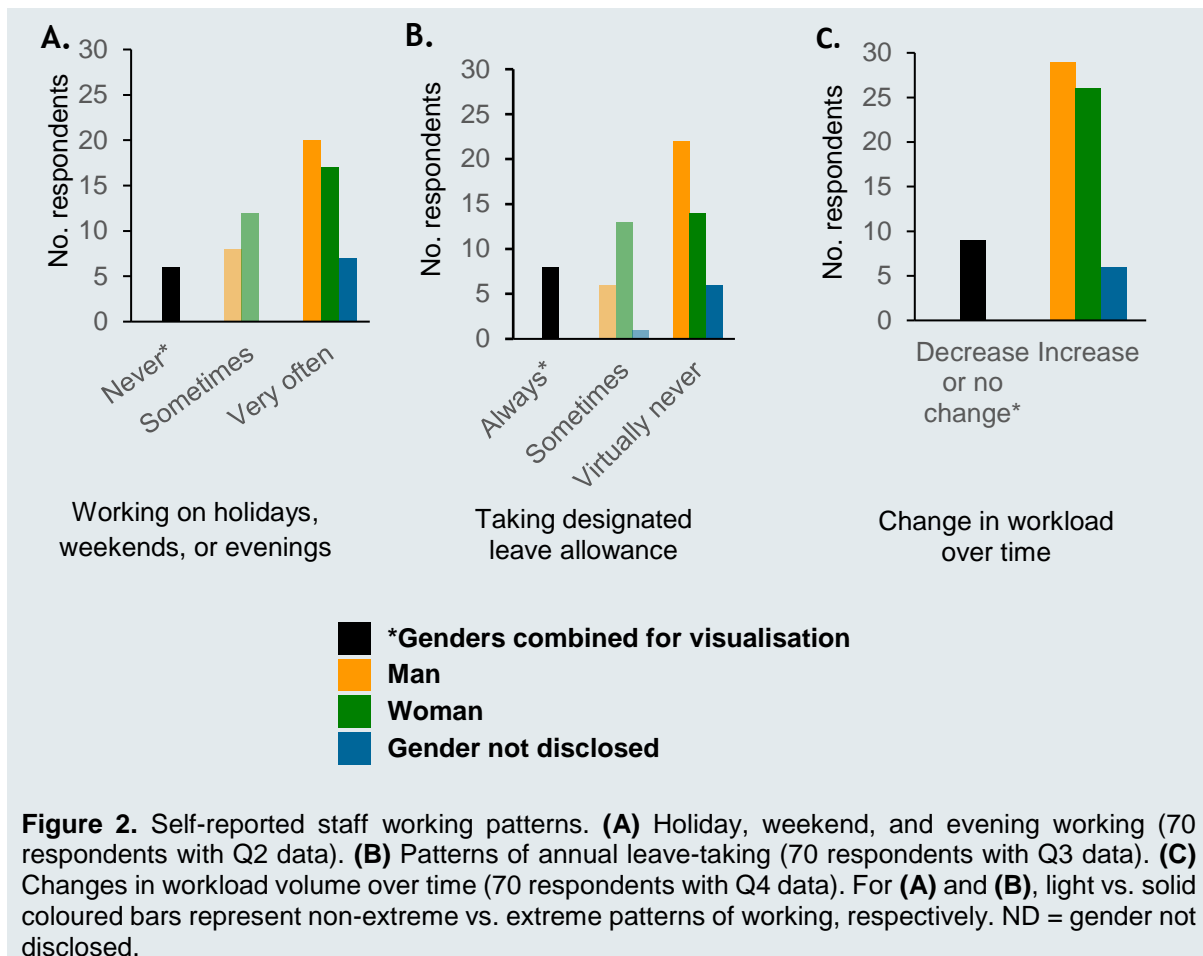
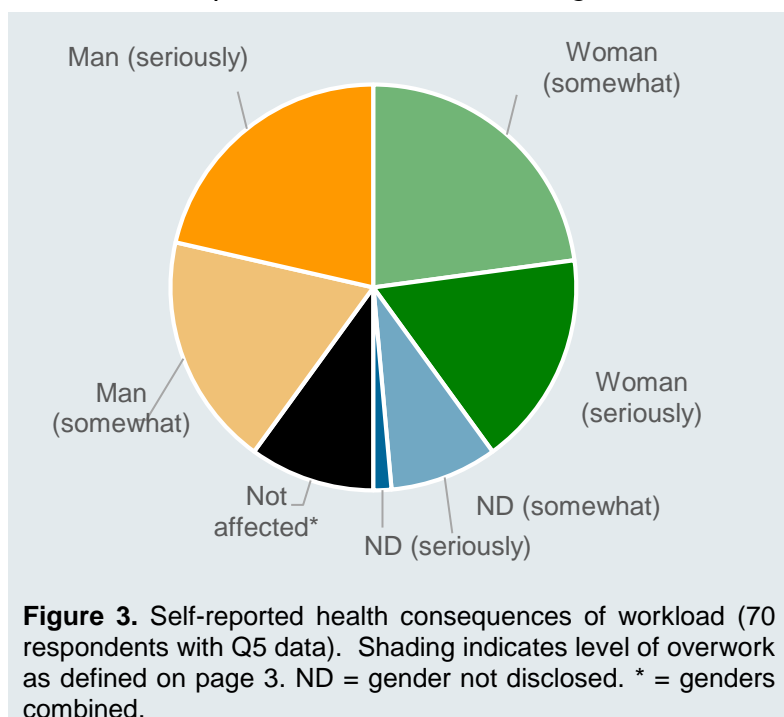


Figure 1. Self-reported staff workload (68 respondents with Q1 data). Shading indicates level of overwork as defined on page 3. ND = gender not disclosed. * = genders combined.

⁸ All survey data are available as a supplementary .csv file archived on the University of St Andrews Pure Repository: <https://doi.org/10.17630/0c80dd00-8752-49b9-93cc-81b1dd7d6787>



Staff reported a range of physical and mental health consequences arising from their workloads, from being unaffected to serious impacts that resulted in taking sick leave, and nearly all staff (90%) reported adverse health effects (Figure 3). Half of respondents reported mild health effects, whereas 40% reported serious consequences. It is noteworthy that three-quarters of those staff experiencing serious health consequences did not take sick leave, suggesting that the detrimental consequences of an increased workload are largely hidden from line managers, colleagues, and students. We did not detect gender differences for any of these outcomes (Fisher exact tests: all $N = 63$, all $P > 0.593$).



PART II: FREE-FORM FEEDBACK

Survey Q6 asked respondents to reflect on causes of increased workload and Q7 sought suggestions for specific actions that would alleviate workload creep. Teaching-associated tasks were the most commonly-mentioned factor underlying increased workload. To explore colleagues' perceptions of the underlying factors driving increased workloads, particularly in non-meaningful work, we identified four recurring themes in free-form responses to both questions: *Teaching*, *Support*, *Reporting Systems*, and *Workplace Norms*. Appendices B and C list every free-form answer to Q6 and Q7, respectively, sorted into the above categories. These are fully redacted for confidentiality purposes in public-facing versions of this report.

After assigning each question to one of the four themes, NWB, SKH, and KNL discussed the feedback to obtain key insights from Q6 and key recommendations from Q7. The process was necessarily qualitative and subjective, informed by our personal and professional backgrounds. Following our meeting, a draft of this report was shared with the BEDI committee and feedback on recommendations was solicited. These were discussed and refined at a BEDI meeting on 01 March 2023, and the report finalised with input from CES.

Several themes emerged in respondents' reflective commentary. The first is a shared belief that increases in workload neither add to delivering the core mission of the university, nor contribute positively to employees' career goals. The proliferation of such *non-meaningful* work was met with perplexity, exasperation, anger, or resignation. It was recognised that academics often

"Workload has always been very large, and has always required working well beyond any sort of designated work hours. It is simply not possible to do the job of an academic within the designated work hours. The issue now is more one of what is done within these very long hours - less time is now spent on research activities and delivering teaching, and more time is spent on administration to support teaching as well as building/School operations."

work unconventional hours because they believe in the value of their contribution. However, this value was perceived as eroded, in some cases resulting in unhealthy stratification within the School whereupon tasks are passed around without consideration of whether they are necessary. As an example, bureaucratic overload was recurrently mentioned in the context of teaching, including excessive second marking, provision of tutorials that students do not attend, increasing demands on lecturing staff to coordinate room bookings and interact with multiple online reporting systems that have accumulated in an incoherent fashion over time.

A second take-home message was the strong emphasis respondents placed on workplace culture, or *workplace norms*. There was a sense that working life would be easier if responsibilities were not so liberally distributed downwards and laterally. Comments relating to workplace norms were nuanced, some recognising that most staff are similarly overworked so may have little choice but to displace expanding bureaucratic demands. However, other comments conveyed a perception that some staff behave as freeloaders. We feel it is important to stress that these are perceptions, not established facts. Some staff may genuinely work less than what is expected for their grade, but others may have

the means to place firmer boundaries around their own workload to protect their careers, health, or family life. The freedom to maintain such boundaries may be related to career stage and contract precariousness; those on fixed-term contracts or with roles answering directly to university management may find it too risky to say ‘no’. The fact that some staff assigned blame to colleagues in free-form comments is concerning regardless of whether it is justified or not: if it is, then there are workload disparities that need to be addressed; if it is not, then there risks developing a culture of blame and resentment. If the reported absolute working hours are approximately correct, one disturbing implication is that a staff member could be working significantly more than their contracted hours, including weekends and holidays, and could be experiencing negative health effects, and yet might still be registered as below the mean in the School’s workload model, and consequently approached to do more by the School management. These circumstances place the staff member and management in a very difficult position.

“Complete lack of managerial oversight of workloads with no effective action from management to address workload imbalances not just for those who do too little (poor value for money) but most importantly to help those who do too much to actually reduce their loads.”

All but one of our analyses indicated no gender disparity in staff workload patterns or workload-related consequences, and surprisingly few free-form comments mentioned protected characteristics. The one gender disparity was that men were more likely to virtually never take holidays. Nevertheless, it is important to interrogate the lack of gender differences in the specific context of staff working within the School of Biology at St Andrews, and in view of methodological limitations. Our data may reflect gender differences in self-reporting style. These have been documented in the literature⁹ but would be impossible to detect given our methodology. Survey respondents are by definition a self-selecting group, and it was also possible that non-respondents have different experiences of workload-related concerns but are invisible to our survey method.

Too few respondents identified with PCs unrelated to gender for meaningful statistical comparison. It does not follow that this small group of respondents do not experience different workload outcomes. There is evidence in the literature to suggest they are *more* likely to experience adverse effects in the workplace arising from bias.¹⁰ Thus, given the low numbers of staff reporting PCs, this report should not be interpreted as demonstrating a lack of EDI-related workload disparities for other PCs. The School of Biology has achieved an Athena SWAN gold award and is highly engaged and attuned to EDI issues, but multiple respondents argued strongly that Athena SWAN initiatives were cosmetic “badging” exercises which actually contributed to excessive volumes of non-meaningful work.

“[P]lease do stop sending those surveys to make us look good for Athena Swan or whatever other paper badge we’re chasing. We also don’t need any more sticking plaster attempts that are cosmetic without actually addressing the fact that we’re all being asked to do more from every corner of the school/ university”

⁹ Jatrana S. 2021. Gender differences in self-reported health and psychological distress among New Zealand adults. *Demographic Research*. 45:693-726.

¹⁰ Owens B, *et al.* 2022. Work-related stressors and mental health among LGBTQ workers: Results from a cross-sectional survey. *PLoS ONE*. 17(10): e0275771.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The total amount of work expected of staff in the School is not possible for that number of staff in the designated hours. This requires us to develop a ‘subtraction culture’, where we accept that we need to reduce the absolute volume of work and are actively looking for ways to do so. Remedy cannot solely be addressed by modifying the workload model. We should be asking what aspects of the job can be removed.

Most all work-related tasks have beneficial qualities. However, the trade-off of negative impacts on staff and student sometimes far outweighs these. Staff opinion will inevitably vary regarding the importance or benefits of particular items of work and will vary depending on staff role, but our guiding principle is that efficiencies must be made to protect the health of our workforce and our ability to deliver excellent teaching and research. This report makes 10 specific, non-exhaustive recommendations:

1. Lead by example.

Senior management should reduce obligations placed upon colleagues. Senior managers, the Teaching Office, and research group heads should be empowered to challenge the status quo for themselves, but it is important that they do that on behalf of colleagues and students they manage. This is particularly important for line managers of PSS. As an example, it is strategically important to place healthy boundaries on work towards charter awards: our activities should be driven by the goal of increasing equality, diversity, and inclusion, not the award itself. It should be seen as reasonable to ask: Is this meeting necessary? Can I call someone on the phone rather than exchange multiple emails? Do I need to send this email out-of-hours? Is this task necessary?

2. Eliminate bSET - Biology Tutorials.

The most frequently mentioned aspect of teaching seen as contributing to workloads which could be eliminated are tutorials. Over a quarter (26%, $N = 18$) of respondents mentioned tutorials in Q7, and this likely represents an under-estimation of the extent of academic staff concern about tutorials due to the distribution of respondents (ca. 75% research and teaching vs ca. 25% PSS). The following are extracts from numerous free-form comments on the topic: “BSET tutorials - drop”, “[T]he current set up of BSETs do not help anyone including students”, ““BSET” tutorials ... are of dubious benefit”, “[S]crap tutorials”, “An easy way of reducing workload is to eliminate tutorials.” The data unambiguously demonstrate that a large number of staff resent the current arrangement, feel it is not an efficient use of their time, and perhaps most importantly, feel that the tutorial system

“Get rid of BSET tutorials. I don’t know how they have been justified for so long. Certainly it must be possible to cherry-pick students to give positive feedback, but it won’t be representative. Having us do resumes and such (when most have not worked in the real world for decades if at all) is dumb. Especially when the university employs people who are expert in this sort of thing. Other activities are not much better. It is micky-mouse work and the students are smart enough (sic) to be able to tell that it has been put together to justify the tutorials, not because there was useful material that needed delivering and tutorials were a good way to do it.”

delivers little of educational value to our students. The observation that attendance is low (or non-existent) implies that many students feel the same way. It must be acknowledged that the recent review of tutorials failed to address the problems. Given the widespread assessment that these tutorials do not contribute to our core mission of teaching excellence enough to justify the immense workload associated with them, we recommend that they be disbanded. Care must be taken to avoid negative unintended consequences, such as decreasing useful staff-student contact that can form the basis of future letters of reference. Any skills thought to be critical can be taught by a single staff member to a large class, greatly enhancing the efficiency of delivery and reducing staff stress and resentment.

3. Increase capacity for administrative and IT support and provide clarity for PSS.

We recognise ongoing efforts to rationalise professional support staff roles and responsibilities, but we also acknowledge dissatisfaction that has been expressed by PSS about these efforts. There are only two ways to alleviate PSS workload: hire more PSS, or subtract or streamline existing tasks undertaken by current PSS. There are several areas of particular and increasing urgency: the School should provide more administrative support for timetabling, entering grades, setting up Moodle, and lecture capture (when it is desirable or necessary). This might be accomplished by hiring more PSS, or it might be accomplished by reducing the necessity of such tasks in the first place. Professional support staff require clarity from line managers about their roles, and healthier boundaries on what tasks they are vs. are not required to undertake.

4. Make lecture capture voluntary until it is fully automated centrally.

There are good reasons for lecture capture, but in practice staff spend hours every week recording lectures that may rarely if ever be viewed, and must manually correct IT technology that is buggy, fails frequently, and is not well-integrated with other systems such as Moodle. This has led to widespread resentment and job dissatisfaction. There are circumstances in which lecture capture serves important EDI goals, and we reinforce the School's commitment to those here. It is important to ensure accessibility, and University policy¹¹ on the use of recording devices explicitly permits those students, and only those students, authorised by Student Services on the basis of reasonable adjustments owing to disability under the UK 2010 Equality Act, to record lectures using their own devices. However, we note that the University's current lecture capture policy¹² does not address these; it currently mandates the use of e.g. Panopto lecture recording in all cases excluding only two extremely narrow exceptions. The only way to alleviate workload associated with lecture capture is therefore to deliver a formal recommendation to the Assistant Vice Principal (Dean of Learning and Teaching) to make lecture capture voluntary, rather than compulsory, or fully automate lecture capture as is done at other comparable universities.

5. Reduce the amount of assessment, especially second-marking.

Second-marking not only takes time to do, it takes time to arrange and administer which can add to PSS workload as well as academic staff workload. As an example, Senior Honours

¹¹ <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/policy/academic-policies-learning-and-teaching-recording-devices-in-lectures-and-tutorials/use-of-recording-devices-by-students-in-lectures.pdf>

¹² <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/policy/academic-policies-learning-and-teaching-lecture-capture-policy/lecture-capture.pdf>

literature reviews comprise 10% of students' final mark for the SH module, yet every report is double-marked. We advise that Module Organisers review the second-marking load associated with work on their module, and streamline or eliminate it wherever possible. Staff should feel empowered to remove items of continuous assessment; less but more focused assessment will benefit all staff and students alike.

6. No longer offer *ad hoc* School visits to prospective students.

Coordinating *ad hoc* visits is extremely inefficient for the potential benefits, and entails workload for academics participating in the visits as well as PSS involved in coordinating logistics. We recognise arguments for using these visits to address widening access goals, but as noted above assess the benefits to be very marginal, and severely outweighed by the negative impacts on staff in terms of reduced time and focus for teaching and research priorities.

7. Reduce PGR interviewing.

There is evidence that in-person interviews are an environment and form of assessment in which bias is more likely to arise; this observation has informed the wider University's recent moves to omit in-person interviews during promotion applications. We advise not interviewing postgraduate applicants, and instead making decisions based on paper applications, *with the proviso* that prospective supervisors take an early and active role in speaking directly with applicants. This shifts the burden of assessing conversational, presentational, and other skills via face-to-face meetings to supervisors and removing it from PG Recruitment committees.

8. Provide greater flexibility to drop or change roles.

To increase job satisfaction there needs to be more flexibility to drop *ad hoc* roles; this includes service roles taken by academic staff as well as committee roles taken by PSS. Currently staff can get stuck with undesirable/unrewarding jobs for far longer than is optimal. Biology EDI have developed tenure and turn-over guidance for common School roles; this should be revised and awareness raised with staff regarding their ability to request role changes. Role tenure should be more explicitly considered during annual reviews.

9. Reduce the number or expected commitment for named roles.

Named roles potentially have a generative effect on workload: their existence implies an unfilled need for work, which can lead to the delegation or creation of more tasks than existed before. The establishment of deputies for most committees and centres may have helped distribute workload, but these should be minor 'stand-in' and sounding-board positions rather than positions with additional workload. An unintended consequence appears to be that some deputies take on greater responsibility than is warranted by the formal recognition they receive. Senior Management within Biology should undertake a systematic review of all named roles within Biology to establish whether the number of expected commitment for these can be reduced.

10. Improve workplace norms around workload.

A proscriptive approach is unlikely to encourage consensus on shifting workplace norms, but many small positive actions by members of staff in leadership positions can cumulatively shift workplace norms around workload. For example, the Biology EDI group's guidance on out-of-hours emailing should be advertised more widely, and encouraging PIs and MGMT across all roles to apply a "send delay" on emails written on evenings and weekends would help convey the message that private time off work is respected.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report recognises the challenges faced by the higher education sector and acknowledges that many of these pressures arise externally. It also recognises the ongoing restructuring of PSS in the School of Biology. Cost:benefit analyses should be undertaken to determine whether new initiatives will lead to long-term benefits; in some cases it is possible to precisely quantify actual staff working hours for different options and we note that the outcomes of these exercises may be counterintuitive. Support from the Biology Teaching Office and HoS will be vital.

It is possible to make work tasks within the School of Biology more efficient in a way that benefits everybody, though it may require a change of perspective and careful management to provide reassurance that everybody's contributions are valued. The change of perspective is that students should not be put first at the expense of staff. Doing so may lead to short-term benefits, but we are now observing what we believe to be the outcome of long-term accumulated negative impacts on learning, research and wellbeing across virtually all members of Biology staff. It is our conclusion that decreasing workload will cause *greater* student satisfaction, by focusing the finite energy and attention of staff on the learning experiences and contributions to knowledge that genuinely matter to students.

APPENDIX A

1. Please estimate how many hours of School/University/Academic work you have on average done each week over the last year:

- ☐ My contracted hours with part-time contract
- ☐ Greater than 10 hours more than my contracted hours, with part-time contract
- ☐ 37.5 – 45 hours
- ☐ 45 – 55 hours
- ☐ More than 55 hours
- ☐ Approximately 37.5 hours with full-time contract

2. Reflecting on the past 3 years, please tick the most accurate box: Working times (beyond contracted hours, or flexible working arrangements):

- ☐ I never work evenings, weekends and/or holidays
- ☐ I sometimes work evenings, weekends and/or holidays
- ☐ I very often work evenings, weekends and/or holidays

3. Annual leave (i.e. holiday):

- ☐ I always take my full designated annual leave allowance
- ☐ I sometimes take my designated annual leave allowance
- ☐ I virtually never take my designated annual leave allowance

4. Workload volume:

- ☐ My workload has decreased
- ☐ My workload has not changed
- ☐ My workload has increased

5. Physical or mental health:

- ☐ My physical/mental health has not been affected by my workload
- ☐ My physical/mental health has been somewhat affected by my workload
- ☐ My physical/mental health has been seriously affected by my workload, but I haven't taken any sick leave.
- ☐ My physical/mental health has been seriously affected by my workload, and I have taken one or more periods of sick leave.

6. If you believe your workload has changed in volume, what do you think is the major cause of this?

Enter your answer

7. Are there School-level tasks that you feel are particularly time-consuming and/or, from a cost-benefit perspective, could potentially be streamlined or dropped? Do you have any practical suggestions for how workloads in the School could be reduced, or prevented from future increase? Please specify.

Enter your answer

8. Which gender do you identify with

- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

9. Do you fall into one or more of these protected characteristic categories: person of colour, LGBT+, disability?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ Prefer not to say

10. Are you?

- ☐ Professional and support staff
- ☐ Academic staff

APPENDIX B

TABLE REDACTED

APPENDIX C

TABLE REDACTED