

# Policy Framework for College Space

## PURPOSE

Provide clarity on College policies related to Space, and a single clear point of reference for navigating specific policy areas, core principles that all Space policies will observe, and the overarching, College-wide strategic goals related to Space.

Moreover, provide an integrating policy framework that:

- Makes clear how mutually reinforcing policy items relate to each other; and
- Makes the case that these policy items be treated as a logical whole; and
- Explains how exceptional situations that arise are to be treated

This document was approved at the November 2016 meeting of Provost's Board.

## STRATEGIC GOALS AND SCOPE OF SPACE POLICY

The strategic goals of this Space Policy Framework are:

1. Promote wide access to safe and shared spaces that support the academic mission
2. Enable substantial student growth without detriment to student experience
3. Alleviate, as a primary objective, the worst disparities of student and staff experience related to physical space used primarily to deliver Education
4. Increase overall utilisation of teaching spaces, with particular emphasis on facilitating access to the most scarcely available space resources
5. Preserve ability for Departments and Divisions to project identity on to shared rooms embedded in the space they utilise, whilst maintaining access to that space for other users
6. Provide to all students and staff of the College visibility and suitable access to all shared spaces

The scope of this policy is all Core College Space used by the College for delivery of the Academic Mission including spaces owned by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties (e.g., NHS locations).

The spaces that are outside the remit of this policy are:

- Non-Core Property held within the College Endowment
- Property held by White City Campus Development designated as Non-Core

## PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO ALL ASPECTS OF COLLEGE SPACE

The overarching College view about our space is articulated through a mutually reinforcing set of guiding principles that we aim to adhere to. These principles describe *“how we want to be”* and provide an empirical guide to all decisions about the planning, allocation, use and broad management of our Core College Spaces.

These principles are designed to inform the vast majority of decisions and trade-offs that arise as a consequence of the core Academic Mission demand for scarce space, and in particular spaces suitable for Education. The principles are:

- a. **The Academic Mission has primacy:** Space provided by the College and occupied by students and staff is a critical enabler of the Academic Mission, and that mission – along with statutory obligations – takes primacy in all decisions considering the use of College Core Space.
- b. **Imperative to diversify and strengthen income generated by College space:** Increasing and diversifying income from physical space – in particular in periods between academic terms and outside teaching day – is a legitimate and valuable contribution to enabling the Academic Mission.
- c. **3rd party income is for College investment:** Shared spaces not otherwise booked for Teaching, Research (including research conferences, workshops, seminars) or College business (including 3<sup>rd</sup> party mission aligned events) will be used to generate College income from appropriate 3<sup>rd</sup> parties. This income will not be generated at the expense of the Academic Mission, and will be centrally administered and reinvested.
- d. **Department Identity is important and will be cherished:** The physical, cultural and discipline characteristics that comprise each Academic Department are greatly valued by its members, and contribute to the diverse strength of the College. This “strength in diversity” should nonetheless be seen in a context in which Shared Space embedded in Academic Departments will be available to other members of College.
- e. **All space is College space:** Academic Departments and Academic Support Divisions require access to sufficient space to carry out their respective roles: this provision enables the use of space in pursuit of the Academic Mission without conferring ownership.
- f. **Space will be supported in a coordinated, professional way:** The wide range of support disciplines involved in provision of effective space will collaborate to coordinate delivery of their services across central and department led teams. In particular, provision of space related services will be focussed on the end-user experience.
- g. **Good stewardship of space will be promoted:** Academic Departments and Support Functions host a wide and varied range of shared and communal spaces within their allocated physical space and will provide good local stewardship of that space; and in particular ensure the maintenance of access to the room and to ensure that the room and its equipment is left in its agreed default configuration.
- h. **‘Scarcity’ drives the prioritisation of space that is in high demand:** Use of shared space that is scarce as a consequence of high demand will be prioritised to maximise the overall utilisation of that space and will drive future planning decisions about space. A practical timetabling example of this is that teaching rooms that are designated scarce will be allocated to teaching events on a best fit basis in the first instance, within a framework mindful of, and sympathetic to, Departmental preferences where possible.<sup>1</sup>
- i. **Disparities in the staff and student experience will be minimised:** Recognising the wide variety, age and condition of College spaces – and in particular shared spaces –

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<sup>1</sup> Timetable construction and maintenance will be sequenced and coordinated to ensure that the best aggregate outcome for Students, Lecturers and College is achieved in each annual cycle. Please refer to the subsidiary Academic Timetabling policy for further detail on how teaching room scarcity will be determined and allocated.

the alleviation of the worst disparities of student and staff experience is a priority, with the aim of promoting an excellent experience for all.

- j. **Good stewardship of space related processes, information and data:** Information and data about physical spaces and their usage is a valuable College asset, and a critical enabler of: timetabling, scheduling of academic conferences and events, scholarly endeavour needing quiet space, and booking rooms for College business. As such, it is the expectation that staff who create and/or manipulate data about College spaces and their usage will ensure timely, accurate and provident information in all systems and data repositories. Process owners will similarly be expected to provide transparent, accurate and complete information about space.

### **Prioritisation and escalation**

Any disputes can be escalated to the Provost as the College Officer responsible for the delivery of the academic mission, or to a delegated authority.