

# University of Cambridge core business in core hours guidance

## 1. Context

*'The University of Cambridge is committed in its pursuit of academic excellence to equality of opportunity and to a pro-active and inclusive approach to equality, which supports and encourages all under-represented groups, promotes an inclusive culture, and values diversity.'* Equal Opportunities Policy (2011)

The following Guidance sets out the principles to be followed, and provides information on good practice, to support staff and institutions in implementing the University's Equal Opportunity Policy in relation to promoting an inclusive culture.

The University recognises that many staff, those working flexibly or for work-life balance reasons (those with caring responsibilities, preparing for retirement and other grounds), may be unable to attend essential meetings if scheduled too early or too late in the day.

## 2. Status and Eligibility

This guidance is not University policy, does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change. It is not intended to remove any current protections afforded to employees under their contracts of employment or under existing legislation or other local arrangements agreed by the University and trades unions.

## 3. Aim of this guidance

The aims of this guidance are:

- to promote an inclusive environment;
- to promote a supportive learning, working and social environment in which all members of the University feel that they are valued and can work to their full potential;
- to ensure that important meetings are accessible to the greatest number of staff, to support, for example, the dissemination of critical information and avoiding unintended exclusion of some staff.

#### 4. Meetings and events inside core hours

Under this Guidance, core hours are defined as the hours between 10.00 am and 16.00. However, these core hours may differ between departments or units dependent on operational or other needs.

Most meetings, and particularly regular meetings that deal with the core business of the University and/or its schools/departments/units/institutions should normally take place during core hours, wherever possible. This would include, for example, all regular committee meetings, staff meetings, departmental seminars, away days and research group meetings.

Regular social events should ideally take place on different days of the week so that all staff, whether part time or full time, have the opportunity to attend. While social events are often held in the late afternoon or early evening, consideration should be given as to whether such events can occasionally take place during core hours.

This guidance does not apply to teaching. Departments, faculties and academic staff are free to arrange their teaching outside core hours. It does not extend to arranging times to meet colleagues and/or students within or beyond core hours, as long as this is by the free agreement of the parties involved.

The University also acknowledges that there can be occasions (e.g. presentations by job candidates in combination with an interview panel) where the logistics are such that the set of meetings cannot reasonably fit into core hours.

#### 5. Meetings and events outside core hours

If one-off or occasional events held during the academic year are organised outside core hours, these should be announced with plenty of notice (e.g. at least six weeks) so that colleagues can, for example, arrange child or other dependent care. This includes, for example, research group residential events/courses.

#### 6. Scope and responsibilities

This guidance has been developed with all staff in mind. This guidance does not, however, apply to meetings that involve external staff as their own commitments may not make it possible for them to attend meetings during core hours.

All University staff will be made aware of this guidance at induction. Details of the guidance will also be distributed to departments, faculties, centres, institutes and units and be made available on the HR website.