

014000S05 Office/Workstation Space Guidelines for Academic, Research and Academic Support Functions

Overview

These space guidelines for office and workstation spaces are intended to enable academic, research, and academic support units to more efficiently and consistently assign space when planning renovations or new construction or when relocating employees within existing spaces. The guidelines were developed in light of guidelines used by other public universities and in light of the space scarcity on the UK campus. Specific programmatic requirements and existing building construction conditions may require deviation from the guidelines when objectively justified and approved by the Provost.

Background

The background information below is intended to shed light on the need for, and opportunity presented by, more efficient office space allocations.

- According to the most recent (2008) update of space needs by the Council of Postsecondary Education, the University of Kentucky has a total academic space deficit of approximately 1,000,000 square feet. And state support for construction of new buildings has been declining over the past decade. With these continuing difficult economic times (called the “new normal” by some), it is very unlikely that new construction will relieve this extensive deficit for a number of years to come. Each existing square foot has ever increasing value to the institution.
- Not only is it simply good stewardship, it is mandatory that every existing square foot be both efficiently assigned and productively used. Our existing space is our only avenue to strategic growth and program improvement.
- With several other Kentucky higher education institutions and state agencies competing for any state construction funds, institutions that have taken clearly identifiable space efficiency actions better position themselves for funding. Such actions demonstrate good stewardship and validate a real need.
- Typically, offices are the single largest use of space on university campuses, comprising approximately 25% of all space (excluding auxiliaries). On our UK campus, office space exceeds classroom, class lab, and research lab space combined.

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- This vast inventory of office space contains considerable variation in office sizes allocated to similar type positions/functions. This variation is due to a number of reasons, some dating back to architectural design of the 1800's, but some continuing today in campus renovation and construction projects due to a lack of space guidelines and variation in project design environments.
- Applying space guidelines, in concert with an ongoing emphasis on utilization, will expose the hidden capacity in existing spaces....capacity available for growth and for positive change. The Education Advisory Board (a private entity in Washington, D.C. serving higher education leadership) interviewed 100 institutions regarding space utilization. The exemplary institutions interviewed estimated that a 30% increase in activity can be accommodated within current space. Such would indicate a significant hidden capacity to launch distinctive programs and accommodate strategic growth within current space assets.

Guidelines table of space types and sizes

- See table comprising the last page

FAQs

- Do these guidelines apply to all areas of the University?
- Why do we need office and workstation space guidelines?
- How are the guidelines to be used?
- How were the square footage figures determined?
- Can my unit have its own set of office space guidelines?
- My office is smaller than the recommended square footage. Can I use these guidelines to get a bigger office?
- My office is larger than the recommended square footage. Does that mean my office is going to be reduced?
- Can our new offices be built larger than the guidelines if available space will accommodate them?
- The guidelines recommended that some positions be allocated only 30 square feet. How is that possible?
- I am in a private office, but according to the guidelines, I should be in a shared space. Does that mean I must share my office?
- Though the guidelines indicate my position type may not warrant a private office, can I get a private office if I settle for less space?
- Are the types of positions listed in the guidelines intended to encompass official UK job titles or classifications?

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Do these guidelines apply to all areas of the University?

These Office Space/Workstation Guidelines apply to on-campus academic, research, and academic support units only; though other units of the University are encouraged to use them.

Why do we need office space guidelines?

Six reasons:

- A. A very real space scarcity on campus impeding growth.
- B. The high costs of new buildings (including construction, maintenance, and energy) and the “new normal” of reduced state funding for all three costs.
- C. The need for consistency in resource stewardship project-to-project and unit-to-unit.
- D. The need to use technology, off-site storage, work procedures, and good workplace design to increase the FTE per square foot.
- E. Implementation of space efficiency initiatives better positions the institution for state construction funding.
- F. The need to reallocate existing space to strategic growth initiatives and necessary program improvement.

How are the guidelines to be used?

For existing buildings: The Provost Office of Resource Management will use these guidelines when planning space reallocations, relocations, and renovations to meet campus space needs. Units should use these guidelines to move office space assignments towards the levels of efficiency reflected herein. Units are encouraged to compare the guidelines and their existing spaces when seeking solutions to their pressing space needs.

It is acknowledged that applying the guidelines will create even more workstation space disparities within units and between units. This phase of increased disparities is an unavoidable step towards more consistency and efficiency.

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For new buildings and renovations: Facilities Management will use the guidelines when working with units and architects in designing space renovations and construction.

How were the square footage recommendations determined?

The square footage recommendations were based on a review of the guidelines used by 30 other universities (including the 19 UK benchmarks), the Society for College & University Planning, and the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education. Consideration was also given to the traditional norms used at the UK Medical Center, where space has been constrained for several years. In addition, consideration was given to the institution's current space deficit, projected space needs, and the requisite level of efficiency. These space allocations assume good workplace design and technology utilization.

Can my unit have its own set of office space guidelines?

Yes, academic units are encouraged to have space guidelines that are tailored to their functions and specific buildings. However, unit-level office space policies or guidelines should align with these Office/Workstation Space Guidelines. The alignment of unit policies needs to be reviewed by the Provost Office of Resource Management prior to issuance.

My office is smaller than the recommended square footage. Can I use these guidelines to get a bigger office?

Given the varying ages and architectural designs of our buildings, not all office spaces will fit the recommended square footage. Each unit must work within the constraints of current campus buildings when allocating office space. Building modifications in older buildings may not be cost-effective if only limited space is gained.

My office is larger than the recommended square footage. Does that mean my office is going to be reduced?

Reducing the size of a single office is ordinarily not cost beneficial, unless the divided space can accommodate an additional employee or work function. But the department may reassign this large office to house two persons, or may modify a larger area of space to repurpose the extra space inside this office.

Due to the scarcity of space, some costly modifications may still be cost-beneficial since space is a recurring expense and space scarcity a recurring

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burden. Though both are limited resources, funding may not be as limited as space.

Can our new offices be built larger than the guidelines if the available space will accommodate them?

New building footprints and existing space conversion projects can sometimes offer more space to a unit than is currently needed by that unit's employees. In such cases, the guidelines need to still be followed and designated "future office" and "future workstation" areas provided by the project.

The guidelines recommend that some positions be allocated only 30 square feet. How is that possible?

The recommended square footages for shared spaces specify the total amount of office space that should be dedicated to any one person. It does not necessarily mean the actual size of the office or cubicle will be 6 feet by 5 feet; though it could be. For example, a department should designate a cumulative 120 square feet for four temporary or rotating positions (30 square feet per person); this space may or may not accommodate all four persons simultaneously, or a single desk may be all that is needed beyond what is provided nearby.

I am in a private office, but according to the guidelines I should be in a shared space. Does that mean I must share my office?

Office space assignments are made at the department level. Departments with pressing office space needs are encouraged to refer to these guidelines to help resolve issues and bring their allocations in line with these efficiency levels, while working within the constraints of current campus buildings. If a space solution can not be identified, a department may place two people in an office that previously housed only one person. Or persons may be moved into open workstations to accommodate growth by increasing the FTE per square foot.

Though the guidelines indicate my position type may not warrant a private office, can I get a private office if I settle for less space?

No. The construction of a private office is costly and it renders the space less flexible for future work/organizational changes. Walls also compromise desirable teamwork with colleagues. On the other hand, open workstations are particularly space-efficient and flexible. If needed, a shared private consultation room can be provided.

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Are the types of positions listed in the guidelines intended to encompass official UK job titles or classifications?

No. The types of positions listed in the guidelines do not reflect official UK job titles or classifications. They are listed strictly for the purpose of showing the relationship between role, space type, and net assignable square feet. The information is only to be used when making office space related decisions.

Multiple Offices

Assignment of multiple offices for faculty and staff is strongly discouraged, unless there is a true demonstrated need and reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Faculty with joint appointments and persons supervising staff in multiple buildings may be assigned a smaller secondary office/workstation; provided it is not located within the same building, or an adjacent building, to the primary office.

Exceptions to the guidelines

Exceptions to the guidelines as applied to academic renovation and new academic construction projects must be reviewed with the Provost Office of Resource Management at 257-1063.

For More Information

For more information on the Office/Workstation Space Guidelines, contact the Provost Office of Resource Management.

Guidelines table on next page.

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**Office/Workstation Space Guidelines Table
(See associated narrative and FAQs)**

NOTE: The types of room occupants listed below do not reflect official UK job titles or classifications. They are listed strictly for the purpose of showing the relationship between role, space type, and net assignable square feet (NASF). The NASF allowance does not include office support spaces shared by the office group.

Types of Space Occupants	Space Type	Recommended NASF Allowance
Administrative Support Staff	Some Shared Office, Most Open Workstation	80
Dean	Private Office	300
Dean, Assistant	Some Private, Some Shared	100
Dean, Associate	Private Office	225
Department Chair	Private Office	200
Director ¹	Private Office	150
Director ¹ , Associate or Assistant	Some Private, Some Shared	100
Faculty, Consulting or Visiting	Some Shared Office, Some Open Workstation	80
Faculty, Emeritus (active)	Some Private Office, Most Shared Office, Some Open Workstation	80
Faculty, Emeritus (non-active)	Some Shared Office, Most Open Workstation	30
Faculty, Full Time ²	Private Office	120
Graduate Student Instructor	Some Shared Office, Most Open Workstation	30
Graduate Student Research Assistant	Some Shared Office, Most Open Workstation	30
Lecturer, Fellow, Research Assoc., Visiting Scholar	Some Shared Office, Some Open Workstation	80
Manager	Some Private Office, Some Shared Office, Some Open Workstation	80
Manager, Unit Administrative ¹	Most Private Office, Some Shared Office	120
Professional Staff, Administrative ¹	Some Private Office, Some Shared Office, Some Open Workstation	100
Professional Staff, Technical Support	Some Shared Office, Most Open Workstation	80
Provost	Private Office	350
Provost, Associate	Private Office	225
Temporary or Student Staff	Some Shared Office, Most Open Workstation	30
Vice President	Private Office	250
Vice President, Associate	Private Office	225

¹ Assumes direct supervisory responsibilities including annual performance reviews of direct reports.

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² Some disciplines will require larger offices when those spaces must house items such as large musical instruments or stationary 3-D models. In cases where faculty DOE indicates low office use, smaller or shared office space may be appropriate.