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Introduction and purpose

The pursuit of excellence in research and teaching requires a constant review of accommodation to cater for new and developing initiatives. The UNSW Workspace Standards is designed to assist in managing existing space and provide a framework for configuring new and modified space.

Successfully managing the quantity, quality, functionality, compliance and location of UNSW’s space will directly lead to better research and teaching outcomes.

The UNSW Workspace Standards sets out key principles for planning workspaces at UNSW. These principles should be applied when:

- defining proposals for new space
- defining proposals for refurbishment works
- defining proposals for additional space
- reviewing existing space allocations

The principles outlined in this standard will be used as criteria for evaluating accommodation proposals.
Accommodation Planning

The Location of Spaces

➤ Vertical & Horizontal Relationships

Buildings should be designed with active or public uses on the ground and lower levels. This allows high volume visitors easy access, maximum visibility to public spaces and options to separately secure the higher floors. Horizontally these principles apply in relation to the proximity of uses to the major access points.

In regards to UNSW, vertical patterns of usage are to locate staff and higher degree students on the upper floors and undergraduate or university wide functions on lower floors. Examples of usage patterns are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Floors</th>
<th>Ground or Lower Floors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff work areas: offices, workstations</td>
<td>Learning and teaching spaces: lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, studios, workshops, tutorial rooms, informal study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research spaces: laboratories</td>
<td>Research spaces: vibration sensitive laboratories, bulky equipment laboratories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service or operational spaces: student services, receptions</td>
<td>Social, public or retail spaces: public spaces, retail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Space Standards – General

- Balancing needs and resources

In the interests of balancing the need for appropriate accommodation with the resources needed to build, maintain or reconfigure space, UNSW wishes to standardise the allocation of space.

The following standards have been adopted by UNSW.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of School or equivalent</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>12-18m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Levels B-E</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>10-12m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Fellow, Post Doctorate Fellow</td>
<td>Dedicated open plan</td>
<td>6m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Associate</td>
<td>Open Plan</td>
<td>6m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Technical 10+</td>
<td>Open plan (typically)/Office (demonstrated need)</td>
<td>6m²/10-12m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Level A</td>
<td>Open Plan</td>
<td>6m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting and Emeritus Academics</td>
<td>Dedicated Open Plan</td>
<td>6m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional &amp; Technical Staff Level 1-9</td>
<td>Open plan</td>
<td>6m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>Open Plan</td>
<td>6m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Research Students</td>
<td>Open Plan</td>
<td>3m²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions:

- Circulation space is excluded
- Allocations are based on full time equivalent positions or students
- Ancillary, support or storage: defined case by case, should be always minimal, centralised and shared
Space Standards - Research Laboratories

- Discipline-based
- Maximise utilisation
- Flexible
- Separate but co-located write up

Laboratory and Studio Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>16m²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Staff</td>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>8m²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDR Student</td>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>4m²</td>
<td>Only for duration of active experimental work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honours Student</td>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>2m²</td>
<td>Typically allocated for a short period of time during experimental work only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Drawing Studios</td>
<td>Teaching studio</td>
<td>4m²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All others e.g. Honorary,</td>
<td>Laboratory or studio</td>
<td>0m²</td>
<td>Must utilise existing resources with the consent of the Dean. There is no entitlement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>companies, consultancy work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumptions – as per Office and Open Plan Standards, plus:

- Laboratory space is calculated by adding the allocation for each person using the space e.g. an academic with four PhD students would be allocated 32m² of laboratory space (16m² + 4x4m²). This is in addition to the office and open plan allocations.
- The standards are for high level space planning. They apply to staff or students who actively need research laboratory space only.

Research Laboratory allocations vary considerably based on discipline and must ultimately be based on demonstrated need. The guidelines in this document are for use in early planning stages only to estimate gross space requirements.

UNSW aims to maximise the utilisation of its laboratories. New laboratories should be designed to service a field of research where all staff in that field utilise the laboratory. Ideally bench space will form a pool to be allocated, reviewed and vacated by groups based on demonstrated needs.

The design of laboratories should allow for flexible reconfiguration of the space and reasonable future growth potential in equipment. The cost versus benefit of flexibility should be monitored at all times.

Office/Write up space must be separate to the laboratory space and is included in the general allocations. There is a preference for such space to be immediately adjoining the related laboratory space with good visual connection. The space should not duplicate other dry space available to a staff member or student i.e. if an office/workstation is provided, additional write up is not required.
**Typical Workspace Examples**

Office Example (18m²)  
Office Example #1 (12m²)  
Office Example #2 (12m²)  
Shared Office Example (12m²)  
Open Plan Example (6m²)  
Open Plan Example (3m²)

**UNSW Resources**

➢ **Maximise the utilisation of existing UNSW resources**

Every effort should be made to utilise existing UNSW resources where available. Projects should consider the context in which they are situated and not duplicate functions which can be sourced from existing facilities.

**Communal Resources**

➢ **Shared via online booking**

Communal resources for a building must be shared to avoid duplicating spaces and increase utilisation. In particular, items like conference/seminar rooms must be for the whole building even if branded for marketing reasons. The adoption of a centralised email/calendar system at UNSW allows conference and meeting rooms to be electronically booked by any staff member. It is expected that existing and new communal rooms be added to this system where they need to be booked.

Communal resource examples: common rooms, conference/seminar rooms, gallery spaces, meeting rooms, kitchen or tea rooms, copier rooms, service or information counters
Design Considerations

A workspace should be inviting and conducive to carrying out the tasks a staff member or student needs to undertake. The exact design of an area is usually resolved with an architect, taking due consideration of the user’s needs, intended use, the existing conditions and the available budget. Listed below are some overarching principles of you should consider when proposing works at UNSW.

**Accessibility**
- Equal access for all

There are specific codes that cover the design of areas but your initial concepts can also influence the outcomes. Is there existing level access to an area you are considering? Where are disabled parking spots located? Where are the lifts located relative to the room? Communal facilities in particular need careful consideration.

**Security**
- Balancing security with access and visibility

Security can be provided via a tiered approach. This can involve layers such as ‘whole of floor’ controlled access, lockable offices and then lockable storage as required. Passive security is a concept where areas are made ‘visible’ and regularly populated so that there is a passive deterrent to unwanted activity.

Highly secure areas can have negative side effects which need to be managed. They can impede passive security, public perception of a space and reduced staff interaction with other units. Secure areas can also cause difficulties for both able and disabled users of the building where they cut circulation routes.

**Future Flexibility**
- Generic facilities can be the most flexible

Designing standard size offices and workspaces results in significant future flexibility. As an example, academic promotion by merit means that the ratio of senior to junior academic staff is constantly changing. Designating different sized offices based on seniority is consequently impractical. The same concept applies to workstation areas.

Laboratories, teaching or similar spaces tend to have more variance making flexibility more difficult to achieve. Nevertheless one can consider to what degree a ‘standardised’ fit out of the space is possible. Reviewing the intended uses and identifying infrequent functions which require specialist facilities can be beneficial.

**Environment**
- Environmental leadership at UNSW

UNSW aims to be a leader in environmental and sustainability issues. The design of spaces needs to give consideration to the environmental impact of the associated construction works, the ongoing operation and maintenance of a space. Operationally, the use of natural light and ventilation is the basis for all new designs unless investigations require alternatives.

Access to natural light and air are issues often raised by users of spaces. Traditional models locate offices on the periphery of a space which can create an isolated central core. UNSW prefers to locate offices inboard with open areas on the periphery and use selective glazing which preserves privacy yet shares light, air and views to the maximum extent.

Request for air conditioning are considered on a needs basis within the following constraints. It is difficult, costly and disruptive to install air conditioning into buildings not originally designed for it. This is especially true for one off installations so UNSW prefers to retrofit air conditioning, if required, when whole floors or whole buildings are being refurbished.

**Visibility**
- UNSW encourages visibility of its achievements

Where appropriate to the function, maximum visibility of a unit is encouraged by UNSW. UNSW is a public institution and opportunities to highlight the teaching and research we undertake should be factored into designs.