Service Level Agreement
between the Space Planning Office and the University of Waterloo

Purpose

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement ("SLA") is to establish a shared understanding between the Space Planning Office ("SPO") and the University of Waterloo ("Waterloo") regarding the administration and stewardship of university space and to ensure that students and employees are provided with suitable, functional, and effective space to support teaching, learning, research, and administrative activities, in alignment with the Campus Plan and institutional priorities.

SPO is responsible for maintaining the University's official space inventory and providing expert analysis and recommendations related to space allocation, utilization, and long-range planning. Oversight for this function resides within the portfolio of the Associate Vice-President, Academic Operations (AVP-AO).

Objectives

The objectives of the SLA are to:

1. ***Clarify Roles***

   Define the respective roles and responsibilities of SPO and other units on campus, including the Faculties, Academic Support Units (ASUs), the Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIWs), ancillaries and satellite campuses in managing space, recognizing and reinforcing that space is a shared institutional resource to be managed collaboratively and in alignment with institutional priorities.

2. ***Establish Service Expectations***

   Define the services provided by SPO, including their scope, governance processes, timelines and expected outcomes, to ensure a clear, consistent, and predictable service experience.

3. ***Improve Service Access***

   Provide clear processes and points of entry for space-related requests, enabling campus partners to understand how and when to engage SPO.

4. ***Support Space Planning***

   Encourage early engagement with SPO and the use of reliable data, analysis, and expertise to support space-related decisions, including updates to the space inventory.

5. ***Strengthen Continuous Improvement***

   Establish processes that support workload management, identify opportunities for service improvements, and address service gaps (e.g., misunderstandings, incomplete requests, duplicated efforts).

6. ***Promote "One Waterloo"***

   Promote collaboration, transparency, consistency, and proactive planning in the management of university space.

Scope

SPO provides services to Waterloo units, including Faculties, ASUs, Campus Housing, and satellite campuses. AFIWs manage their own space allocations and assignments and are therefore excluded from most SPO services. However, SPO maintains the official space inventory for all Waterloo facilities, including AFIW facilities.

Service Inclusions

SPO is responsible for maintaining the University's comprehensive space inventory database and, as such, holds direct and indirect responsibility for the assignment, utilization, reporting, modification, analysis, and evaluation of space across the main campus, satellite campuses and leased spaces.

Space is managed as a shared institutional resource and allocated on a long-term, campus-wide basis to support the University's mission and priorities.

The following services outline the SPO's role in managing and supporting university space:

- **Allocation of Unassigned Space**. Unassigned space is institutional space that becomes unoccupied due to various reasons such as relocations, reorganizations, or program changes. Unoccupied space is classified as "unassigned" within the space inventory system and is held centrally by SPO, the AVP-AO, and the Vice-President, Academic and Provost (Provost) until reassignment is determined. Requests for unassigned space are assessed by SPO, who provides recommendations to the AVP-AO.

- **Reassignment/ Temporary Reassignment of Space.** Deans and department heads/VPs have the authority to reassign space within their respective faculties or departmental units. SPO approval is not required for internal reassignments. In addition, temporary transfers of space may occur within or between faculties and departments, with or without SPO involvement.

  However, where space reassignment involves multiple faculties or units, or where mediation is required, SPO will provide support to facilitate discussions and prepare formal space agreements.

  To ensure proper documentation and tracking, all reassignment arrangements - including duration, purpose, and any associated renovation considerations - must be submitted to SPO.

- **Requests for New or Additional Space.** Requests for new or additional space must first be addressed internally within the requesting faculty, ASU, or ancillary service. Only when all internal reallocation options have been exhausted—or where requirements are significant—should a request be escalated to SPO.

- **Requests to Vacate and Release Space.** Units may seek to vacate, or release assigned space due to relocations, restructurings, program changes, or operational adjustments. Upon receipt of such requests, SPO will conduct a comprehensive review, including consideration of:

  - Future institutional use and strategic value
  - Physical condition and readiness for reassignment
  - Decommissioning requirements
  - Scheduling and operational implications
  - Financial implications

Not all space is suitable for reassignment. Requests to release space may be declined where the proposed release would result in operational inefficiencies, fragmentation, or limited institutional value. Examples of requests that may not be approved include:

- Individual offices located within an otherwise occupied suite
- Small or non-contiguous pockets of space
- Areas located within secured or restricted-access environments
- Spaces dependent on shared infrastructure or support functions
- Arrangements that create fragmented occupancy or reduce utilization efficiency
- Releases that negatively affect departmental cohesion or long-term planning objectives.

The University reserves the right to deny requests that do not provide meaningful institutional benefit or that create ongoing operational challenges. In such cases, the requesting unit will retain responsibility for the space until a broader strategic solution is identified.

Vacated space must be returned in a condition suitable for reassignment or redevelopment, as agreed upon with SPO. Units remain responsible for their assigned space until formal turnover has been completed and accepted.

- **Classroom Management.** SPO supports the planning, renovation, fit out, and equipping of centrally scheduled classroom space.
- **System Integration Support.** In collaboration with Information Systems & Technology (IST), SPO supports requests to integrate data from Archibus[1] into software managed by other units.
- **Data Requests.** SPO supports requests for space-related data generated from Archibus.
- **Project Management.** SPO provides Project Management (PM) services, typically related to construction projects or small renovations. Requests are generally received from Academic Support Units (ASUs) and may include requests for funding from the Provost, but PM services may also be provided to any faculty or unit across campus.
- **Relocation Support.** SPO provides organizing and planning support for relocations from one space to another. This may include project management services to coordinate and integrate all teams required to support the relocation, such as Central Stores, IST, Plant Operations, and other relevant campus partners.

For information on how to access these services see Appendix A.

Service Exclusions

The following exclusions apply to this agreement:

- **Furniture Management.** SPO does not manage furniture surplus, disposal, procurement, purchasing, delivery, installation, or storage. While furniture requirements may be considered

[1] https://uwaterloo.iwmsapp.com/archibus/schema/ab-core/views/navigator/ab-navigator.axvw

when assessing space requirements or planning a new space, requests related to obtaining, removing, storing, or disposing of furniture should be directed to the appropriate unit.

- **Building Maintenance.** SPO does not submit, track, or manage routine building maintenance requests on behalf of departments. Issues such as lighting, temperature, plumbing, electrical, building finishes, doors, or other maintenance concerns should be submitted directly through the appropriate Plant Operations process[2].
- **Building Code Inquiries.** SPO does not provide advice on or interpret building codes, fire codes, accessibility requirements, occupancy regulations, or other technical/code-related matters. These questions should be directed to Plant Operations.
- **Storage Services.** SPO does not arrange, manage, or provide storage for furniture, equipment, records, supplies, or other materials. Requests for storage should be directed to Central Stores[3].
- **Official Cost Estimates.** SPO does not provide official or formal cost estimates for construction, renovation, furniture, relocation, or other project-related work. SPO may provide high-level space-planning information or preliminary planning assumptions that can help inform a project, but formal cost estimates should be prepared by Plant Operations.
- **Key Requests.** SPO does not coordinate or submit key requests for spaces that it does not manage. Key issuance, changes, replacements, and access-related requests should be directed to Key Control[4].
- **AFIWs.** AFIWs manage their own space allocations and assignments and are therefore excluded from most SPO services.

Service Availability

Services are offered during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:30am to 4:30pm.

Billable Services

The SPO provides services at no additional cost to units.

The assignment of space or provision of other SPO services does not imply or guarantee the allocation of funding for related renovations, fit-outs, alterations, or other project costs. Where funding is required, financial responsibilities and arrangements must be clearly defined and approved before the service is delivered or work begins.

[2] https://uwaterloo.ca/plant-operations/
[3] https://uwaterloo.ca/central-stores/
[4] https://uwaterloo.ca/plant-operations/services/key-control

Performance

Performance refers to the measurable standards and outcomes that demonstrate how effectively services are provided, and may include:

- Response time: The time to acknowledge or begin addressing a request.
- Processing time: The time to complete a request after it has been received.
- Accuracy: The acceptable threshold of error-free work, transactions, or data.

The performance targets outlined in the table below represent the service levels that can be expected from SPO.

Services	Performance Metric(s)	Performance Target
Allocation of Unassigned Space	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	Dependent on request type*
Mediation Services for the Reassignment/ Temporary reassignment of Space	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	2-3 weeks
Space Inventory Database Management	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	5 business days
	Accuracy	>95%
Requests for New or Additional Space	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	Dependent on request type*
Requests to Vacate and Release Space	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	Dependent on request type*
Classroom management	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	Dependent on project scope or request type*
System Integration Support	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	2-3 weeks
	Accuracy	>95%
Space Data	Response time	2 business days
	Processing time	2-3 business days
	Accuracy	> 95%
Project Management	Response time	5 business days
Relocation Support	Response time	2 business days

***** *For complex requests, such as group relocations, requests for new or additional space, or project management services requiring collaboration with Plant Operations, processing times will vary depending on the scope of the request. Examples are provided below:*

- Group relocations – dependent on move date
- Requests to vacate or release space – dependent on move date
- Requests for new or additional space:
  - swing space: 1 week
  - additional space: 2-6 months
  - request for new program space: <6 months (possible timeline of 12-18 months for large renovation projects)
- Project management services:
  - small renovation projects (under $100K): 6-12 months
  - large renovation projects (over $100K): 12-18 months

Governance

Roles and Responsibilities

The following outlines the responsibilities and commitments of each party under this agreement.

The Space Planning Office	Other Waterloo Units
• **Space Inventory:** Maintain a comprehensive space inventory to support decision-making, planning, and external reporting requirements, including those of the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). • **Strategic Advice:** Provide expert analysis and recommendations related to space allocation, utilization, and long-term planning in alignment with institutional priorities. • **Facilitation:** Facilitate discussions and mediation where space reassignment involves multiple units, or where resolution of competing needs is required. • **Compliance:** Ensure services meet health and safety requirements and comply with all relevant policies and standards. • **Service Delivery:** Provide agreed-upon services and deliverables as specified. • **Timely Response:** Respond promptly to incidents, concerns, and requests for support. • **Communication:** Clearly and promptly communicate any planned service changes or updates to service users. • **Professionalism:** Treat service users fairly and respectfully in all interactions. • **Continuous Improvement:** Incorporate user feedback and evaluation to continually improve services.	• **Policy compliance**: Ensure all users (students, staff, faculty, and visitors) follow University related policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements. • **Stewardship**: Ensure space is used responsibly, efficiently, and in support of the University's academic, operational, and strategic objectives. • **Space Notifications**: Promptly notify SPO of any changes that may impact space records/the space inventory, including reorganizations, relocations, room-use changes, renovations, vacancies, and other space-related updates. • **Early Engagement**: Involve SPO at the earliest stages of discussions related to space needs to allow sufficient time for analysis and service delivery. • **Authorization**: Ensure requests are submitted by an authorized faculty or staff member with the appropriate departmental approvals. • **Submissions**: Submit space requests with sufficient context, rationale, timelines, and operational requirements to support decisions. • **Sustainability**: Work collaboratively with SPO to identify sustainable, long-term space solutions and minimize reliance on temporary or swing space. • **Flexibility**: Recognize that space is a limited institutional resource and remain open to different locations, configurations, and space options when evaluating potential solutions with SPO. • **Communication**: Promptly communicate changes, delays, cancellations, or issues that may affect services. • **Respect**: Treat SPO staff professionally and respectfully in all interactions.

Decision-Making Protocols

Given the limited availability of space, requests are assessed based on institutional priorities, competing demands, long-term planning considerations, and alignment with the Campus Plan. Requests for additional space must demonstrate that existing space has been optimized to the greatest extent possible.

SPO reviews each request and provides recommendations to the AVP-AO. Final decisions are made by the AVP-AO and/or the Provost and may, in some cases, require approval from the Capital Projects and Space Allocations Committee (CaPS).

The following criteria will be used to assess the space request and determine whether it should be recommended for approval:

- Unit and institutional objectives
- Code and facilities considerations
- Cost and benefit considerations
- Appropriateness of space to the proposed function
- Physical proximity of departmental units in cases where programs can be enhanced by close geographical locations and/or shared spaces
- Audit and analysis of space request based on current space utilization standards and guidelines
- Priorities for research, academic programs, and support areas established by the President, Provost and/or VPs
- Minimal disruption of ongoing activities of faculty, students and staff
- Time frame requested
- Demonstrated exhaustion of existing departmental space

Dispute Resolution

If service performance does not meet the levels outlined in this SLA or you have immediate concerns, please email SPO (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca) with a detailed description of your concern, including information on the unit, specific buildings and rooms.

In the event that a dispute cannot be resolved at this level, the matter will be escalated to the AVP-AO and/or the Provost for resolution.

Review

SPO will conduct regular reviews to assess compliance with the SLA. These reviews will highlight achievements, identify opportunities for improvement, and address any concerns in collaboration with representatives from campus units.

Feedback will be regularly gathered to support continuous improvement by monitoring performance metrics, service requests, complaints, and concerns.

Engaging in these practices will promote reliable and consistent service delivery.

Amendments to the SLA

This agreement will undergo a formal review every 12 months to allow for adjustments. If necessary, service commitments may be amended in the interim to address the following variables:

- Health and safety requirements (e.g., pandemic response).
- Budget constraints (e.g., reducing costs by adjusting frequency or scope of services).
- Operational changes (e.g., staff changes).
- Emergency/unforeseen situations (e.g., floods, weather, employee attendance).

Amendments to this document will be made as required and communicated to all affected parties.

The Director, Space Planning Office is responsible for incorporating revisions and ensuring they are communicated to the campus community.

Appendix A: How to Access SPO Services

Service	How to Access Service
Allocation of Unassigned Space*	Requests for unassigned space must be submitted via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca) by Deans or department heads/ Vice-Presidents (VPs), outlining the purpose, requirements, and justification for the request.
Reassignment/ Temporary reassignment of Space*	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca) for reassignment or temporary reassignment of space support.
Space Inventory Database Management	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca) to ensure proper documentation and tracking of all reassignment arrangements, including duration, purpose, and any associated renovation considerations
Requests for New or Additional Space*	These requests are made via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca). Submitted requests must include: - A clear description of the space requirements, including type and quantity - Justification demonstrating why existing space cannot meet the need - Appropriate approvals, including the signature of the Dean, department head or VP.
Requests to Vacate and Release Space*	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca)
Classroom management	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca)
System Integration Support	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca)
Space Data	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca) to request space data/reports.
Project Management	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca)
Relocation Support	Contact SPO via email (dl-spo@uwaterloo.ca)

**For space requests:*

- *provide a rationale for your request and explain how it fits with the role and mission of your unit.*
- *include the type of space (e.g., office, wet/dry lab, teaching/student space, support space), assignable area, and building and room location (where appropriate).*
- *provide an anticipated timeline (if moving into new space or moving out of current space).*
- *explain the benefits (e.g., increased enrolment, support for new programs, costs savings) that would accrue if your request were approved.*
- *attach any drawings or schedules pertinent to your proposal (if relevant).*
- *identify any required remodelling/repair work prior to occupancy (for new space requests).*
- *provide cost estimates, if known, for any required renovations, moving, leasing, electrical work etc, along with funding source information.*
- *Identify any anticipated increases in operating costs associated with the new space and how they will be funded.*
- *Indicate whether parking arrangements are needed as part of a new space or lease agreement.*
- *indicate whether temporary arrangements have been made to secure space for the request.*

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