C L A S S

Coordinators Leading Advancement of Sessional Staff

Guidelines & Templates

FOR INSTITUTIONAL, FACULTY & SUBJECT COORDINATOR USE IN LEADING & MANAGING SESSIONAL STAFF

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Promoting excellence in higher education

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Introduction

According to the RED report (Percy et al 2008[1]), universities rely heavily on the contributions of sessional staff. Estimates suggest that sessional staff could be responsible for up to 50% of the teaching load in institutions and undertake the full gamut of teaching-related tasks such as curriculum designer, subject coordinator, tutor and marker (Percy et al 2008). In light of the significant contribution that sessional staff make to institutional teaching and learning, sound practices and relevant resources are needed to ensure the effective leadership and management of these critical higher education teaching providers.

Managers and supervisors of sessional staff play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining quality processes in teaching and learning (Percy et al 2008). As such, these managers and supervisors should be supported in their leadership of sessional staff. Many universities have developed resources to assist managers and supervisors in their leadership and management of sessional staff. This resource is a collection of guidelines and templates that have been developed by universities to assist in the leadership and management of sessional staff. The compiled list of guidelines and templates have been organised in relation to the main areas of leadership and management of sessional staff related to recruitment, employment, induction, management and development.

Sessional Staff Leadership & Management Considerations

The following considerations are a summary of the issues that should be contemplated and inform the effective leadership and management of sessional staff. These considerations are intended as a guide and not a definitive checklist of tasks that need to be performed.

RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF SESSIONAL STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

1 Are there institutional policies, guidelines or procedures for recruiting and employing sessional staff?

2 Is there a standard sessional staff contract that needs to be used?

3 Has the sessional staff applicant been informed of the role, duties and responsibilities they are being employed for?

4 Has appropriate and fair remuneration, which is in accordance with award rates and enterprise bargaining agreements, been identified and organised?

5 Has the sessional staff member been informed of their rate of pay, payment schedule and any requirements they need to manage to be paid?

6 Has office space, phone, computer facilities, email, library access etc been organised for the sessional staff member?

INDUCTION OF SESSIONAL STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

1 Are there institutional/faculty/school policies, guidelines or procedures regarding the induction of sessional staff?

2 Has the sessional staff member been informed of their role and the related duties and responsibilities of their role (e.g. student consultation hours, marking requirements, attendance at lectures/team meetings etc)?

3 Has the sessional staff member been provided with or given access to all of the University, Faculty or School policies, procedures, codes of conduct etc that affect them?

4 Does the sessional staff member know what they have to do to be paid (e.g. timesheets, pay systems etc)

5 Does the sessional staff member know how to access the services, facilities and resources that they might need?

6 Does the sessional staff member know the protocols and procedures for using IT including email and library etc resources that they might need or be required to use?

7 Has someone been nominated as the point of contact for the sessional staff member to speak to in regard to queries they might have?

MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF SESSIONAL STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

1 Are there institutional/faculty/school policies, guidelines or procedures regarding the management of sessional staff?

2 Is there a mechanism in place to evaluate the performance of sessional staff?

3 Are there strategies for identifying the development needs of sessional staff

4 Are there professional development opportunities provided for sessional staff (both formal and informal)?

5 Do sessional staff receive feedback on their performance?

6 Do sessional staff have an opportunity to provide feedback?

Recruitment and Employment of Sessional Staff Guidelines and Templates

Recruitment and employment of sessional staff is concerned with identifying and engaging suitable staff on a part-time or casual basis to take on roles and responsibilities in relation to the delivery of courses and subjects that are offered by the university/ faculty/ department/ school. There are a number of issues that need to be considered when recruiting and employing sessional staff and many institutions have policies and guidelines to assist in the management and facilitation of these.

SUBJECT LEVEL TEMPLATES

The Expression of Interest - Sessional Teaching Template used by *Macquarie University (MQ)* is a template that has been designed to gather expressions of interest from potential staff wanting to be employed as sessional teachers at MQ.

Link: http://ltcwiki.ltc.mq.edu.au/@api/deki/files/1350/=Expression_of_Interest_-_Sessional_Teaching_Template.docx
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

The Casual Academic Staff Appointment Form used by *Macquarie University (MQ)* is a form of contract for sessional teachers at MQ.

Link: http://www.hr.mq.edu.au/pdf/forms/working/appointmentsandtimesheets/602a.pdf
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

The Welcome Letter Template used by *Macquarie University (MQ)* is a template of a letter that is sent to sessional teachers who have been employed by MQ.

Link: http://ltcwiki.ltc.mq.edu.au/@api/deki/files/1318/=Welcome_Letter_Template.docx
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

A Feedback and Reflection Sheet is a template developed by *Macquarie University (MQ)* to gather feedback from sessional staff regarding their experience as a sessional staff member employed at MQ.

Link: http://ltcwiki.ltc.mq.edu.au/@api/deki/files/1317/=Feedback_and_Reflection_Sheet.docx
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

A Template: Letter of Thanks & Acknowledgement used by *Macquarie University (MQ)* is a template of a letter that is sent to sessional teachers when their employment tenure at MQ has finished.

Link: http://ltcwiki.ltc.mq.edu.au/@api/deki/files/1378/=Thanks_%2526_Acknowledgment_Letter_Template.docx
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

FACULTY/SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT LEVEL GUIDELINES

Employment of casual staff guidelines is a resource provided by *RMIT* and details information aimed at assisting those managing the employment of casual staff.

Link: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2fo70cl51i5o
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

Guidelines for employees and supervisors in relation to employment contracts and payroll procedures for all casual staff is provided by the *University of Ballarat (UB)*. This online resource provides links to forms, contracts and timesheets used at UB in relation to the employment of casual staff as well as information about casual staff employment.

Link: http://guerin.ballarat.edu.au/aasp/staff/salaries/payrollforms/cas_sess_guidelines.shtml
Audience: Supervisors and managers of sessional staff and sessional staff

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Guidelines for Employing Casual and Sessional Teaching Staff have been developed by the *University of New England (UNE)*. This resource presents a rationale, principles and considerations in regard to the employment and management of casual and sessional teaching staff.

Link: http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/staff/casts/casts-guidelines-for-employing.pdf
Audience: Supervisors and managers of sessional staff

FACULTY/SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT LEVEL TEMPLATES

Sessional Academic Staff Application Form is a specific form for the *Queensland University of Technology (QUT)* Faculty of Law. This application form is completed by the applicant and submitted, along with their CV, certified copies of relevant academic records and one (1) written reference. The application is processed for eligibility to be part of the approved pool of sessional academic staff in the Law School.

Link: http://www.law.qut.edu.au/files/V6-08SessionalAcademicApplicationFormJune2008.pdf
Audience: Supervisors and managers of sessional staff and Sessional staff

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Casual Academic Staff – Contract of Employment is provided by the *University of New England (UNE)*.This is a comprehensive document and includes fields which would be used for the processing and administration of the casual staff member's employment.

Link: www.une.edu.au/hrs/handbook/08/08.08a.doc
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL GUIDELINES

Conditions Of Employment for Sessional Academic Staff guidelines can be found at *The University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA)* and provide details of the responsibilities of the university and sessional staff in regard to sessional staff members' employment.

Link: http://www.nd.edu.au/downloads/staff/conditions_of_employment_sessional_staff_09.pdf
Audience: Supervisors and managers of sessional staff and sessional staff

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Procedure: Sessional Academic Conditions developed by *The Australian National University (ANU)* are procedural guidelines pertaining to sessional academic staff. The guidelines provide details relating to:

- The responsibilities of the university and sessional staff in regard to sessional staff employment;
- Sessional academic salary rates and superannuation details; and
- Employment conditions and expectations.

Links: *Procedure: Sessional Academic Conditions:* http://policies.anu.edu.au/procedures/sessional_academic_conditions/procedure
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff and sessional staff

Induction Guidelines and Templates

Induction is concerned with providing a new employee with information about the university/ faculty/ department/ school that will assist them to operate effectively and be productive in their role. Induction may be managed in a number of different ways including professional development activities, self-paced learning modules, booklets or online portals. The following are examples of induction resources that have been specifically developed for sessional staff or that could be used with sessional staff.

FACULTY/SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT LEVEL GUIDELINES

A Sessional Staff Directory - Quick Start Guide was developed at *Charles Sturt University (CSU)* to provide information and links to a range of resources specifically targeting the needs and activities of sessional staff. These resources are organised according to the different stages of staff induction and orientation including: before commencement of work, Day One, Day Two, Day Three, First Week, First Month, End of Semester.

Link: http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/sessional-staff/quick-start-guide.htm
Audience: Sessional staff

Law School Sessional Academic Staff is a web portal developed by the *Queensland University of Technology (QUT)*. This web portal provides new Law School staff with information and guidelines to assist them in relation to administrative matters pertaining to their appointment, remuneration, online access to QUT facilities etc. It also provides some general information regarding Faculty life and the facilities available to sessional academic staff in the Law School.

Link: http://www.law.qut.edu.au/about/work/lsnew.jsp
Audience: Sessional staff

A Sessional Academic Staff Guide of Administrative Procedures is held by the Law School at the *Queensland University of Technology (QUT)*. This guide has been developed to inform Sessional academic staff of the terms of their employment

and the associated administrative procedures relating to their appointment. It also provides some general information regarding faculty life and the facilities available to Sessional academic staff.

Link: http://www.law.qut.edu.au/files/ SessionalAcademicStaffGuide2009sem2.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

A Sessional Academic Staff Information Guide 2011 has been produced by the *University of Tasmania (UTAS)*, Faculty of Education. The guide aims to orient new sessional staff to the School of Education. This guide also provides details for sessional staff member's first dealings with the School including meeting with their supervisor and the process of being created on the Education computer system. There is also information outlining teaching related matters and information about staff and the leadership of the School and Faculty.

Link: http://www.education.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_ file/0020/118352/Sessional-Guide-2011.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL GUIDELINES

Information for Casual Academic Employees is a resource from *Southern Cross University (SCU)* that provides a range of information specifically for the casual academic. This information provides guidelines on topics including employment conditions, remuneration and university services and facilities.

Link: http://www.scu.edu.au/admin/hr/index.php/84/
Audience: Sessional staff

Sessional Staff: A Quick Guide for Academics is an induction resource produced by the *University of South Australia* (UniSA) which enables new sessional staff to access a broad range of information about the university. The information is compiled under a collection of frequently asked questions related to the University the sessional staff member's appointment and role, University services, resources and facilities and it also lists various contacts across the university that the sessional staff member might require.

Link: http://www.unisa.edu.au/staffdev/guides/sessional_staff_ quick_guide.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

An Information Guide for Sessional Academic Staff is provided by the *University of Ballarat (UB)* and contains details about the university; the new employee's appointment; their role as an academic and the services, resources and facilities that are available to new employees.

Link: http://guerin.ballarat.edu.au/aasp/staff/corp_induction/info_ guide_for_sess_aca.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

A Quick Guide for Sessional Academic Staff is provided by the *University of South Australia (UniSA)* and contains specific details for sessional staff related to the university, their role and the services, resources and facilities available to sessional staff.

Link: http://www.unisa.edu.au/staffdev/guides/sessional_staff_quick_guide.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

Welcome to Sessional Teachers @UOW is provided by *The University of Wollongong (UOW)* and outlines career and administrative information for sessional staff in regard to their employment at the UOW. It provides links to teaching and learning resources, induction programs and policies relevant for sessional staff as well as an overview of useful policy and guideline documents.

Link: http://focusonteaching.uow.edu.au/sessionalteachers/index.html
Audience: Sessional staff

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL TEMPLATES

Starting at Macquarie: Checklist for New Sessional Staff is a checklist that has been developed by *Macquarie University (MQ)* to provide sessional staff with an overview of the essential things that they need to get done on their first day of work, first week and month or work as a Sessional Staff member at Macquarie.

Links: http://ltcwiki.ltc.mq.edu.au/@api/deki/files/1320/=New_Sessional_Staff_Member_Checklist.docx
Audience: Sessional staff

Resources for you as a staff member at Griffith is offered by *Griffith University (Griffith)* and is a handout that has been designed to assist sessional staff to effectively orient themselves with the university and guide them as to the things they should do when they first start working for the university.

Link: http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/124066/CASS-Orientation.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

An Information for Prospective Sessional Staff handout is provided by *The University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA)* and outlines the roles, responsibilities and expectations of sessional staff in regard to sessional employment at the UNDA. This is a very comprehensive overview that would provide potential sessional staff with a clear understanding of the prospective terms of their employment as a sessional staff member.

Link: http://www.nd.edu.au/downloads/staff/information_prospective_sessional_staff_09.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

Management and Development of Sessional Staff Guidelines and Templates

Sessional staff undertake a range of roles and responsibilities in faculties/ departments/ schools. While these employees have a level of skill and knowledge competence for the role they have been appointed to, there is still a need to support and develop these staff to ensure the quality of their contributions. Universities in addressing this need, provide development activities and establish support mechanisms for sessional staff.

SUBJECT LEVEL GUIDELINES

TeachingTips resource offered by *Deakin University (Deakin)* is designed to enable sessional staff access to advice about particular aspects of their teaching. Each topic is specific in focus, and designed with a 'question and answer' format. The question represents the aspect of teaching that the sessional staff member may feel they would like to know more about. The answer takes the form of some suggestions as well as providing links to resources which could help determine strategies to suit a particular circumstance.

Link: http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/teaching-tips/index.php
Audience: Sessional staff

Guide to Effective Tutoring at La Trobe University is offered by *La Trobe University (La Trobe)*. This guide provides strategies and information for tutors and demonstrators to assist them to more effectively, efficiently and confidently help students learn. The Guide is intended as a practical teaching resource.

Link: http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/assets/downloads/
Guide-Tutors-at-LT-ver4.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

Getting started in Teaching at Macquarie is a guide published by *Macquarie University (MQ)*. The purpose of this booklet is to provide guidance to teaching staff at Macquarie in relation to: their rights as an employee of Macquarie University; Macquarie's expectations of them as an employee; effective teaching and learning strategies and details about the support services available

in the areas of learning and teaching. Throughout the booklet, website addresses and contact details are included.

Link: http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/pdfs/041_start_teaching.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

Guide for Sessional Teachers is one of a number of resources developed by *RMIT College of Science, Engineering and Health (SEH)* for sessional staff. This handbook has been designed to introduce new sessional staff to some key teaching procedures. It also provides a broad overview from planning through to evaluation and reflection for the first few weeks of semester teaching. The aim of the Guide is to offer practical ideas and strategies that can be used in the classroom along with links to follow-up resources.

Link: http://mams.rmit.edu.au/c3pb3sy0dhkiz.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

How to Start Your First Class: A Guide for Sessional Staff a resource provided by *The University of Melbourne (UniMelb) Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU)* in the Faculty of Economics and Commerce has been written as a guide for staff who are new to lecturing. This comprehensive guide provides strategies and suggestions in relation to the issues, considerations and tasks that a teacher may need to plan for and address. It recommends where appropriate additional institutional resources and references that the new teacher can access.

Link: http://tlu.ecom.unimelb.edu.au/pdfs/academic_resources/STEP_first.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

UWS Tutor's Guide from the *University of Western Sydney (UWS)* is a guide that provides information on student learning and ways to promote student learning in small class learning contexts. It has chapters on: Getting started; Understanding student learning; Effective small group teaching and learning; E-Learning; Marking and giving feedback; Evaluating and improving teaching.

Link: http://tdu.uws.edu.au/qilt/downloads/Tutors_Guide.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

FACULTY/SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT LEVEL GUIDELINES

Computer Science and IT Sessional Staff Frequently Asked Questions web page provided by *RMIT College of Science, Engineering and Health (SEH)* is an example of a resource provided by a number of schools which is specific ally aimed at sessional staff. This resource addresses common questions in relation to administration, remuneration, tutoring and labs, roles and responsibilities, training and school services.

Link: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=pnm2tr8094zxz
Audience: Sessional staff

Guidelines for Employing Casual and Sessional Teaching Staff is provided by the *University of New England (UNE).* This resource presents a rationale, principles and considerations in regard to the employment and management of casual and sessional teaching staff.

Link: http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/staff/casts/casts-guidelines-for-employing.pdf

Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff

A Coaching Guide for Sessional Academic Staff has been produced by the *Curtin University (Curtin)* School of Marketing to assist new and ongoing Sessional Academic staff members by providing helpful information regarding teaching within the School of Marketing, Curtin Business School. This Guide details information pertinent to working within the School and university including available resources and services. It also provides guidelines of the role and responsibilities of sessional staff particularly in regard to teaching and assessment.

Link: http://odu.curtin.edu.au/development/documents/Sessional_ staff_coachingguide_SOM_MASTER_Feb_2009insert.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL GUIDELINES

Monash Sessional Survival Guide that is provided by *Monash University (Monash)* is a resource that has been developed by the National Tertiary Education Union to provide sessional staff at Monash with information, practical tips and advice on what they should expect to be paid and their rights as a sessional staff employee.

Link: http://www.nteu.org.au/library/view/id/499
Audience: Sessional staff

Handbook for Casual and Sessional Teaching Staff offered by the *University of New England (UNE)* provides casual and part time teaching staff with information about the university and services available to support them, the expectations of their employment; and strategies and suggestions to assist them to teach effectively as well as some guidance on opportunities for professional development.

Link: http://www.une.edu.au/tlc/staff/casts/casts-handbook.pdf
Audience: Sessional staff

The Sessional Staff Standards Framework currently in development by *Macquarie University (MQ)* sets out the standards, or criteria, by which the quality of performance and outcomes in learning and teaching, and in management and administrative policy, procedure and practices affecting Sessional Staff will be measured. The Framework is intended as a resource that would be used to evaluate practices and benchmark across the University and at each of the levels – institution, faculty, department and sessional staff member. The Framework is positioned as a developmental tool, designed to stimulate reflection and action and to assist staff to work towards consistency in good practice.

Link: http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/projects/docs/Intro_Sessional_ Staff_Standards_Framework.pdf
Audience: Managers and Supervisors of sessional staff and sessional staff

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Good Practice Guidelines - Leading Teaching Teams offered by the *University of Wollongong (UOW)* outlines key principles for leading teaching teams. The principles presented in these

guidelines are supplemented by Good Practice Examples that are drawn from the RED report. These Guidelines complement the University's Code of Practice - Casual Academic Teaching. They have been designed to assist faculties, schools and individuals improve supervision and peer learning at the teaching team level.

Links: http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW069338.html
Audience: Supervisors and managers of sessional staff

Code of Practice for Casual Academic Teaching Staff at the *University of Wollongong (UOW)* provides a guide for managing and supporting casual academic teaching employees.

Links: http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058668.html
Audience: Supervisors and managers of sessional staff

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL TEMPLATES

Sessional Staff Survey is an online survey provided by the *University of Western Australia (UWA)* and is designed to get feedback from sessional staff following their tenure with UWA. This information is used to inform the support that is provided to sessional staff by the Centre for the Advancement of teaching and learning (CATL) at UWA.

Link: http://www.catl.uwa.edu.au/projects/CATLystNetwork/sessional_staff_survey
Audience: Sessional staff