**Faculty of Arts**

**Code of Practice on working with Teaching Affiliate colleagues**

**Heads of Department (or designated colleague) responsibilities**

1. All TAs should be given a mentor, who must be a member of academic staff, who can provide guidance and advice to aid integration. In cases where the TA is contributing to a module convened by someone else, the mentor could be the convenor.
2. TAs will receive constructive and regular feedback on their performance (including strengths and weaknesses) by the mentor or another member of academic staff.
3. TAs should be appraised annually through Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) and, in order to contribute to staff development, TAs should undergo annual peer observation.
4. Mentors should offer advice and support to TAs on teaching matters, bearing in mind the important role of teaching in the professional development of TAs.
5. Effort will be made for TAs to receive letters of appointment, or at least an email guaranteeing the conditions of employment and pay offered, before any work commences.

**Role of Convenors who are assisted by TAs**

1. Convenors should set preparation work for TAs that corresponds roughly to the amount of preparation time for which they are paid. Where TAs are getting paid for seminar preparation, convenors should be aware that they are only allocated preparation time equivalent to the length of a seminar.
2. By discussing with the TA, the convenor will provide preparation work that corresponds with the TA’s amount of paid preparation time.
3. Convenors should provide sufficient guidance to facilitate this expectation.
4. Convenors should guide and moderate assessment undertaken by TAs.
5. Convenors should endeavour to create as much overlap as possible between the seminar topics (which TAs are paid to prepare for) and essay topics (which TAs are not paid to prepare for) to avoid asking TAs to do unnecessary, unpaid work. That is, where possible convenors should not set essay topics that are very distant from seminar topics.
6. Convenors should not ask TAs to undertake work for which they are not paid under the terms of their casual engagement. This includes but is not limited to:
* Contributing to module development
* Developing reading lists
* Pastoral work
* Completing mark-sheets
* Work on Moodle sites
* Dealing with correspondence with students they do not personally teach
* Formative assessments not specified in module specs[[1]](#footnote-1)

Convenors need to check with their Head of Department (HoD) which tasks TAs are paid to undertake, and should seek agreement in writing from the HoD before any changes to their casual engagement are made. Changes must be communicated in writing to HoD and the Administration Team in advance of the work taking place so that relevant staff have a chance of issuing revised letters of engagement to TAs in time with accurate information.

1. Staff should be aware of relevant terms and conditions of the casual engagement of each TA and ensure that discussions with TAs avoid making reference to the possibility of future paid work, or to leaving the amount of preparation time to ‘your own ethical sense’ or ‘moral judgement’.

**Next steps in case of difficulties**

1. Schools/Departments should have a clearly advertised mechanism for dealing with issues concerning the casual engagement of Teaching Affiliate staff. TAs must be made aware of steps they can take if they have queries or concerns about their work for the Department or School. This could include recourse to a designated TA Coordinator, or the Head of Department or School, or the Departmental or School Director of Teaching.

Code approved by Faculty of Arts Education and Student Experience Board; amended August 2017 to reflect changes agreed by Faculty Executive Board; feedback/comments to Faculty Associate PVC, Mark Bradley.

1. added August 2017 to reflect changes agreed by Faculty Executive Board [↑](#footnote-ref-1)