

## THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

### Guidance on Good Practice for the Employment of Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers at LSE<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. Principles

- 1.1 The Teaching Learning and Assessment and Appointments Committees of the School jointly recognise the value of the contributions made by Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers across all departments and subject areas.
- 1.2 When undertaking teaching and associated duties, Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers have the same responsibility as other teaching staff for maintaining the quality of teaching and learning and enhancing the international reputation of the LSE. The School must therefore ensure that these staff have the appropriate level of support and that there are adequate quality assurance measures in place to secure a professional and high quality service, and in particular must ensure that the following Codes of Practice are adhered to:

*Teaching & Learning for Undergraduates*  
(incorporated in Section ii of Information for Undergraduates)

*Taught Master's Programmes*  
*School Diploma Programmes*  
(incorporated in the Appendices of the Information for Graduate Students & their supervisors)

- 1.3 MSc students should not be employed as Graduate Teaching Assistants, other than in exceptional circumstances. Permission from the Vice-Chair of the Appointments Committee should be sought in such circumstances.
- 1.4 Graduate Teaching Assistants who are registered PhD students should not teach MSc students other than in cases where the PhD student is near to completion and/or has specialist expertise of direct relevance to the course on which s/he is to teach.
- 1.5 Where registered PhD students are employed as Graduate Teaching Assistants, this should be with the acknowledgement of their research supervisors

#### 2. Standards

##### 2.1 Contracts of appointment

---

<sup>1</sup> This document is relevant to all hourly-paid teachers (sometimes called “occasional teachers” or “part-time teachers”) at the LSE. Teachers who are registered LSE students are known as Graduate Teaching Assistants; other teachers are known as Guest Teachers. This document does not apply to teachers appointed on a fractional full-time basis. The main focus of this document is on Graduate Teaching Assistants. Departments will need to consider the appropriateness of the Guidance for Guest Teachers, as many of these already have extensive teaching and/or professional expertise, and aspects of the Guidance will be less relevant to them. Please note that where references to “teachers” refer to both Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers.

The contract for the whole period of work will be issued as soon as the department has determined its teaching programme.

Payment will be made in equal instalments into a UK bank account, and the notice to be given by either party in case of absence or termination will be set out. Payment for different duties should be paid at the appropriate rate. There are different rates for running classes, for lecturing, and for office hours. When setting up contracts, departments should also consider reasonable workload for marking course work, attendance at meetings etc.

All Graduate Teaching Assistants will be expected to attend an introductory workshop on teaching and learning in their first year of appointment. Contracts for subsequent years may be withheld if training has not been undertaken. Guest Teachers who lack teaching experience may also be required to attend an introductory workshop. Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers will be paid to attend the central training of up to 5 half days at a fixed rate per half day. Departments may decide on any additional payment for departmental and course briefings.

All Teachers should receive a copy of this Guidance on Good Practice with their contract, and be directed to contact the Teaching and Learning Development Office to register for initial training if relevant.

## **2.2 Course details**

All information available about the course to be taught or series of lectures or seminars will be provided to the teacher by the lecturer in charge of the course sufficiently far in advance of commencement to allow adequate teaching preparation. The lecturer in charge of the course will be responsible for directing the work of the teacher and for discussing with the teacher any questions s/he may have as to the level of attainment to be assumed by the students or the relationship of their work to their course as a whole.

All details of times and venues will be supplied by the Timetables Office in advance of the start of the contract.

## **2.3 Examination and marking**

All relevant regulations on examination and marking will be provided to the teacher by the Convener in advance of the contract.

Marking by teachers should be moderated as appropriate in order to ensure that they are marking to the standards required, with further guidance as necessary.

In line with the relevant Code of Practice, teachers are expected to maintain appropriate student/class records, which can be used to monitor student progress, and to inform course and/or personal tutors where they are concerned about student performance.

Teacher involvement in marking of examinations or other formal assessment should comply with the Instructions for Undergraduate Examiners (see Annex

A: Appointment of Undergraduate Examiners).

## **2.4 Departmental and School communications**

The Convener is responsible for ensuring that the teacher understands what level of liaison and co-operation with other colleagues is required for the effective running of the department and the quality delivery of the particular course.

The Convener should also ensure that the teacher has sufficient induction information about the LSE, its reputation and the nature of its student body to fully integrate into the spirit and culture of the School, thereby reflecting its quality and values.

Conveners may nominate one member of the full time staff to act as adviser to Graduate Teaching Assistants / Guest Teachers. The role of the adviser is to:

- ensure teachers receive proper induction at departmental level, and that they are fully aware of staff development requirements and opportunities
- ensure that teachers are kept fully informed of relevant meetings, events, support opportunities and other departmental matters
- provide support as necessary where communications between teachers and course tutors are problematic
- follow through the results of monitoring exercises undertaken with teachers, advising them and/or referring them (e.g. to TLDO) as appropriate.

## **2.5 Use of Equipment and Facilities**

The Convener is responsible for ensuring that the teacher is fully aware of his/her obligations in the workplace in relation to

- use of equipment and premises
- student welfare reporting lines
- health and safety at work

The Convener should ensure that standard information is made available to the teacher at the start of the contract regarding the School's and department's range of support services e.g. audio-visual and reprographic services.

## **3. Performance Monitoring and Staff Development**

### **3.1 Performance monitoring**

The lecturer responsible for a course listed in the calendar should co-ordinate and monitor the work of the teachers for that course. As soon as possible in the Michaelmas Term the Convener, with the assistance of the lecturer responsible, should undertake an assessment of the performance of the teacher to establish whether the teacher can continue.

Wherever possible, for teachers with no previous teaching experience in the department, this decision should be based on feedback from students (e.g. via

TQAC questionnaire) as well as from at least one observation of the teacher in action by one of the full time faculty.

The Convener (or adviser to teachers) should give feedback on the results of the student questionnaires to teachers. Where relevant, teachers should be guided on any necessary areas for development, and encouraged to make appropriate use of support available from the Teaching and Learning Development Office.

Questionnaire results, along with a note of any action required should be held on the personal file held by the Convener.

### **3.2 Staff development**

It is recognised that teachers have commitments outside the LSE, are appointed for a variety of different reasons and under different circumstances.

It is likely in many cases that they have a variety of sources of development and training through their professional channels and other employers. In this context, the primary responsibility for following up any development needs identified or in the course of employment with the School lies with individual teachers. The School's own staff development programme will be made available to all teachers, with co-operation from Departmental Administrators. Teachers are welcome to attend School staff development events free of charge.

In the case of a substantial number of teachers who are also postgraduate students of the LSE or other institutions, the School recognises its duty to provide more structured training in the interests of both the teaching quality at the School and the professional development of the individual postgraduate teacher. To this end the School expects that such teachers will attend:

- departmental induction events/course briefings at the start of each academic year
- the Deans' School induction session, held annually at the start of the academic year, in the year they start teaching
- the School Introduction to Teaching and Learning for Graduate Teaching Assistants and Guest Teachers (or an equivalent arranged by the department) before or during their first year of teaching.

Teachers may choose to take their teaching development further (e.g. working towards membership of the Institute for Learning and Teaching), and can seek support from the Teaching and Learning Development Office as required.

For those teachers drawn from the professions external to the School participation is encouraged, but is not compulsory. No charge will be made for participation by any teacher in any of the School's staff development events.