Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to notify you that the University of Western Australia will implement minimum guidelines to ensure that all new casual teaching staff have access to appropriate induction and supervision in the course of their employment. These measures, developed in late 2010, have been discussed with faculty Deans and approved by the University Executive. I have attached a copy of the new guidelines, for your information. We recognise that many casual staff will already have been employed for semester 1 2011, under the old system; however, as far as practicable, we hope to implement the new system early in the year, with a view to its full adoption by semester 2, 2011.

Accompanying these measures, the University is seeking to promote approaches to selection of casual teaching staff so that we continue to attract teachers of the highest calibre. Both the guidelines for selection and induction remain alert to the particular demands and often pressing time constraints operating in this area of staff recruitment and development.

Many schools and faculties already have robust selection, induction and supervision procedures in place to inform and to assist their new staff. These university-wide guidelines are not intended to supplant such practices, but rather, to support and supplement them. In areas where there are no existing systems or guidelines, the university-wide guidelines will ensure that new casual teaching staff are well supported.

The logistics of the initiative are straightforward. I have attached the university-wide guidelines, and draw your attention to three points within them, in particular:

1. A new employment form is being created by Human Resources for casual teaching staff, within which an appropriate supervisor must be designated. The responsibilities of the supervisor are contained in the guidelines, and represent a commonsense ‘minimum’ to ensure support for casual teaching staff. The new Employment form will be made available to you as soon as practicable.

2. The online induction module and package of policies to which the guidelines refer, which will take less than one hour to study, is being prepared by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) in conjunction with Human Resources. This module and the associated package of the most relevant information needed by casual teaching staff (pertaining to assessment requirements, academic misconduct policies, HR policies, etc.) will be forwarded to schools for dissemination among incoming casual teaching staff, in the next fortnight.
3. New casual teaching staff undertaking the new induction will be paid one hour at the 'Other Required Academic Activity' (ORAA) rate, through their school. For 2011, I will reimburse this extra cost. Instructions concerning the process of reimbursement will be contained on the Employment form from HR.

The induction package for new casual teaching staff and minor changes to the Employment form to indicate arrangements for supervision, are intended to be informative and to provide support to such staff, without being onerous.

I would be grateful for your cooperation as we implement the new system. In particular, arrangements should be made to disseminate the guidelines, and associated resources in the near future to all staff with responsibility for casual teaching employees.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Professor Bill Louden
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Guidelines for the selection, induction and supervision of casual teaching staff at The University of Western Australia.

The University of Western Australia recognises the important contribution made by casual staff to teaching and learning. While the employment rate of such staff at UWA is comparatively low, a number of faculties have devised very good approaches to the selection, induction and supervision of casual staff to meet the needs of particular disciplines, as well as providing support for those staff members.

The following guidelines are provided for university-wide use by all staff responsible for the selection, induction and supervision of casual staff. The guidelines are not intrusive, but ensure that some standard procedures are followed to provide support and clarity for staff, and to contribute to the quality of the student experience at UWA.

The guidelines augment, rather than supplant, existing faculty-based approaches to matters of selection, induction and supervision of casual teaching staff.

Exclusions:

For practical purposes, categories of casual staff employed at UWA may be differentiated as follows:

A. guest lecturers and occasional teachers who do not have any involvement in the assessment or examination of students;
B. tutors, demonstrators and lecturers who interact with students and who are usually involved in processes of assessment and/or examination;
C. staff employed to undertake full unit coordination duties, who undertake assessment and examination, and who may serve as the responsible ‘Examiner’ lodging final results and making associated assessment decisions under UWA policies.

N.B.: These guidelines do not normally pertain to those casual teaching staff in category A above.

Casual Teaching Staff Selection:

Time constraints often operate in relation to casual staff recruitment. An elaborate recruitment and selection process will neither enable the University to be flexible in the context of variable enrolments, nor ensure its capacity to employ staff with sometimes scarce expertise at short notice. These guidelines therefore envisage a continuation of casual staff employment practices which rely upon experienced faculty-based staff making appropriate selection decisions using their knowledge and insight. Such decisions should be aided by the following measures:

1. Each school will establish and maintain a file of CVs of people seeking to be recruited to casual staff positions, updated at the beginning of each academic year. Schools will call for expressions of interest, with potential recruits providing a 2 page curriculum vitae.

2. Recruitment of casual staff will not be confined to the pool so registered, but both recruiting staff and prospective casual staff should, over time, be strongly encouraged to use the file as a first port of call when identifying prospective casual staff appointees.
3. CVs should also include details of two referees who will be contacted by the unit coordinator whenever an applicant for casual employment has not previously worked in the same field at UWA, and/or is not known to the unit coordinator (or other responsible staff member) in a professional capacity.

4. When a casual staff position includes unit coordination duties, brief CVs will be provided to the course or program coordinator and at least one other faculty colleague to make a selection (if there is a choice of applicants). If a candidate is not known in a professional capacity or has not previously worked in the same field at UWA, a referee check will be undertaken and that check confirmed by the responsible staff member on the Casual Teaching Employment Proposal.

Supervision of Casual Teaching Staff:

5. The supervisor responsible for a casual staff member will be confirmed on the Casual Teaching Employment Proposal.

6. Casual teaching staff will meet with their supervisor, who is usually the unit coordinator, to discuss unit and assessment requirements at least three times through the unit: before a unit commences; at a key assessment point (preferably early in a teaching period); at the conclusion of a unit, to discuss assessment and examination outcomes.

7. Casual staff employed as unit coordinators will be supervised usually by the course or degree coordinator, and will meet with them at least three times for similar purposes.

Induction of Casual Teaching Staff:

8. All casual teaching staff who have not worked as a teacher at UWA will be provided with a kit of online documents\(^1\) relating to the expectations and requirements of the University in relation to assessment and feedback; the handling of complaints, grievances and appeals; student academic misconduct; expectations in relation to staff conduct; the Charter of Student rights and responsibilities; and information about further avenues of student support. This kit will be emailed to all casual staff for their reference by the responsible staff member, at the time of their employment. The kit will be created and disseminated for use by all schools, and new versions circulated in the event of updates.

9. A casual teaching staff member who has not previously worked at UWA will be expected to work through an online induction module\(^2\) which will contextualise the documentation within the kit and serve as a further

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\(^1\) The electronic kit will be created by CATL and provided to School and Faculty managers for further dissemination. Schools may choose to supplement this material with specific information relating to local processes and approaches to teaching and learning.

\(^2\) The online induction module is approximately 20 minutes in length, prepared by CATL in conjunction with Human Resources.
means of induction. Casual staff will access the module before, or as soon as possible after the commencement of their period of employment.

10. The responsible staff member will confirm on the Casual Teaching Employment Proposal that the induction kit will be provided on commencement of employment, and the casual teaching staff member will confirm that they will acquaint themselves with the kit and will work through the online module.

11. Casual teaching staff at UWA undertaking such academic induction duties will be paid up to two hours by their school, at the 'Other Required Academic Activity' rate within the relevant schedule.

12. Casual teaching staff undertaking unit coordination duties would normally be expected to undergo more intensive induction usually of at least a half day duration, which combines the basic induction processes of online kit and induction module, and further scheduled discussion with program coordinators. This induction should also be paid at the ORAA rate.