

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Employment of Sessional Academic Staff Policy</b>
<b>Description of Policy</b>	This policy relates to the engagement of sessional academic staff at ACU.
<input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision	
<b>Description of Revision</b>	<i>This policy describes the conditions of employment for sessional academic staff. The Policy has been updated to incorporate the provisions of the Australian Catholic University Staff Enterprise Agreement, 2010 - 2013</i>

### Human Resources Directorate

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## **1 Background Information**

An academic staff member may be employed at the University on a sessional basis. The Australian Catholic University Staff Enterprise Agreement 2010 – 2013 (the **Agreement**) sets out the broad terms and conditions that apply to sessional employment at the University.

## **2 Policy Statement**

Employment of sessional staff is employment on a non-continuing basis for which payment is made at an hourly rate. Sessional employment provides a mechanism for the University to engage staff on a pattern of hours to assist the University to meet its needs at identified peak work periods, such as for semester-based (summer, autumn, winter and spring) teaching, or to cover identified short-term absences. The employment of sessional staff will be in accordance with the provisions set out in this policy.

## **3 Policy Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide information about the conditions of employment that relate to the engagement of sessional staff at the University and the procedures for engaging sessional staff.

## **4 Application of Policy**

This policy applies to academic staff members who are employed at ACU on a sessional basis.

## **5 Approvals**

The Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff form must be authorised in accordance with the University's Staffing Delegations Register.

## **6 Procedures**

### **6.1 Request for Sessional Academic Staff**

#### **6.1.1 Recruitment of Sessional Staff**

Each School/Centre should create and maintain an eligibility list of suitable persons who may be engaged as sessional staff. The list should be regularly updated including in relation to contact details and curriculum vitae (CV). Where practicable the School should arrange for a prospective sessional staff member to be interviewed, particularly when the sessional academic is going to be a Lecturer-in-Charge (LIC) of a unit.

Sessional staff may be employed through the following processes:

- publishing a call for expressions of interest for persons to submit their CV for consideration (eg in suitable vocational journals, newspapers and on-line job sites);
- putting up a notice on a school/hospital noticeboard;
- placing an advertisement on the University's website on the Careers At ACU page;
- sending an email to all relevant higher degree research and honours students asking for them to submit an expression of interest in undertaking casual/sessional work.

### 6.1.2 Request for Sessional Academic Staff

The nominated supervisor initiates the appointment of a sessional staff member by completing the Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff form. The Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff form must be authorised in accordance with the University's Staffing Delegations Register and forwarded to Human Resources at the following address:

- [hr@acu.edu.au](mailto:hr@acu.edu.au)
- By facsimile 02 9701 4226,
- Level 14, NCR House, 8-20 Napier Street, North Sydney NSW 2060

### 6.2 Offer of Appointment

After receiving the authorised Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff form, and prior to commencement of employment, staff of Human Resources issue an offer of appointment to the prospective sessional academic staff member.

The offer of sessional academic employment informs the staff member of the terms of engagement, including the name of the supervisor, the duties required, the number of hours required, the rate of pay for each class of duty required, and a statement that any additional duties required during the term of appointment will be remunerated.

All sessional staff are required to accept the offer of employment formally, in writing, prior to commencing work at the University. In order to facilitate this requirement, the offer of appointment includes provision for the staff member's acceptance, and instructions for the staff member to return their acceptance to Human Resources.

### 6.3 Sessional Academic Staff Employment Kit

The offer of appointment to a prospective sessional academic staff member is made with the 'Sessional Staff Employment Kit' which is sent to the staff member normally with the offer of appointment.

The Sessional Academic Staff Employment Kit for new appointees includes, but is not limited to:

- Offer of Sessional Academic Employment
- General Information
- Mission Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Staff Induction Policy and materials
- Induction Checklist
- Privacy Statement
- Policy and Procedures for Complaints of Sexual Harassment
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Tax File Number Declaration
- UniSuper Product Disclosure Statement
- Payment Record
- Calendar of Pay Periods
- Return Addressed Envelope (if the Kit is not sent by email)

The contents of the Kit may vary from time to time according to legislative and other requirements that apply to the employment of sessional staff. Other materials that the University considers relevant to the employment of a sessional staff member may also be included.

## **7. Conditions of Employment for Sessional Academic Staff**

### **7.1 Sessional Academic Staff Remuneration**

A sessional academic staff member will be paid in accordance with the University's provisions for the payment of casual academic staff and in line with the casual academic salary rates detailed in Schedule 2 of *the Australian Catholic University Staff Enterprise Agreement 2010 - 2013*. The hourly rates are inclusive of a 24 per cent loading which is paid in compensation for the casual nature of the appointment and in lieu of all paid leave entitlements including personal leave, public holidays, annual leave and annual leave loading. The casual loading will increase to 25 per cent (effective from 8 July 2012).

#### **7.1.1 Structure of Casual Academic Rates**

There are two basic casual academic payment rates:

- a standard rate; and
- a higher rate which is applicable when the sessional staff member either holds a doctorate and/or is undertaking co-ordination duties (eg when the sessional is also the LIC).

Each sessional academic staff member is remunerated at an hourly rate of pay for the formal face-to-face delivery of lectures, tutorials, clinical education or musical accompanying and the provision of associated non-contact duties directly related to the formal delivery in the nature of preparation, in class marking and student consultation.

The number of non-contact hours associated with the formal delivery is calculated in accordance with the casual academic salary rates schedule and should be discussed with the Head of School or nominated supervisor (HOS) at the commencement of the semester. For example payment for a standard lecture includes one hour of preparation, one hour of delivery and one hour of associated work (which includes student consultation). In the event that a sessional academic is employed to work for less than a full hour, then the rates are to be pro-rated accordingly.

#### **7.1.2 Preparation for Lecturers and Tutorials**

Preparation includes:

- researching material for a lecture or tutorial;
- writing notes/overheads/powerpoint for a lecture/tutorial;
- preparing materials for posting onto the University's Online Learning platform (LEO);
- updating Unit Outlines and Reading Lists;
- meeting with the Course Coordinator and/or with the LIC to talk about the unit or program.

Preparation does not include researching and preparing Unit Outlines and Reading Lists which, if required, must be paid for separately (see "other academic activities" below).

#### **7.1.3 Student Consultation**

Student consultation will normally occur at the rate of at least one half hour per week in total for each hour of lectures or tutorials given (including repeat lectures and tutorials).

This may include consultation:

- immediately adjacent to lectures or tutorials;
- at regular advertised times each week;
- through an open door policy; and/or
- through email correspondence.

### 7.1.4 Marking

In class marking means marking undertaken within the lecture or tutorial delivered (ie within the learning activity or the class). It includes:

- marking of student presentations given in tutorials, and
- marking of short answer/multiple choice tests which are conducted and marked within the lecture/tutorial or seminar.

A sessional staff member may be required to mark assignments and/or examination papers. In these circumstances once the final number of students in a unit is confirmed after the semester census date, the Head of School should arrange for the additional marking requirements to be paid by either issuing a new sessional employment contract or by using the Casual Academic Staff Contract Amendment Notification of Increase or Decrease in Sessional Staffing Hours Form which is available at Attachment 1 and also on the Human Resources website.

### 7.1.5 Other Required Academic Activities

A sessional staff member who is required to undertake an activity (eg attend an Orientation or Induction Program and/or participate in a School assessors' meeting) must be paid at the appropriate rate for that activity. It is important that Heads of School clearly specify those activities that a sessional staff member is required to undertake, and those activities which are voluntary and for which no payment will be made (eg an invitation to attend an open lecture by a visiting scholar).

The following duties must be paid for at the relevant "Other Academic Activity Rate":

- development of teaching and subject (unit) materials such as the preparation of unit guides;
- the conduct of practical classes, demonstrations, workshops, student field excursions, etc;
- the conduct of clinical sessions other than clinical nurse education;
- the conduct of performance and visual art studio sessions;
- musical coaching, repititeurship and musical accompanying other than with special educational service;
- preparation of reading lists and basic activities associated with subject/unit coordination;
- development of open/distance learning materials;
- consultation with students (other than associated with a lecture or tutorial);
- supervision; and
- attendance at School and/or Faculty meetings as required
- attendance at Orientation and Induction sessions as required.

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive, but is provided by way of examples and guidance.

## 7.2 Examples of Sessional Academic Workloads

The following table contains examples of sessional staff workloads:

	Per Week	Per 12 Week Semester
<b>Standard Lectures</b>	1 lecture per week includes: 1 hour of preparation 1 hour of delivery and 1 hour of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)	1 lecture per week means: 12 hours of preparation 12 hours of delivery and 12 hours of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)
<b>Repeat Lectures</b>	1 repeat lecture per week includes: 1 hour of delivery and	1 repeat lecture per week means: 12 hours of delivery and 12 hours of associated work (student

	1 hour of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)	consultation and/or in class marking)
<b>Standard Tutorials</b>	1 tutorial per week includes: 1 hour of preparation 1 hour of delivery and 1 hour of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)	1 tutorial per week means: 12 hours of preparation 12 hours of delivery and 12 hours of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)
<b>Repeat Tutorials</b>	1 repeat tutorial per week includes: 1 hour of delivery and 1 hour of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)	1 repeat tutorial per week means: 12 hours of delivery and 12 hours of associated work (student consultation and/or in class marking)
	<b>Major Assignment Marking - As Required</b>	
<b>Non-contemporaneous marking</b>	Standard marking of major assignments will normally be based on a ratio of 15 minutes per 1000 words or as determined by the Head of School	
<b>Examination Marking</b>	The number of papers to be marked per hour will be determined by the Head of School	

### 7.3 Payments to Sessional Staff

A sessional academic staff member will be paid on a fortnightly basis in line with the formal delivery of lectures, tutorials, clinical education and musical accompaniment as outlined in the Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff.

### 7.4 Advice of When Payment is Not to be Made

Human Resources will automatically pay the sessional academic staff member in accordance with the authorised Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff form.

If the sessional academic staff member does not perform any of the duties listed within the Employment Request form (eg the sessional academic staff member accesses 1 or 2 days of unpaid carer's leave), the supervisor must advise Human Resources ([hr@acu.edu.au](mailto:hr@acu.edu.au)) as soon as possible in order for the staff member not to be paid. In such circumstances the "Casual Academic Staff Contract Amendment [Notification of Change in Sessional Staffing Hours]" form should be completed to advise of the exact number of hours which are no longer to be paid. The submission of this form to Human Resources in a timely manner will avoid the possibility of an overpayment occurring which would then have to be recovered in line with the University's Payment of Salaries Policy.

### 7.5 Employment Engagement Period

The sessional engagement commences on the first date listed in the Employment Request for Sessional Academic Staff form. The date when the casual engagement finishes listed in this form is the date on which it is expected that all associated non-contact duties directly related to formal delivery will have been completed.

## **7.6 Access to University IT Systems**

Sessional academic staff will have access to relevant and approved University systems at least until the nominal end date for the autumn and spring semesters, being 31 August and 31 January respectively. The University uses its electronic resources to disseminate information to staff. Each sessional academic staff member is allocated an ACU email address and is expected to regularly access and maintain that email address in order to receive information from the University. Such information may include advice regarding accessing pay slips and payment summaries on the University's StaffConnect facility.

## **7.7 Induction and Staff Development**

Sessional academic staff who commence employment with the University for the first time are subject to the provisions of the University's Staff Induction Policy. The induction and orientation process for new staff at ACU provides a mechanism for introducing new staff members to their role and responsibilities and to the University's Mission so that they become integrated into the ACU environment and community as quickly as possible.

The responsibility for successful induction is shared between the nominated supervisor and the commencing staff member, supported by colleagues in the relevant organisational unit and in other areas of the University.

Sessional staff should be encouraged to participate in the University's Induction Program(s) and must receive payment at the relevant "other academic activity".

Where possible the University will provide sessional staff with opportunities for further staff development, normally on a voluntary basis. These may include attending professional development workshops and seminars offered by the University.

## **7.8 Meal Breaks**

A staff member will not be required to work for more than five consecutive hours, without taking an unpaid meal break of at least 30 minutes.

## **7.9 Notice Periods for Termination of Engagement**

A sessional academic staff member is required to give a minimum of one hour's notice of separation from employment with the University. The University may terminate the employment of a sessional academic staff member by giving one hour's notice.

## **7.10 Superannuation for Sessional Academic Staff**

The University makes minimum employer contributions of nine (9) per cent to superannuation to UniSuper on behalf of sessional academic staff members.

In circumstances where a Superannuation Fund does not accept employer contributions made on behalf of staff members who are over 70 years of age, the University will make equivalent contributions in the form of the payment of additional monies to such staff members.

The management of superannuation contributions for all staff is subject to the provisions of the University's Superannuation Policy.

## **7.11 Unpaid Carer's Leave for Sessional Academic Staff**

A sessional academic staff member is entitled to a period of up to 2 days unpaid carer's leave for each permissible occasion when a member of the staff member's immediate family or household requires care or support during such a period because of:

- a personal illness or injury, or
- an unexpected emergency affecting the member.

A sessional academic staff member is required to give her/his supervisor advice of her/his absence from the workplace as soon as possible in order for alternative arrangements to be made.

#### **7.12 Unpaid Compassionate Leave for Sessional Academic Staff**

A sessional academic staff member is entitled to a period of up to 2 days unpaid compassionate leave for each occasion when a member of the staff member's immediate family or household:

- contracts or develops a personal illness that poses a serious threat to her or his life; or
- sustains a personal injury that poses a serious threat to her or his life; or
- dies.

The sessional staff member may take compassionate leave for a particular permissible occasion if the leave is taken:

- (a) to spend time with the member of the staff member's immediate family or household who has contracted or developed the personal illness, or sustained the personal injury; or
- (b) after the death of the member of the sessional staff member's immediate family or household.

If the permissible occasion is the contraction or development of a personal illness, or the sustaining of a personal injury, the staff member may take the compassionate leave for that occasion at any time while the illness or injury persists.

A sessional academic staff member is required to give her/his supervisor advice of her/his absence from the workplace as soon as possible in order for alternative arrangements to be made.

#### **7.13 Recognition of Sessional Service for other Leave Purposes**

Sessional academic staff members will not have their sessional service counted as service for the purpose of calculating any other entitlements except for any applicable unpaid parental leave.

A sessional staff member may be entitled to unpaid parental leave and to the Federal Government's Paid Parental Leave where she/he becomes an eligible casual employee as provided for in the relevant Federal legislation.

For the purposes of eligibility for unpaid parental leave, an eligible casual employee is a person who has been employed as a casual or sessional academic on a regular and systematic basis for a sequence of periods of employment for a period of at least 12 months and who, but for the expected birth or placement of a child, would have a reasonable expectation of continuing engagement on a regular and systematic basis.

### **8 Conversion from Sessional to Non-Sessional [Regular] Academic Employment**

The University will call for applications for conversion from Sessional to Non-Sessional (Regular) Academic employment at least once per annum.

#### **8.1 Eligibility for Conversion**

**8.1.1** To be eligible to apply for conversion, a sessional staff member must have been employed and performing academic duties on a regular and systematic basis in the same or a similar role in the same School (or equivalent) over the immediately preceding period of twenty-four months.

**8.1.2** During this period, the sessional staff member must have worked at least 3 out of the 4 semesters and her/his average weekly hours worked must equal at least 50 per cent of the relevant ordinary weekly teaching contact hours that would have been worked by an equivalent full-time staff member.

**8.1.3** Applications for conversion will normally be considered for Teaching Focussed roles or positions, which may be available on a fractional, and/or part-time basis. The University may offer either conversion to a continuing appointment or to fixed-term appointments.

**8.1.4** Applications for conversion to Teaching and Research roles will normally only be considered from sessional staff who can demonstrate either possession of a relevant doctorate or substantial progress towards completion.

**8.1.5** The University shall not unreasonably refuse an application for conversion. However, it may refuse an application on reasonable grounds. A staff member whose application for conversion is rejected will be provided with written reasons for the refusal.

Reasonable grounds include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (i) the sessional staff member is a genuine retiree;
- (ii) the sessional staff member is performing work which will either cease to be required or will be performed by a regular staff member, within 26 weeks (from the date of application), eg. a staff member is returning from a secondment arrangement or a period of child rearing leave, or recruitment activity has commenced for the role;
- (iii) the sessional staff member has a primary occupation with the University or elsewhere, either as a regular staff member, a professional or as a self-employed person;
- (iv) the sessional staff member does not meet the essential requirements of the position;  
or
- (v) the work is ad hoc, intermittent, unpredictable or involves hours that are irregular.

**8.1.6** The essential requirements of the position are:

- (i) demonstrated capacity to undertake higher degree studies.
- (ii) demonstrated capacity to teach and, where appropriate, research to a satisfactory standard.
- (iii) relevant qualifications and/or professional experience.

## **8.2 Procedures for Conversion**

**8.2.1** During Semester 2, the University will call for Expressions of Interest from eligible sessional staff who are interested in converting to regular academic employment. Sessional staff will need to complete the Expression of Interest, provide copies of relevant supporting documentation and lodge their Expression of Interest with the University through the Careers@ACU page.

**8.2.2** Human Resources and the School or Faculty will determine whether the sessional staff member meets the eligibility criterion. For the purposes of determining, the average weekly hours worked must equal at least 50 per cent of the relevant ordinary weekly teaching contact hours that would have been worked by an equivalent full-time staff member, this will be 50 percent of the relevant teaching contact hours outlined by Academic Career Pathway, as detailed in the Academic Career Pathways in Schedule 4 of the Agreement.

**8.2.3** The School or Faculty will consider Expressions of Interest from staff who meet the essential criteria and who meet the essential requirements of the position. Evidence to support an Expression of Interest may include:

- copies of Unit and other Teaching Evaluations undertaken in the past 24 months
- copies of undergraduate and higher degrees and/or evidence of enrolment in a higher degree program (including a report from the HDR supervisor); and/or
- copy of membership of the relevant professional association

The selection of successful applicants will occur consistent with the University's Recruitment and Selection Policy. Applicants may be requested to provide additional supporting documentation and/or evidence and will normally be interviewed by a Faculty or School Sessional Conversion Committee.

**8.2.4** Successful applicants will be placed on an Eligibility List which will remain current for 12 months. Applicants who are on the Eligibility List may be offered either a fixed-term or continuing contract of employment, which may be an Academic Teaching Focussed appointment or an Academic Teaching and Research appointment. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised in writing by Human Resources of the reasons why their Expression of Interest has not been successful.

**8.2.5** The University reserves the right to appoint or to not appoint sessional academic staff members who apply for conversion under the provisions of this Policy.

## **9 Policy Review**

The University may make changes to this Policy to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this Policy may forward her/his suggestions to the Director, Human Resources.

## **10 Further Assistance**

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult her/his nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in her/his work area. Should further advice be needed, she/he should contact the Human Resources Consultant responsible for her/his campus.

## **11 Related Policies**

Compassionate Leave Policy  
Payment of Salaries  
Personal Leave Policy  
Recruitment and Selection Policy  
Superannuation Policy