TUTOR EMPLOYMENT AND ADMINISTRATION POLICY*

PREAMBLE

The School of Life Sciences (SOLS) runs practical classes and/or tutorials in many of the courses offered at the first, second, and third year level. Tutors are often employed to supervise or instruct undergraduate students, and many of these tutors are postgraduate students. Tutoring is a common way for postgraduates to gain teaching experience which is particularly useful if planning an academic career.

Currently, postgraduates seeking to be tutors are employed as 'Casual Tutors' (variable hrs/week). Payment for tutoring is at rates determined by the University and the National Tertiary Education Industry Union and ratified by the Australian Industrial Commission. Selection criteria must be met before a person is employed as a 'Casual Tutor':

TUTOR NUMBERS

We have a responsibility to provide advanced practical training in certain courses, and to provide students with reasonable quality and safety. The safety aspect is critical and students are not permitted to be left unsupervised in a laboratory class. We are therefore obliged to provide at least one tutor for all practical classes. This also implies that the Course Coordinator (or supervising academic) should attend practical classes as well.

The supervising academic should cover various needs that cannot be dealt with by the tutor(s), be present when the tutor has to depart from the class, and solve unanticipated problems that arise.

First, second & third year student to staff ratio 16:1
up to 16 students 1 part time tutor. Course Coordinator himself/herself.
17-32 students 2 part time tutors
33-48 students 3 part time tutors
49-64 students 4 part time tutors
65-80 students 5 part time tutors and so on…..

Certain practical classes require a lower student to staff ratio, and such needs must be negotiated by the relevant Course Coordinator with the tutor coordinator on a case by case basis. Examples of such needs include field courses and practicals in which complex, dangerous and/or expensive techniques and equipment is used. In addition, the creative use of a relatively large number of tutors can get around the greater expense of purchasing numerous sets of expensive equipment. For example: Instead of running six sets of the same expensive experiment simultaneously (thereby needing six sets of the same equipment) with relatively few tutors, the six different experiments could be run in each practical (thereby needing only one set of equipment for each experiment for the entire semester) and one tutor for each experiment.

TUTOR HOURS

Course Coordinators should in the first instance, submit estimates of number of tutor hours required per course and related maximum costs. Budgets will then be determined for courses by the tutor coordinator in consultation with the School Executive Officer, within the context of the School's budget. Unforeseen costs, as a result of work that had not been anticipated at the planning stage, are to be considered on a case by case basis, but are to be avoided if at all possible.

For field trips, the number of hours worked by tutors needs to be planned as carefully as possible. The ideal situation for those field trips that are held as part of a course’s practical component, would be for field trip hours to replace time that would otherwise have been scheduled for practicals. For example, 16 hours spent in the field should reduce formal contact in the laboratory by 16 hours. This is as much a student workload issue as a costing issue.

Tutors on field trips are to be paid for work done, and academic supervisors are to monitor the hours worked, and should adjust the assignments so that they can be completed without students’ and tutors’ working hours becoming excessive.

FIELD-BASED COURSES

All field trips and field courses are required to include at least one tutor with first aid certification.

Travel/meal allowance for time spent travelling to and from off-campus site must be paid. Before the commencement of the trip, the Course Coordinator will strictly specify contact hours on field courses. Meals are provided gratis during field courses (at off-campus site), and no claim will be made/accepted on return.

Note:
G:\policies&procedures\Policies & Procedures Sub Documents\Staffing Sub Documents\School_Tutor_policy_2002.doc
1. Where a field course includes one or more nights off campus, expenses incurred can be claimed through the usual process using standard allowance for meals and receipted expenses for accommodation.

2. Where a field trip does not include an overnight stay off campus, tutors may be required to bring their own lunch and other sustenance

**SELECTION CRITERIA AND APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES**

1. The person must be competent in both spoken and written English.

2. The person must hold at least a Bachelor of Science degree (or equivalent), with significant third level experience of Botany, Entomology or Zoology, as appropriate for the particular course.

3. In accordance with the University Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan, all postgraduate students who wish to be part-time tutors in the School of Life Sciences must undertake a tutor training program, usually held during Orientation Week (the week immediately before commencement of Semester 1, each year). Once a tutor has attended one tutor training program, they are not required to attend these in the following year(s). Tutors can expect to be remunerated (once only) for attendance of this workshop.

   The training sessions are currently coordinated by Dr Hock Ng (Department of Botany) room 335, John Hines building, ext. 52441 or email h.ng@botany.uq.edu.au and Dr Janet Lanyon (Department of Zoology & Entomology) room 214, Goddard Building ext. 54416 or email jlanyon@zen.uq.edu.au

4. Appointments are made on merit, taking into account previous teaching experience and performance, and preference is given to postgraduate students enrolled in SOLS.

5. Reappointment is subject to satisfactory performance in any previously held appointment as determined by the Course Coordinator in consultation with the tutor coordinator.

**MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS OF TUTORS**

1. The person must be familiar with the material covered in the laboratory/tutorial prior to the commencement of the laboratory/tutorial.

2. The person must attend any weekly laboratory/tutorial preparation meetings that are convened by the Course Coordinator (payment is made for attending these meetings – but not if there is no preparation involved).

3. If a person cannot attend their assigned laboratory/tutorial session it is their responsibility to find a suitable replacement tutor (i.e. one who is experienced in tutoring that course). They must inform the Course Coordinator and obtain the Coordinator's approval of the replacement before the arrangement is implemented.

**EXPECTATIONS OF TUTORS**

Tutors are often the first staff member in SOLS with whom students have person-to-person contact. Tutors must therefore display enthusiasm and conduct themselves in a professional manner. Being professional includes keeping “an arms length” from students with respect to gossip and socialising, and abiding by the University's Code of Practice with respect to fraternisation, discrimination and sexual harassment.

**CASUAL TUTORING HOURS**

Casual tutors are paid on a “contact hour” basis. In other words, tutors can claim only for the hours they worked with the students and not the total duration for which each laboratory class is scheduled (usually 2 or 3 hours). Tutor hours for each course may need to be adjusted (up or down) after the commencement of courses as student numbers change.

Honours students are permitted to tutor only one 3 hour or two 2 hour laboratories per week, on average across the teaching weeks of a semester, and only if they have the written approval of their principal supervisor. Tutoring in the second semester of an honours year is not recommended, as achievement of a good grade necessitates a dedicated approach, especially leading up to the thesis submission. If an Honours student wishes to tutor in their second semester of candidature, they need the written approval of their supervisor.
Ph.D. and M.Sc. students receiving University of Queensland or APA awards are allowed to work as tutors for a maximum of 9 contact hours per week (this includes all paid work, not just contract tutoring). Those postgrads without awards are permitted to work up to 18 hours per week.

**HOW TO OBTAIN CASUAL TUTORING**

Persons seeking a tutoring post (for both Botany or ZEN courses) should register their interest with Dr Janet Lanyon (Zoology and Entomology) or Dr Hock Ng (Botany) in the first instance, at least two months before the beginning of the teaching semester. They should fill in a summary application form, available from the SOLS Student Centre (Hines Building).

People seeking tutoring in second or third year courses should also contact the relevant Course Coordinator at least two months before the beginning of the teaching semester.

The Tutor Coordinators will make recommendations after consultation with the relevant Course Coordinator for the appointment of part time tutors to the HoS prior to the beginning of each semester. Appointment procedure will be as per casual staff appointments. The Tutor Coordinators, Drs Janet Lanyon and Hock Ng will arrange appointments with School Administrative staff.

4. Applications for tutoring must include:
   (i) a summary application form (in the case of ‘new’ tutors)
   (ii) a letter of application containing information about the student's areas of biological expertise, research interests, and the name of their principal supervisor. A brief description of previous tutor experience should also be included along with the names, addresses (including email address if known) and phone/fax numbers of academic referees. Previous tutor experience is highly advantageous. The letter of application should include some indication of the courses(s) the student would like to tutor, the requested number of hours of tutoring per week and daily availability.

   *Part-time tutors will be sent copies of employment contracts to inform them of their responsibilities and rights.*

**RATES & CONDITIONS for 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>20A</th>
<th>20B</th>
<th>20E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student contact</td>
<td>$23.24/hr</td>
<td>$25.51/hr</td>
<td>$27.79/hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking @</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation/ Meeting @</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20A = standard tutor rate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20B = Base plus Course Co-ordination or PhD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20E = Advanced - Level B status – supervising examiner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This includes time-tabled contact and other student consultation as approved by coordinator. Tutors are NOT permitted to undertake formal lectures. Replacement lecturer (appointments) must be approved by the HoS and special rates of pay apply.

Attendance at pre-lab/preparation meetings with Coordinators is mandatory and tutors will be remunerated (a maximum of one hour) where these meetings involve preparatory work for lab classes.

Tutors must submit completed Casual Tutoring Claim forms (available from corridor near the photocopy room in Goddard Building and Hines building or SOLS intranet site) with details of the hours claimed, course code and signed by Course Coordinator to Administrative staff, School of Life Sciences reception, John Hines building, by 4.00pm on the Monday of the week before payday.