

Casual Employment Guideline

This document provides important guidance to managers regarding the engagement of staff on a casual basis.

What is it?

This Guideline is a resource to assist in managing the employment of casual staff.

Who is this for?

This Guideline applies to managers wishing to employ members of staff on a casual basis who will be employed by RMIT University. It does not apply to casual members of staff engaged with RMIT Training or RMIT Online.

1. Pre-employment checks

An offer of casual employment, extension or re-employment may not be made until the preferred candidate has passed all required pre-employment checks. The People Team will conduct the following verification checks where appropriate:

- Police checks
- Working with Children checks
- Verification of qualifications and/or certifications
- Australian Working Rights check
- For TAFE Senior Management only – check of RTO suspensions and cancellations for the past 3 years.
- Confirmation of Aboriginality for Special Measures roles (this needs to be requested on application for Special Measures roles)
- Sanctioned country screening and assisting the hiring manager with the sanctions process when relevant.
- Any other verification of mandatory requirements.

The Hiring Manager will assist as required under the direction of the People Team.

2. Recruitment and Selection

- 2.1. It is important that casual members of staff are assessed as having the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to undertake their duties and are provided with adequate support. The recruitment of all casual members of staff, including the pre-employment checking, must be managed by the University casual Talent Acquisition team.
- 2.2. There are obligations regarding specific information to be included in offers of employment to casual members of staff which are explained in the relevant enterprise agreement. All offers of employment to casual members of staff must be made via the casual Talent Acquisition team.

- 2.3. Many casual staff at RMIT are visa holders. A visa provides specific work rights and conditions - a common condition is a maximum hours of work per week - and casual staff may move from one visa type to another resulting in a change to work rights and conditions.
- 2.4. RMIT cannot not employ a casual staff member who does not hold a valid visa with appropriate work rights for their current engagement. If a casual staff member's visa is revoked or amended (which may happen at any time) and that casual staff member loses their right to work under the current arrangements, then RMIT must immediately cease providing work for that casual staff member.
- 2.5. The RMIT casual Talent Acquisition Team conduct visa/ work rights checks prior to each new engagement, re-engagement or extension of a casual staff member, and casual members of staff are required to advise of any change to their visa or work rights.
- 2.6. RMIT managers must not set any expectation or imply to any casual staff member that RMIT will be able to provide visa sponsorship.
- 2.7. RMIT is committed to all candidates being treated equitably, with care, respect and fairness throughout the recruitment and selection process. RMIT complies with legislation and supports its commitments to gender equity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to ensure a diverse workforce profile capable of achieving RMIT's strategic objectives. This includes staff employed through direct casual employment with RMIT as well as independent contractor arrangements.

3. Duration of engagements

- 3.1. The University must not use casual employment in circumstances which require significant numbers of hours per week for the conduct of long term regular and systematic work. If a manager has work to be performed which meets this description then engagement of casual staff should not be used and the manager should consider alternative work options such as part time, job-sharing, part-year, annualised, fixed term (where permissible), labour hire (agency temps) and other flexible work arrangements or task allocations.
 - a) The academic calendar is based around semesters and whilst it is acceptable to offer casual engagements a semester at a time, a period of casual employment may not normally be offered which exceeds six months in duration and must never be offered for more than a 12 month duration.
 - b) From the outset of an engagement managers should not make arrangements for, or create expectations of, further ongoing casual work or consecutive future engagements.

4. Payment

- 4.1. Casual rates of pay are prescribed in the relevant enterprise agreement although it is permissible to negotiate rates of pay in excess of those prescribed. In many cases the prescribed rate includes additional pre-paid hours of associated work.
 - a) Professional casual staff should be offered a minimum of three hours work per engagement unless agreed otherwise; employed in another primary occupation with the University or are RMIT students who would be attending the University anyway on the same day as the engagement.
- 4.2. Casual academic staff members will be paid at the academic judgement rate for performing activities 'where academic judgement is required.' (see cl 41.10 of the *RMIT University Enterprise Agreement 2018*). As a general rule, academic judgement will not be required (or paid) in circumstances where an academic without subject matter expertise would, using the rubric provided, be able to assess the work in question to the same standard as would a relevant academic possessing the relevant subject matter expertise and using the same rubric.
- 4.3. Examples of when Academic Judgement will be required include assessment of student work where analysis is required such as when a student is required to make an argument or build a case or when the rubric requires judgement to award a score within a range. Examples include:
 - a) Essays and case studies,
 - b) Assignments which require detailed reading, assessment and feedback,
 - c) Project reports and prac/lab reports,
 - d) Some short answer questions (where subject matter expertise is required to assess the answer),
 - e) Portfolio work, self-directed projects and studio projects.
- 4.4. Examples of when Academic Judgement will not be required include assessment of student work where students are simply required to present or recall information and when the rubric consists of a checklist of facts, with accompanying marks (eg one mark for naming the principle and a second mark for identifying X as the missing factor). Examples include:
 - a) Simple right or wrong answers,
 - b) Multiple choice,
 - c) Marking numerical answers,
 - d) Some short answer questions (limited to questions with a pre-defined and finite set of answers and accompanying marks),
 - e) Tick-box assessment.

5. Induction

- 5.1. Induction is as important for new casual staff members as it is for other staff members. The supervisor is responsible for providing all new casual staff members with an induction to RMIT, their role and the work environment.
- 5.2. New casual members of staff should be advised by their supervisor of the requirement to complete the mandatory online training modules as soon as they start. Completion is required within one month. Casual staff must also be advised of any specific school policies and procedures, particularly in relation to student assessment, safety and emergency procedures in workshops or laboratories, and what is expected of them.
- 5.3. Casual staff will be paid for up to five hours upon the successful completion of induction. Payment is at the 'other required academic activity' or 'non teaching duty' rate for academic and vocational education employees respectively. Professional, childcare and senior executive employees should use their regular hourly rate. The University may require evidence of completion of the induction modules.
 - a) Induction training can be reasonably completed within 5 hours and should not take longer.

6. Development

- 6.1. Building and maintaining relationships with casual staff members is critical to the effectiveness of their employment at RMIT. Two way exchanges of information; giving and receiving feedback and advice; the development of a team atmosphere; invitations to casual staff members to attend staff functions, orientation sessions and briefings can all contribute to the success of the casual staff member's appointment with RMIT.
- 6.2. Applying equal opportunity and gender equality commitments across the Employee Lifecycle. This includes implementing retention strategies to support retaining diverse talent in development and engagement of RMIT's casual staff and independent contractors.
- 6.3. Creating a culturally safe and responsible working environment that enables career advancement and professional development.
- 6.4. Casual employment is subject to satisfactory performance in accordance with the expectations set by the staff member's supervisor and the supervisor should maintain contact and provide feedback to the casual staff member regarding their performance.
 - a) Where the casual staff member is newly employed contact should be regular and feedback and advice given frequently.
 - b) A casual member of staff who has is not meeting expectations should be provided with a reasonable opportunity to improve their performance.
 - c) In the event that, despite receiving feedback and opportunity to improve, a casual staff member is not performing at the expected level the manager should contact the HR team for advice.

7. Conversion

- 7.1. A Vocational Education or Professional casual staff member may apply in writing for conversion to continuing or fixed-term employment provided that they meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the relevant enterprise agreement. The University may refuse a formal application for conversion on reasonable grounds and if it does so, will provide written reasons for rejecting the application.
- 7.2. Academic, childcare and senior executive staff members who are employed casually may apply in writing for conversion to continuing or fixed term employment.
- a) Eligibility criteria to apply for conversion are that the academic/childcare or senior executive must have worked in the same work unit for the last 24 months in regular and systematic employment at an equivalent of at least 40% full time load; have a performance level that meets expectation or above and a satisfactory conduct record.
- In addition to the above a casual academic employee must have a PhD or have substantial progress towards a PhD
- b) Eligible applications for conversion will then be considered and may be refused on reasonable grounds in writing. Relevant managers should contact the People team for further guidance on acceptance criteria.
- 7.3. Managers should remember that conversion to fixed term employment can only occur with a valid reason to justify the fixed term nature of the employment.
- 7.4. Conversion to continuing or fixed term employment should be at a similar time fraction equivalent to the hours worked as a casual member of staff unless agreed otherwise.
- a) This might be achieved with part time, annualised or part year contracts of employment.
- 7.5. Work activity and duties of converted continuing/fixed term members of staff should be the same as those performed during their casual engagement(s) unless agreed otherwise.

Document history

Version	Last updated	Authority	Author
2.0	18 th February 2021	Employee Lifecycle Policy	Director, Policy and Workplace Relations
2.1	25 th October 2021	Employee Lifecycle Policy	Senior Manager, Policy and Workplace Relations