

# Royal Historical Society

## *Employing Temporary Teaching Staff in History Code of Good Practice*



Last Updated, January 2020

### Introduction

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This Code of Good Practice highlights issues, policies, and standards that history departments (or equivalent units) should consider when employing temporary teaching staff. It has been developed and updated through the Royal Historical Society's regular work on HE policy and consultation with Early Career Researchers (ECRs). The original document dates back to a survey of postgraduate and postdoctoral historians undertaken with History Lab Plus in 2012.

Please send any comments or suggestions to the RHS Research & Communications Officer:  
rescommsofficer@royalhistoc.org.

### 1. Integration into the Department (or equivalent unit)

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#### To promote the inclusion of temporary teaching staff:

- a. Introduce them to academic and administrative colleagues, especially those in their own area of research interest, and to each other.
- b. Include them on staff email lists and invite them to staff events, both academic and social.
- c. Give them representation on teaching committees (or other appropriate bodies).
- d. Give them a guide to all administrative procedures, a list of key contacts and of important dates.
- e. Make sure they know who to contact about any difficulties, especially regarding:
  - 1) receipt of their pay;
  - 2) the conduct of teaching;
  - 3) the content of their teaching;
  - 4) equipment and facilities;
  - 5) managing classroom issues and student-facing problems;
  - 6) pastoral care. It is vital that ECRs know how to seek support in dealing with student problems and pastoral issues.
- f. Allocate a mentor, ideally someone in their own research area.

### 2. Staff Development

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- a. Temporary staff should be included in any peer-review or personal development processes within the department, including peer-review of teaching.
- b. Temporary teaching staff should be offered training, and paid for the time required. Ideally, they should be encouraged and supported in working towards becoming Associate Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (scheme details at: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/fellowship/>).

- c. Advice should be available regarding research and career plans from assigned mentors and/or other more senior staff.
- d. Institutional support, including mentoring, library access and affiliated status, should be available to recent doctoral candidates in the year following completion of their studies. The same facilities should be offered during vacations, including the summer, to people on 10-month or term-time only contracts.
- e. Wherever possible, institutional support should be available to temporary staff preparing funding applications.

### **3. Conditions of Employment**

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- a. Temporary staff should be offered formal contracts, with standard employment rights, including those on hourly employment.
- b. Temporary staff should be on the payroll and paid on time regularly, without prompting, and at the level promised.
- c. Fractional teaching contracts should include preparation and marking time, especially for course convenors.
- d. Fractional teaching contracts should allow for any administrative roles allocated to the member of staff, including time spent attending any required meetings.
- e. Fractional teaching contracts should include payment for time spent attending staff development/training sessions.
- f. When hours required for preparation, marking and administrative work are taken into account, it should be ensured that temporary staff are paid at least the Living Wage.
- g. In ordinary circumstances, temporary teaching staff should be offered contracts and informed about the courses they are teaching at least a month before the teaching term begins. Wherever possible, this should be done earlier.
- h. Extremely short-term contracts, for example when REF deadlines are imminent, are not acceptable.
- i. In departments (or equivalent units) where research-led teaching is a priority, this should be recognised in the conditions and work of temporary teaching staff.
- j. Summer months should never be treated as unpaid leave.