



Casualised Teaching in Art History

Statement of Good Practice

Introduction

This statement is based on a survey and report produced by the Higher Education Committee of the Association for Art History (AAH) on the question of the employment status and experience of temporary staff working in art history in the UK. For the purpose of this statement, we define ‘casualised’ workers as those with temporary (full-time or part-time contracts); those on fractional or hourly contracts and those on post-doctoral (or other similar research) posts—in short, any employment that is not permanent.

Art history staff in non-permanent positions face disadvantageous employment terms and conditions which are not encountered by those with permanent contracts. These can lead to a ‘cycle of precarity’ from which one cannot progress and to adverse effects on employees’ mental and physical health which may, ultimately, affect student learning. We highlight these inequities and make recommendations to improve the working conditions of casualised workers in several areas: Workload and Compensation, Development and Research Support and Conditions of Employment.

Workload and Compensation

1. Any time required to prepare for teaching, including writing course material over the summer, must be compensated. For those leading tutorials or group discussion, this should include attending relevant lectures.
2. Fractional and non-permanent members of staff on hourly contracts should be invited to departmental meetings and should be paid their regular hourly rate for attending.
3. Workloads should be consistent with the job description and agreed upon in advance. Teaching and administration loads must be calculated in a manner that is transparent to both the employee and the supervisor.
4. Precarious staff should not be asked to do *any* unpaid work; and permanent members of staff should have a clear idea of the responsibilities of colleagues on non-permanent contracts in order to know what work they can reasonably expect them to do.
5. The workload should not exceed the fractional nature of the contract. E.g. the workload of casualised staff on a 0.5FTE contract should not be greater than 50% of a fulltime permanent member of staff. Precarious staff on a fractional contract should never be asked to teach more than permanent staff on a 1.0FTE contract. And Staff on fractional contracts of less than 0.5FTE should not be required to work more than three days per week.
6. Whenever possible, replacements should be ‘like for like’. A staff member on 1.0 FTE given full-time research leave should be replaced by someone on a 1.0 FTE contract. If a 1.0FTE member of staff is replaced by someone on a fractional contract covering only their teaching and administrative work, then extra care needs to be taken to ensure their workload is not in excess of that fraction.

7. The issuance of discontinuous, multi-year contracts (of eight to ten months in length) to obviate payment during the summer or outside of term should be avoided.

Development and Research Support

1. Casualised staff should be given access to financial support for research activities, even if the contract is teaching-only. This could include monies for publication costs, conference expenses, and other research needs. Casualised staff on a 1.0FTE should have the same basic research support as entry-level 1.0FTE permanent staff.
2. Research activities of casualised staff should be recognised and promoted through the same channels used for permanent staff. This could include announcing major publication in staff forums and promoting publications via social media.
3. Individual members of permanent staff should informally support the research activities of precarious scholars within their communities. This can include giving feedback on prospective publications, advice about the job market and publishing industry, and expressing interest in their career development. Non-permanent staff should be included in departmental and/or university-wide mentoring schemes.
4. Teaching training and support should be offered on an annual basis. Casualised staff should be encouraged and supported to make use of institutional training for teaching in higher education, for course briefings and for technical resourced used in teaching. Time spent on training should be paid and/or recognised in their workload.
5. To increase visibility and a sense of belonging, casualised staff should be put on staff email lists and invited to seminars, research events and social events.

Conditions of Employment

1. Casualised staff should be given access to financial support for research activities, even if the contract is teaching-only. This could include monies for publication costs, conference expenses, and other research needs. Casualised staff on a 1.0FTE should have the same basic research support as entry-level 1.0FTE permanent staff.
2. As part of a formal induction provided to casualised staff, departments should lay out key employment practices in a policy document that is made available to both current and prospective staff, which covers: recruitment and selection, responsibilities, pay and hours, training, support, and performance feedback.
3. All casualised staff, like their permanently employed colleagues, should be issued employment contracts. They should be put on the departmental payroll so that they are paid monthly rather than at the end of term.
4. Casualised teaching staff should be informed of the courses they will be teaching, and a contract offered at least one month prior to the commencement of those classes, longer is preferable if not required for courses that must be newly created.
5. Casualised staff should take part in annual staff development and performance appraisals.
6. Various benefits offered to permanent staff should be similarly offered to casualised staff including: Office space; contact information for pastoral care and student mental health issues, for staff union representation; and access to library, email, on-line services both in an out of term time if on a ten-month or term-only contract.