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## Planning Staff Development

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**PLANNING STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

**DESIGNING INDUCTIONS**

**OTHER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

**PAYMENT**

**COMMUNICATION**





# Planning Staff Development

This is a practical section that takes you through the stages of planning and implementing support and development. As well as an overview of the planning process, it includes guidelines on providing tailored induction programmes for part-time lecturers, other approaches to staff development, and a look at the issues of payment and communication which often block part-timers from taking part in development activities.



# Planning Staff Development

ACTIVITY	KEY QUESTIONS	POINTS TO CONSIDER
<b>DRAW UP A STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN/STRATEGY FOR PART-TIME STAFF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does it fit in with what is already going on?</li> <li>• Do your aims align with the organisational aims?</li> <li>• What provision is already available?</li> <li>• Do part-time lecturers make any use of it? If not, why not?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any particular “triggers” to introducing staff development for part-time lecturers? Eg quality audit, new legislation, need for re-skilling, expansion etc</li> </ul>
<b>ASSESS NEEDS AND INTERESTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you want to get from it?</li> <li>• What do you need them to know about?</li> <li>• What do they want to know about?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is going to identify the staff development needs? Part-time Lecturers/Programme Leaders/Mentors/you?</li> <li>• Identified from student feedback/appraisals/peer review?</li> <li>• Is it going to be driven by bottom-up demand, or top-down strategy, or can the two meet in the middle?</li> <li>• You can use a questionnaire – but be aware that people are likely to tick far more than they will ever attend, and return rates tend to be low</li> <li>• Are you doing a needs analysis or asking people to choose between planned options?</li> <li>• How can you ensure that the perspectives of lecturers who attend shape the activities and their presentation?</li> </ul>
<b>PLAN ACTIVITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about appropriate modes of delivery</li> <li>• How can you make timings flexible?</li> <li>• What are other departments doing that might provide a useful model?</li> <li>• Are the necessary skills and knowledge available in the department, the institution, or will you need to get someone in?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't have to be a course! Could be sitting in on someone else's session, or informal buddying</li> <li>• Will it be backed up by individual mentoring or action learning?</li> <li>• If you are running workshops or seminars, you need to think about the timing. Lunchtime may be convenient, but only those already there on that day are likely to attend. Many part-time lecturers travel a distance, and coming in for two hours in the middle of a day is not an effective use of their time.</li> <li>• A half-day may take more organising but get a better turn-out, particularly if time and travel are paid for. Some places have found Saturdays a popular option, as it doesn't conflict with professional activities.</li> <li>• Timings within the term are an important factor too – just before term starts may be a better option than when everyone is busy with teaching or assessment. The best solution is probably flexibility – offer as many options as you realistically can and you'll get a wider range of people!</li> </ul>

ACTIVITY	KEY QUESTIONS	POINTS TO CONSIDER
<b>ARRANGE APPROPRIATE WORKSHOPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Who is going to be responsible for organising/running the sessions?</li> <li>● If you are co-ordinating the staff development, how is the role going to fit into <i>your</i> time?</li> </ul>	
<b>SORT OUT FUNDING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How will it be paid for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff time</li> <li>● Facilitator time</li> <li>● Refreshments etc</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Will you need to bid for extra funding, either internally or nationally?</li> <li>● If you are paying participants, how will this be administered?</li> </ul>	
<b>LET THE VISITING LECTURERS KNOW WHAT IS AVAILABLE</b> (SEE "COMMUNICATION" SECTION)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How will you let the part-time lecturers know about it?</li> </ul>	
<b>RUN THE WORKSHOPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Will attendance be voluntary/mandatory/paid for?</li> <li>● What will you do about the ones that don't attend?</li> </ul>	
<b>EVALUATE THE RESULTS</b>	See separate section	
<b>RE-ASSESS PLAN....ETC</b>	Does your original plan need to be revised in the light of feedback and experience?	

# Designing Inductions

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## INTRODUCTION

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How do you achieve successful induction of part-time lecturers? And how does this differ from the induction offered to other full or part-time members of staff? In some institutions there will be no differentiation and all part-time lecturers will be treated as any other member of staff, but in other Art & Design departments/schools there may be no formal system at all for inducting part-time lecturers. Detailed in this section are some examples of different approaches used and some issues for consideration.

Most institutions have a comprehensive local and central induction system – including mentoring, central meetings, equal opportunities training etc. It is unlikely that part-time lecturers will be part of this process. They are likely to have a specific contract to teach for a certain number of hours and no allowance may be made for attending additional meetings or staff development events.

Therefore it is important that within the faculty or department where the part-time lecturers are working the key messages that the institution wants to get across are identified and, at the same time, the part-time lecturers have an opportunity to say what they want to know. Induction sessions can then be arranged so that they will be useful and mutually beneficial to both management and the part-time lecturers. Think how to include all part-time lecturers – is it just the new starters that need to be addressed or is there important new information or changes that must be communicated to all the part-time lecturers regardless of how long they have been around? Perhaps splitting a session – the first two hours just for new starters, who are then joined by existing part-time lecturers for a more general update would be one way of addressing both these groups.

## Mini Case Study

### LONDON COLLEGE OF FASHION

As we have a very inclusive approach to staff development, all new staff are encouraged to attend the 'Preparing to Teach' sessions run termly through the Centre for Learning and Teaching in Art and Design and are paid to attend specific college training events. Our priority now is to develop strategies for working with the part-time lecturers who are 'hard to reach' for a number of reasons (working elsewhere, family commitments). This will include targeted small groups or one to one staff development when necessary.

An associate lecturer induction event was recently held and was very successful. Payment was made to the part-time lecturers for their attendance. The timing was important, we ran it early evening and for just an hour and a half – so it wasn't too much of a commitment for the part-time lecturers. Six new members of staff attended and the approach was more interactive. We discussed working with dyslexic students and how to deal with lateness and non-attendance. The evaluation was positive.

Think about timings and the length of the sessions. Does the session need to be a whole day, morning or afternoon? Perhaps one or two shorter sessions would be better over a lunchtime slot or early evening once the day's teaching is over. Other institutions have held sessions during holiday periods or on a Saturday morning, which have been well attended as there was no overlap with teaching.

The case study also raised the question of payment for attendance. This would have to be agreed and declared when invitations were issued. Payment at a 'meetings rate', often much lower than the teaching rate, is often acceptable to both the institution and the part-time lecturers or a flat fee for the session could be agreed.

Including some interactive elements in the session is useful – not only to keep the attention of the attendees but also to give them an opportunity to share experiences and to consider questions and scenarios without being 'preached' at. Although part-time lecturers may not be trained academics they will have a wealth of experience

from their professional practice, which they will be able to use in discussions.

It is also sensible to concentrate on one or two specific issues rather than try to give a quick overview of everything. There is too much information to cover in one session and you run the risk of confusing people and achieving very little. The part-time lecturers want 'survival' information rather than to be weighed down with lots of what they consider 'unnecessary documentation'. Focussing on one or two main issues, and getting the part-time lecturers to work in groups around these, will ensure that messages get across clearly and the part-time lecturers have learnt something useful.

A typical induction programme would include a welcome to the faculty and the institution, practical information on how to work the systems (including how to get paid) and also an introduction to some key contacts. Sessions on quality, learning and teaching, student support or health & safety would usually follow. The part-time lecturers often want some clarity on what exactly is their role - and how does it fit in to the existing set-up?

What goes into an induction programme should be complemented / reflected by what is in the part-time lecturer handbook and there will be many overlaps. Perhaps the handbook could be handed out at the induction session and people's attention drawn to some of the main points. The remaining time together could then be used to concentrate on a specific issue and to work interactively.

There will inevitably be late starters – how do these people get picked up? Are there notes from the previous meeting that the programme leader could go through with them along with a part-time lecturer handbook of information?

Feedback forms are essential for two reasons. To make sure that the session was right in terms of timing, length and content and to pick up issues and concerns to form the basis of future sessions for part-time lecturers.

Feedback from sessions will hopefully be positive and it is likely that networking has been one of the major benefits: finding out how others cope and share hints and tips. It is likely too for some form of follow-up to be requested. The part-time lecturers will hopefully have learned a lot and feel valued by being included in the induction process but overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information to take in. "There can't be a big event at the beginning of term and then do nothing again for a year – the sessions need to be regular" was a

## Designing Inductions

quote from one part-time lecturer following a faculty induction session at her institution.

Part-time lecturers will want the induction sessions to run earlier in the year, preferably before they start teaching and often also ask “when will I know if you need me next year?” This is a problem as the department may not know until quite close to the start of the new academic year how many students they have and therefore the requirements for part-time lecturers to cover classes. The part-time lecturers need to know as soon as possible so that they can organise their time between ‘professional’ work and tutoring, and may well tutor at more than one institution. The longer you leave it the less likely you are to get the best part-time lecturers – they will have made commitments elsewhere. This is also why induction never takes place early enough – the part-time lecturers come in just in time to start teaching and induction gets pushed until things have calmed down – in October or November.

As well as a faculty or school level induction session there is a lot of information that a part-time lecturer will need relating to the programme that he or she is teaching on. The case study at the end of this section is based on a programme level induction session run for part-time lecturers.

Each programme leader will have specific issues that their part-time lecturers will need to know that may only be relevant to that programme and an induction at programme level will be able to be very specific – especially relating to equipment and resources used. It is also a real opportunity to network with the other members of the team, hourly paid lecturers and part-time or full-time staff.

Induction of part-time lecturers is important for an institution: to ensure that they are fully briefed on issues, feel confident about the job they are undertaking and so that they feel part of the team. As long as the following issues are considered when planning induction events then they should be positive and beneficial to both the lecturer and the institution.

- ❖ **TIMING**
- ❖ **LENGTH OF SESSION**
- ❖ **PAYMENT FOR ATTENDANCE / COST TO THE INSTITUTION**
- ❖ **HANDBOOK OF INFORMATION**
- ❖ **INTERACTIVE ELEMENT**

## Designing Inductions

- ❖ PERSPECTIVES OF THE PARTICIPANTS
- ❖ PRIOR EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS
- ❖ FOCUS – ON A SPECIFIC ISSUE OR AT PROGRAMME LEVEL
- ❖ FEEDBACK
- ❖ FUTURE FOLLOW ON SESSIONS AND TOPICS

## Mini Case Study

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

*A programme specific induction session was run for  
Graphic Design & Illustration part-time lecturers  
Sponsored by ADEPTT in September 2003*

### **How are things different now? What impact has the development session had?**

The session gave us a chance to emphasise to the part-time lecturers how important they are to the programme. They never felt part of a team before and I can understand their previous reluctance to get involved above and beyond their contracted hours.

The relationship started off differently with us investing time into bringing the part-time lecturers on line and explaining changes and systems to them. Therefore they have, from the start, been more involved. They are preparing sessions well in advance and producing hand-outs at home. There has been a real attitude change.

### ***A small investment at the beginning of the year has paid massive dividends throughout the year.***

The part-time lecturers play a more crucial role than people perceive and I think that they got a lot out of the day. Ideally this would be one of a number of sessions run over the year – an initial induction, and then follow up sessions at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2 to cover general issues and any changes. As long as they were getting something really useful out of these sessions the part-time lecturers would, I believe, attend for no pay just to feel better informed and therefore improve the job they are doing. Small issues could be tackled regularly and not allowed to grow into major problems.

The faculty inductions were a great opportunity for part-time lecturers to receive an overview and to meet each other but this does not replace the need for a more specific programme level induction – the two sessions are complementary.

# Other Development Activities

Of course staff development doesn't have to consist of workshops and courses; here are some other approaches that you might want to consider when planning:

- ❖ Do a **skills/practice audit** and set up an electronic database of skills and areas of knowledge across the department
- ❖ **Job shadowing** is easy to set up, and may be particularly helpful for new members of staff, or those moving into new areas
- ❖ **Peer observation** can be useful for both parties, but be clear about the purpose – development should not be confused with monitoring/appraisal
- ❖ **Mentoring** is a relatively cheap and very effective way of helping new staff or those changing roles, as long as the mentor is keen and has time to undertake the role. The mentor does not have to be an “expert”; someone in a similar role but with a little more experience may be more in touch with what the newcomer needs. Because mentoring for part-time lecturers needs a light touch, it may have to be organised separately from any central institutional mentoring scheme. Detailed guidelines for setting up a scheme can be found in the **Appendix**
- ❖ **Action Learning Sets**, also known as teaching circles, group mentoring, self-help groups etc., who support each other as peers. It is the process rather than the name that is important. These are particularly helpful in encouraging reflective practice, and carrying forward ideas and changes arising from workshops

## Other Development Activities

- ❖ **Seminars** where staff from one programme which has solved a particular issue share their experience with others
- ❖ **Awaydays** are a good option where major issues need to be tackled. Again you will need to think about timing and payment options. If you are running the awayday as a consultation exercise though, do ensure that outcomes are fed back to participants with an explanation about why any particular areas could not be actioned, otherwise they will be far more cynical next time
- ❖ **Involvement in course review meetings etc** - part-time lecturers are frequently excluded from these and, while some are happy not to be involved, many feel that their direct experience of working with the students can be very valuable to the programme. Involvement in meetings will not only help their sense of ownership, but will help keep them in touch with the bigger picture
- ❖ **Developing a reflective approach** is central to ADEPTT. The Appendix on developing a reflective stance/ supporting professional development suggests some ways of thinking about reflection that could be used with small groups of staff

# Payment

When planning staff development for part-time lecturers, or inviting them to meetings, some decisions will need to be taken about payment for their time. On the face of it, as full-time members of staff undertake these activities in paid time it seems only reasonable that part-time lecturers should also be reimbursed for extra time – particularly if it may mean them taking time out from their own practice. Of course the question is not as straightforward as that, and you will need to decide in advance what activities are to be paid for, at what rate, and how the administration of this will be managed. Budgets may be tight, priorities conflict, and the arrangements for claiming extra hours may be complex and time-consuming. However, apart from practical considerations, it is important that part-time lecturers feel their time and contribution is valued, so arrangements need to be clear from the outset.

Approaches that have been tried in different institutions include:

- ❖ Paying for all additional time spent at meetings and in staff development at “meeting rates” – usually half of the hourly teaching rate
- ❖ Offering a flat fee plus lunch for a half-day or full day session
- ❖ Prioritising staff development:
  - Time spent on compulsory activities is paid at the full hourly rate
  - Optional activities are paid for at “meeting rates”
  - Development activities requested by the lecturer

## Payment

themselves, and considered relevant by the course director, are offered free, but in the lecturer's own time

# Communication

The most commonly cited reason for part-time lecturers not taking part in staff development events is that they don't know about them! Managers agree that part-time staff are the most elusive group of lecturers, and in many institutions they tend to be left out of the normal communication systems such as staff email, intranet and meetings. They may not have individual pigeonholes, or not come in frequently enough to pick up messages in time.

Departments that have been successful in involving part-time lecturers in staff development tend to be those that work hard at communication. One successful approach is having a designated person who, as part of their job description, is the key contact point for all part-time lecturers, and who makes sure that essential information and news reaches them. Ensuring that they are all on staff email (and that they check it regularly) is one option, but many part-timers resist this because they do not have home computers or resent the inevitable information overload. Distributing news through programme leaders can be effective, but many departments resort to mailing out to lecturers' home addresses as the only certain way to reach them.

