



THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME A U S T R A L I A

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR SESSIONAL ACADEMIC STAFF

INTRODUCTION

The University of Notre Dame Australia's enabling Act of Parliament (*The University of Notre Dame Australia Act 1989*) states that the Objects of the University are:

- (a) *the provision of university education, within a context of Catholic faith and values;*
- and
- (b) *the provision of an excellent standard of –*
 - (i) *teaching, scholarship and research;*
 - (ii) *training for the professions; and*
 - (iii) *pastoral care for its students.*

The Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities*, issued by Pope John Paul II, establishes the framework within which staff of Notre Dame Australia seek to accomplish the Objects of the University. It establishes the principles underlying the conditions of employment of staff, and the teaching and research policies of the University. The Constitution makes the following statement:

The University Community. A Catholic university pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the Spirit of Christ. The source of its unity springs from a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ, which gives the institution its distinctive character. As a result of this inspiration, the community is animated by a spirit of freedom and charity; it is characterised by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals. It assists each of its members to achieve wholeness as human persons; in turn everyone in the community helps in promoting unity, and each one, according to his or her role and capacity, contributes towards decisions which affect the community and also towards maintaining and strengthening the distinctive Catholic character of the institution.

University teachers should seek to improve their competence and endeavour to set the content, objectives, methods and results of research in an individual discipline within the framework of a coherent world vision. Christians among the teachers are called to be witnesses and educators of authentic Christian life, which evidences an attained integration between faith and life, and between professional competence and Christian wisdom. All teachers are to be inspired by academic ideals and by the principles of an authentic human life.

Directors and administrators in a Catholic university promote the constant growth of the university and its community through a leadership of service; the dedication and witness of the non-academic staff are vital for the identity and life of the university.

All the basic academic activities of a Catholic university are connected with and in harmony with the evangelising mission of the Church: research carried out in the light of the Christian message which puts new human discoveries at the service of individuals and society; education offered in a faith context that forms men and women capable of rational and critical judgment and conscious of the transcendent dignity of the human person; professional training that incorporates ethical values and a sense of service to individuals and society; the dialogue with culture that makes faith better understood, and the theological research that translates the faith into contemporary language.

(* *Ex Corde Ecclesiae, Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, 1990*)

Unless otherwise agreed in writing between the University and an individual employee, the following conditions of employment shall apply to all sessional academic staff members employed by the University.

1. Personal Commitment

The University requires a personal commitment from all staff to respect the beliefs, traditions, and practices of the Catholic Church and to advance the Objects of the University as defined in its Act of Parliament.

2. Letter of Appointment

Each prospective employee will receive a letter of appointment. A person will become an employee at the time specified in the letter of appointment, provided a signed copy is given to the Staffing Office by the designated date.

3. Medical Clearance

Prospective employees may be required to undergo a medical examination as a condition precedent to their employment. The purpose of a medical examination, if one is required, is to assess the prospective employee's mental and physical fitness for the proposed job. If, in the opinion of the University, the results of the medical examination indicate that the prospective employee does not meet the level of mental and physical fitness required, the University may decide not to proceed with the appointment.

4. Term of Appointment

Notwithstanding the inclusion of a nominal start and end date in the letter of appointment to a sessional academic staff member, all sessional academic staff members of the University are employed on a casual basis.

5. Variation/Termination of Employment

The hours of casual duties for which the sessional academic staff member has been engaged can be changed/ withdrawn by the University with 1 week's notice.

Where possible, the sessional academic staff member is required to give the University 1 week's notification of any teaching hours that they are unable to undertake.

6. Leave Entitlements

As the sessional academic member is engaged on a casual basis, the sessional academic staff member has no entitlement to accrue paid leave of any form during his or her period of employment with the University.

7. Rates of Pay

The standard sessional rates of pay offered by the University incorporate a loading to include leave of any kind and all loadings for public holidays (if any). No additional payments are made.

If a sessional academic staff member negotiates a rate of pay which is higher than the standard sessional rates of pay offered by the University, such negotiated rate will be deemed to have automatically included the loadings referred to in the previous paragraphs and there will be no additional payments made.

8. Public Holidays

The sessional academic staff member may be requested to teach on a public holiday if such public holiday is designated as being a teaching day on the University calendar. In such cases, no additional payments will be made to the sessional academic staff member, as this obligation is factored into the rate of pay.

9. Policies and Procedures

To the extent to which they are relevant, sessional academic staff members are bound by all policies, procedures and Code of Conduct of the University as are in force from time to time and as amended from time to time.

10. Changes to Conditions

Staff conditions of employment may be altered by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Vice Chancellor at any time. Commitments by the University in individual contracts will not be altered by changes to these general conditions without the consent of the staff member involved.

11. Salary

Salary shall be paid fortnightly into a bank account nominated by the employee.

12 Intellectual Property

Subject to separate agreement between the University and the employee, and as further detailed in the University's policy on Intellectual Property, the University owns the rights to any intellectual property created by a staff member in the course of the employee's employment.

13 Confidentiality and use of Official Information

Staff members are expected to maintain confidentiality, integrity and security of official information for which they are responsible, or to which they may have access, in any academic or administrative area.

In particular, unless required by law, personal and official information (such as academic records) provided by and about staff and students must not be given to third parties without the informed consent of the individuals concerned.

The University of Notre Dame Australia is bound by amendments to the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* which came into effect on December 21, 2001. The University has adopted a matching Privacy Policy. It is the responsibility of each staff member to be familiar with the University's Privacy Policy, and to follow it in their work practices.

14 Use of University Facilities and Equipment

All staff members are expected to use all facilities and equipment efficiently and effectively and not to permit their misuse by themselves or others.

All staff members must adhere to University policy in relation to use of email, internet, photocopying, University letterhead, and other such matters as determined by the Vice Chancellor. In general, the resources of the University should not be used by staff for private purposes unless approved by the Vice Chancellor or his delegate.

15 Smoking

The University has a non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted in any campus building or any campus open space.

16 Teaching obligations

Depending on the needs of the University, academic sessional staff members may be employed for a variety of reasons, which include the following:

- to take responsibility for the teaching of an entire unit (s), or
- to take responsibility for teaching part of a unit (such as the conduct of tutorials), or
- to conduct an occasional lecture in a unit, or
- to undertake laboratory work, clinical supervision or the like, or
- to undertake marking or any other academic activity at the University.

Where the sessional academic staff member is engaged to take full responsibility for the conduct of a unit, the obligations on the employee include (unless otherwise agreed):

- performing in full the teaching load which is stipulated within the letter of appointment and any accompanying documentation;
- accepting responsibility for all aspects of the conduct of the unit, including -
 - preparation and delivery of all classes,
 - the setting and marking of continuing assessment and final examination,
 - invigilation of final examination,
 - participation in examiner's meeting (if possible),
 - ordering of text books,
 - liaison with library regarding resources required for the unit,
 - preparation of all course and other materials required to teach the unit,
 - preparation and marking of any supplementary or deferred examination or assessment which may be required in the unit.
- providing reasonable out of class contact time to students to allow for student consultation and counseling, and, wherever possible, providing some non-private contact information to students (such as an email address, mobile phone);
- being punctual and attending all classes (save for exceptional circumstances);
- advising the Dean (or delegate) in advance if unable to attend a scheduled class and making appropriate arrangements to reschedule a missed session; and
- agreeing to be evaluated by the University on their teaching performance at such times and in such manner as the University considers necessary.

Where the sessional academic staff member is engaged for a reason other than the full conduct of a unit, the obligations referred to above are binding on the sessional academic staff member to the extent to which they are applicable.