

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET SOCIAL SCIENCE / HUMANITIES RESEARCH

Casual academic teaching staff at UTAS survey: Experiences and Information Needs

Invitation

You are invited to participate in an online survey that is part of an ongoing research study into the information experiences and needs of casual teaching staff at the University of Tasmania. The research is a project of the *Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching (TILT)*.

1. 'What is the purpose of this study?'

The purpose of this survey is to benchmark the situation for UTAS staff against a standards framework, "Benchmarking leadership and advancement of standards for sessional teaching" (BLAAST), a national research endeavour with which UTAS is a partner.

Data from the survey will be analysed to:

- 1) understand the current information needs of casual teaching staff at UTAS (academic staff employed on a casual, or sessional, basis);
- 2) identify the ability of casual teaching staff to find information they need to perform their role(s) at UTAS; and
- 3) make recommendations to improve the experiences of casual teaching staff employed in line with the BLAAST sessional staff standards framework.

2. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'

You are eligible to participate in this study because you are employed as a casual academic teaching staff member at UTAS. For the purposes of this study, a casual teaching staff member is defined as academic teaching staff who are employed casually or on a contract less than 12 months'.

This definition captures staff members who currently do not have access to the induction service provided to newly appointed contract and permanent staff members at UTAS.

4. 'What does this study involve?'

The survey is in two parts and should take about 10 minutes to complete. The first part collects limited personal information (your role(s), year commenced first employment as a casual academic teaching staff member at UTAS, total years working experience as an academic). Your responses to these questions will allow us to link the diversity of casual academic teaching staff working at UTAS to the various information needs that apply to them.

The second part asks you about your knowledge of a range of information that is important for UTAS staff members to have access to and to use in their roles at UTAS. At the end of the survey there is an opportunity to 'opt in' to participate in a focus group aiming to explore casual academic teaching staff information needs in more depth.

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and as the survey is anonymous, your name will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. The survey is conducted using the online provider

SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey stores its data on servers in the United States (further information on SurveyMonkey's privacy and security standards may be found at: http://help.surveymonkey.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/337/kw/security).

Data will be deleted from SurveyMonkey one week following the closure of the survey. Hard copies of downloaded data will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the Tasmanian Institute for Learning and Teaching, whilst electronic copies will be stored on a password protected network drive.

5. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The information from this study will enable the researchers to benchmark the experiences and information needs of UTAS staff using a nationally developed framework. The BLAAST framework provides "criteria and standards which can be used to measure the quality of performance and outcomes in learning and teaching, and in management and administrative policy, procedure and practices" for casual, or sessional, teaching staff. The analysis will be an important evidence base for policy and practice decisions at UTAS.

6. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study.

7. What if I have questions about this research?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact the Chief Investigator, Dr Natalie Brown on (03) 6226 1756. She will be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. You are welcome to contact us to discuss the findings of our research or any issue relating to the research study.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study you should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 7479 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote HREC project number H11123.

**Your consent to take part is implied by your completion of the survey.
This information sheet is for you to keep.**