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 the part of an ongoing research study into the information situation of casual teaching staff at UTAS. 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 repeat an institution-wide survey conducted in 2012 to benchmark the situation for UTAS staff against a standards framework, “Benchmarking leadership and advancement of standards for sessional teaching” (BLASST), a national research endeavour with which UTAS is a partner. The BLASST 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.

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 anyone who is employed casually at UTAS in a teaching capacity that is not on a contract lasting 12 months or more or who is not a tenured member of academic staff. 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.

3. ‘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 teacher 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 to 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. You will be asked to provide your contact details so we can arrange the meeting.
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/categories/Privacy_Legal](http://help.surveymonkey.com/categories/Privacy_Legal)).

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 of Learning and Teaching, whilst electronic copies will be stored on a password protected network drive.

4. **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.

5. **Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**
There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study. The survey is completely anonymous and all data is de-identified. If you elect to opt in to participate in a focus group, your name and contact details will not be linked to your responses to the survey questions.

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 Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching on ph 6226 1906. Dr Steve Drew 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 should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 7479 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto: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.*