



## Purpose statement

The University of Nottingham is committing to minimise the use of casual engagements and to adopt direct contracts of employment as the preferred solution. The University also recognises that there will be situations where casual contracts are needed when permanent recruitment or other staffing options are not practicable to cover unexpected, ad hoc or short-term engagements. These principles are designed to ensure that casual contracts are used only once all other alternatives have been explored.

## Principle 1

**Casual contract engagements should be used in unexpected situations where alternative staffing options have been explored.**

**Unexpected definition:** The casual contract process is designed to enable short-term engagements to be set up quickly and effectively (see Principle 2 on length of engagement). Casual engagements should only be used in unexpected or extenuating circumstances where alternatives such as the recruitment process is impracticable.

**Alternative staffing options definition:** Alternatives which should be considered prior to using a casual contract include recruitment of a permanent member of staff (full-time or part-time), fixed-term contract, secondment, redeployment pool and reallocation of workloads.

Examples of unexpected circumstances include:

- To cover short-term absence
- To cover an extension of a project which had been delayed
- To cover an unexpected peak in demand

Note: If it is clear - or becomes clear - that the demand for cover will not be short-term, then an appropriate employment contract must be offered to replace the casual engagement as soon as possible and **no later than 12 weeks** after the casual engagement first began, as per Principle 2.

Unexpected is not:

- To be used to avoid going through a full recruitment process
- To cover maternity/adoption/shared parental leave
- To cover for 'sections' of a role whilst a permanent member of staff conducts research. All staffing requirements should be thoroughly assessed. Appropriate employment contracts should then be issued in a timely and professional manner.

## Principle 2

**Casual worker engagements should be for unexpected situations of less than 12 weeks\* or where the nature of the role is ad-hoc which is defined as infrequent and/or has irregular hours.**

**Infrequent definition:** Where work is not guaranteed and there is no expectation of continuity of delivery or there is a varying demand which cannot be covered by existing staff.

**Irregular working patterns definition:** Where hours of work cannot be scheduled so there is no standard working pattern.

Infrequent and/or irregular working patterns can be identified when you see breaks in service as there is no demand for the work.

Examples of *infrequent* and/or *irregular* roles include:

- To cover distinct and discontinuous pieces of work/obligations (for example, exam invigilators)
- To cover one off events eg a single film screening for students, student open days, sports events
- Teaching for non-standard or expert curricula eg music tuition, *where the demand is infrequent* and there is no expectation of continuity of delivery and no standard working pattern
- Irregular student tutor support eg retirees who tutor students with their expertise for the duration of the student studies. These hours are irregular and cannot be pre-scheduled and there is no expectation of continuity of delivery.
- Irregular work carried out by students where there is irregular hours and there is no obligation to accept shifts eg demonstrators, disability support workers, sports referees/instructors.
- Infrequent peak in demand for services eg catering staff over Christmas, Halls staff preparing for start of terms.

In addition, the following conditions need to be met:

- At the end of the engagement there should be no prior agreement or guarantee that further work will be offered. If there is a need to extend a casual contract, then the initial period plus the extension period shouldn't exceed a total assignment durations of 12 weeks. A fixed-term contract or permanent employment should be explored.
- Requests for extensions over 12 weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and should be aligned to the overall intent of the casual contract principles document as described in the purpose section.
- Irregular individual engagements should be reviewed every 10 months (or no longer than annually) to ensure that the engagement is still in line with the purpose of a casual engagement principles.
- For R&T roles, the role must fit within principle 1, ie you may have a role which is for less than 12 weeks, but it is planned for, therefore, an alternative staffing method should be used such as a fixed-term contract.

## Principle 3

**Workers should not be requested to undertake activities for which they will not be paid. This includes preparation/room set-up time, training or meetings which they are required to attend. Where the contract duties include teaching, the Faculty Teaching norms should be adhered to.**

Workload allocations should be no less than those of permanent members of staff and consideration should be given to increase allocations to early career academics where additional time will be required to undertake duties such as preparation for lectures and familiarisation with pre-prepared teaching materials.

#### **Principle 4**

**There will be regular monitoring of the adherence to the principles as well as an annual review to ensure that the Principles are up-to-date and align to the University's strategy.**

Regular monitoring for adherence will be completed within HR and results will be shared with the appropriate faculties. Any non-compliance will be investigated on a case-by-case basis and faculties will be responsible for working with HR to remediate any issues.

The casual engagement principles have been built jointly with the University and recognised trade unions and is owned by HR. Any exceptions to the principles will be looked at on a case-by-case basis and exceptions for need to be approved by HR.

A review of these Principles will be conducted by HR, consulting the University and recognised trade unions, annually. The review will ensure that the purpose and principles are still relevant as well as reviewing adherence and usage of R&T Casual Engagements.

\* In addition, the 12 week period for unexpected casual engagements will be reviewed every 6 months.