Industry professionals as sessional teachers

The Brisbane Graduate School of Business

The Brisbane Graduate School of Business (BGSB) at the Queensland University of Technology is one of the six schools in the Faculty of Business, and has over 1000 students, offering courses that reflect global best practice in graduate management education.

As well as the highly regarded Master of Business Administration program, the BGSB also offers the Graduate Diploma in Business Administration and the Graduate Certificate in Business Administration. A Graduate Certificate in Management - offering a wide range of subject choices - is also available. These programs provide the leadership and management skills required in the international business environment. Students undertake two six-credit point subjects/units each semester.

A key objective of the School is to be recognised globally as a world-class provider of high-quality business education.

Recruitment of sessional teaching staff

As reflected in the preceding comments there is a strong client focus within the School that is underpinned by a shared understanding and acknowledgement that the quality of teaching and learning is fundamental to the School’s success. Consequently the recruitment of industry professionals, who make up approximately 60% of the BGSB’s teaching staff, is very carefully managed.

The Subject Area Coordinators play an active role in the recruitment process. Recruitment through advertisement is not common with most recruitment occurring through industry networks in terms of identifying those individuals who are held in the highest regard within the profession for potential sessional teaching appointments. All industry professionals who take up an appointment at the BGSB have at least a Masters degree as well as industry experience.

Preparing sessional teachers to teach

A comprehensive induction program is provided for sessional teaching staff the majority of who are industry professionals, again reflecting BGSB’s strong emphasis on quality teaching and learning.

The induction program

Industry professionals are initially appointed for a six-week period to take part in the six-week induction program, a requirement for ongoing appointment, which involves sessional teaching staff in the following activities:

- Observing teaching approaches by attending all lectures and group work sessions conducted by the lecturer for the subject/unit that they will be involved in teaching
- Leading a teaching session in collaboration with the respective lecturer for the subject/unit
- Assisting with joint marking of assessment items
- Attending exams
Respective Subject Area Coordinators are responsible for coordinating and supporting the Induction Program. All sessional teachers who participate in the program are fully remunerated. There is no guarantee however, that on completion of the six-week program an ongoing appointment will be made. This is contingent upon the perceived capacity of the candidate to uphold and continue to develop the BGSB’s reputation for excellence in teaching.

Remuneration for sessional teachers

Sessional teachers in the BGSB commence at the standard casual academic rate for each hour in each three hour session, this rate is not reduced for repeat lectures. In cases of ongoing appointment this rate increases overtime to the top of the casual academic pay scale.

Ongoing support for sessional teachers

The BGSB attempts to establish parity of esteem between full-time academics and sessional teaching staff acknowledging the unique praxis orientation and applied theory that industry professionals bring to the student learning experience. This is achieved by:

- Meeting with the Head of School
- Meeting with the MBA Director
- Providing six in-service professional development meetings for instructors during each semester teaching period - each meeting focuses on a teaching and learning topic of interest
- Providing routine meetings with the Subject Area Coordinator
- Providing appropriate infrastructure - office space, 24 hour access, tea and coffee facilities, computer and photocopy access
- An orientation to the physical facilities of the work area, key personnel and the wider campus
- Administrative support
- Access to stationary
- Invitation to all meetings of the BGSB Teaching and Learning Committee
- Invitation to the BGSB retreat
- Induction booklet that outlines all the administrative details associated with teaching in the BGSB
  - Key contacts and their roles
  - Facilities for sessional teaching staff
  - Academic calendar
  - The quality service code and standards for teaching in the BGSB
  - Examination timeframes
  - Plagiarism policy
  - University induction program
  - Marking procedures
  - Assessment policy
Web-based support for sessional teachers

The BGSB provides a comprehensive web-site for all teachers but particularly for the benefit of sessional teachers detailing outlining all facets associated with teaching in the School including the teaching philosophy of the BGSB, unit administration, useful web sites for teaching resources and discussion forum.

For further information on the strategies used by the BGSB to engage and retain industry-based sessional teaching staff please contact the MBA Director - mailto:mbadirector@qut.edu.au