

Essex Business School

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT HANDBOOK

*GUIDANCE NOTES FOR
NOTES FOR GRADUATE
GRADUATE TEACHING
TEACHING
ASSISTANTS*



...and their mentors

2010 – 2011

FOREWORD

The Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) plays a very important role in the Essex Business School. By instructing, evaluating and enabling students in the development of their potential, he/she forms an integral part of the learning experience at the School. Often on modules associated with large numbers of students it is the Graduate Teaching Assistant who provides an element of personal touch, reassuring and motivating students to do their very best. Thus the position of a GTA is one that carries considerable responsibility.

On a different note, being a doctoral student entails not only undertaking research but also communicating ideas to various audiences. Working as a Graduate Teaching Assistant is indeed a great way of learning the ropes of effective communication and interaction. It also opens a window for strengthening the link between teaching and research because it is only by teaching the subject that one acquires a deeper understanding of one's field.

It is hoped that the guidance offered in this handbook will stimulate your interest in teaching and also help you as a GTA to carry out your duties effectively.

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Appointment of a Graduate Teaching Assistant

Each year, in the Summer Term, an announcement will be made to all doctoral students in the Essex Business School inviting applications for the position of a Graduate Teaching Assistant. Potential PhD students (i.e. new applicants with the potential for commencing doctoral study the following academic year) may also be included in the announcement.

Applications must then be submitted by the stated deadline. The application should include:

- (a) An up-to-date CV
- (b) A brief statement on areas of interest for teaching

The Heads of the four groups in the Business School will review the applications and compile a shortlist of those applicants who meet the criteria. The shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and if successful, receive offers of appointment. This will be followed by correspondence from the Business School Administrator and the Graduate Teaching Assistant Coordinator on various aspects of the role such as signing the GTA contract, details of the teaching allocation, training requirements etc.

Please also refer to the Supplementary Employment Information below, from the Human Resources Section regarding contacting them and the Finance Office before you start work.

Supplementary Employment Information

Before you sign this contract

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 requires employers to verify a new employee's right to work in the UK by checking and copying certain documents, and to undertake annual checks on individuals whose right to work is time-limited. To comply with equality legislation this applies to all new staff, irrespective of nationality.

You should provide one of the documents, or combination of documents, detailed on the attached Appendix and a copy of the relevant page(s) will be retained on your personal file for the duration of your employment. In the event that you are unable to produce document(s) which satisfy the requirements of the Act then it may be necessary for the University to delay the commencement of your employment and, if you continue to fail to meet the requirements, withdraw the offer of employment.

During your first week

You should obtain a Payroll Information Pack at your GTA Induction meeting, complete the documentation in the pack as requested, and take this information to the Finance Office (Room 4SW.6.6) in the sealed envelope provided. **If you have held a previous contract with us, but there has been a break in your service, you must re-confirm these details with Finance.**

You should also ensure that you complete the Equal Opportunities (HESA) Form provided to you by your School. You must return this to Human Resources in a sealed envelope.

Attendance at Training

You are required to attend a short training programme for Graduate Teaching Assistants, organised by the Learning and Teaching Unit, unless you have previously completed this course.

Payment

You will be paid in monthly instalments in arrears by direct credit into a bank or building society account.

Duties of the Post - Graduate Teaching Assistants

In addition to your teaching duties, you will be required to undertake related administrative, marking and examining work as required by the Director of the School.

Job descriptions for these roles are held at School level and do not form part of the contract of employment.

Annual Holiday/Leave Entitlement

You are entitled to paid annual holiday/leave. Leave should be taken monthly at your discretion outside the hours you are required to work by your Department/School and your monthly salary has been calculated to take into account payment for this monthly holiday/leave entitlement. The holiday element equates to 10.77% of your salary payment. This holiday payment is based on 28 days holiday per annum/leave year and includes all entitlements to public holidays and closure days.

Occupational Sickness Pay

There is no entitlement to occupational sickness pay.

Superannuation

You will note that under the terms of this contract you are eligible to join the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). If you are not already a member of USS and now wish to join, please contact the Finance Section for further details.

Period of Notice

This employment may be terminated by either side giving one months notice in writing.

Disciplinary Matters

Details of the procedures for dealing with disciplinary matters, including termination of the appointment may be obtained from Human Resources upon request.

Individual Grievances

A member of staff who has a grievance relating to his/her employment should discuss the matter initially with his/her Head of Department/School. If the grievance is not settled satisfactorily at that stage, then he/she should follow the procedure set out in the Grievance Procedure which may be obtained from Human Resources upon request.

Policy Statement of Equal Opportunities

The University of Essex, in conformity with the intention of its Charter, confirms its commitment to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities within the University. It aims to create the conditions whereby students and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs and affiliations, family circumstances, sexual orientation or other irrelevant distinction.

The University is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this policy be fully effective.

Members of staff should ensure that they become familiar with, and understand, the contents of both the University Policy and Codes of Practice.

It should be noted that any intentional breaches of the legislation on equal opportunities or of the University Policy or Codes of Practice may lead to disciplinary action.

Membership of Trade Unions

Graduate Teaching Assistants are entitled to join the University and College Union.

Employment Document Checklist

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 requires the University to make basic document checks on all new employees, irrespective of nationality. **You must provide the document (or combination of documents) shown in either List A or List B so that we can verify your right to work in the UK before a contract of employment is issued.**

List A (choose from the following)

- ❖ UK or European Economic Area or Swiss Passport or Identity Card
- ❖ A Residence Permit or Residence Card indicating permanent residence in the UK
- ❖ A Biometric Immigration Document issued by the Border & Immigration Agency (BIA) indicating Indefinite Leave to Remain
- ❖ Passport or other travel document showing Indefinite Leave to Remain
- ❖ A full birth certificate issued in the UK **plus** an official document giving your permanent National Insurance (NI) number and name
- ❖ A full adoption certificate issued in the UK **plus** an official document giving your permanent NI number and name
- ❖ A Certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen **plus** an official document giving your permanent NI number and name
- ❖ An Immigration Status letter issued by the Home Office or BIA indicating the person named is allowed to stay in the UK indefinitely **plus** an official document giving your permanent NI number and name

OR

List B (choose from the following - we will need to check documents every 12 months)

- ❖ A Work Permit (or other approval to take employment) **plus** a Passport or other travel document endorsed to show the holder can stay in the UK and is allowed to do the work in question
- ❖ A Passport or travel document endorsed to show the holder may stay in the UK and is allowed to do the type of work in question provided it does not require a Work Permit (eg. student Visa)
- ❖ A Biometric Immigration Document which indicates that the person named can stay in the UK and can do the work in question
- ❖ A Residence Card or document issued to a family member of an EEA country or Switzerland
- ❖ An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office or BIA stating the holder is permitted to take employment **plus** evidence of verification by the BIA Employer Checking Service
- ❖ An Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office or BIA with an endorsement indicating the person named can stay in the UK and do the type of work in questions **plus** an official document giving your permanent NI Number and name
- ❖ A letter issued by the Home Office or BIA to the holder or employer/prospective employer indicating the person named can stay in the UK and is allowed to do the work in question **plus** an official document giving your permanent NI number and name
- ❖ A certificate of application issued by the Home Office or BIA to a member of an EEA country or Switzerland stating the holder is permitted to take up employment **plus** evidence of verification by the BIA Employer Checking Service

Payment for Graduate Teaching Assistants/Graduate Demonstrators

The GTA contract covers **teaching and marking** of the first piece of coursework, which could take the form of an essay, a class test, etc. Payment for any additional marking (which could once again take the form of essays, class tests etc.) will be at the discretion of the Director of the School.

For the academic year 2010-11, base rate is £15.36 per hour

For teaching/demonstrating

Per class = £15.36 x 2 = £30.72

For office hours

Every GTA will have a weekly office hour for each module for every week of teaching.

Pay per office hour = £15.36

For marking

Discursive assignments = £15.36 x (Number of scripts marked/4) hours

Numerical assignments = £15.36 x (Number of scripts marked/8) hours

Please use the timesheets (to be emailed later in the term) to claim your payment **for marking**.

In addition to their contracted duties GTAs may be offered the opportunity to take on exam marking on their module for additional payment, the amount of which is dependent on the type of script and the number marked.

Since the GTA contract is a yearly contract, you need to pass on your bank details to the University's Payroll Section every year. To be paid in October, you need to pass on the information before the 6th of October. Otherwise your October payment will be added in with your November salary.

Duties of Graduate Teaching Assistants

Most Graduate Teaching Assistants in the Essex Business School will be attached to modules where they are asked to take the classes but not give the lectures. The prime tasks therefore relate to:

- Stimulating the class into useful and constructive discussions around the lecture, the readings prescribed, and the broad syllabus for the week. In addition, support can be provided for essay work and general problems encountered.
- Carrying out the required marking for their module in an accurate, timely and professional manner

In order to be introduced to the student cohort and to facilitate the relation of class material to lectures it is mandatory for GTAs to attend the first lecture of each module and any other lectures as agreed with the module lecturer.

However Graduate Teaching Assistants don't just teach: they are also responsible for the smooth running of their classes, and a certain amount of 'admin' is therefore involved.

This includes being clear about:

Keeping registers of attendance

At the Colchester Campus class registers will be e-mailed to GTAs on a weekly basis before the class - by Fran Bysh or Sarah Mumford, on a Tuesday and Friday depending on when the class takes place. It is **the GTA's responsibility** to print off the register, take it to the class for attendance and once the class is over take the filled-in register and post it in the post boxes in room 5N.5.6 (the main Administration office for EBS).

At the Southend Campus hard copy printed registers for the students to sign, will be available for the **GTA to pick up** before their class. These are to be returned to administrative staff – Emma Nicholas or Karon Galvin - after the class so that the attendance information can be entered into MIS.

Please note it is mandatory for GTAs to submit registers on time (ideally as soon as the class is over) because attendance records are updated on a weekly basis. A delay makes it difficult to keep track of student attendance and causes various administrative problems.

Unable to take a class

If the GTA is unwell and unable to take a class he/she should phone the School General Office as soon as possible on the following numbers:

First year modules – Fran Bysh, Tel: 01206 873161

Second year modules – Keeley Ortiz, Tel: 01206 873158

Third year modules – Jo Lambert, Tel: 01206 873072

Also Sarah Mumford, Tel: 01206 873796

For Southend modules –

Emma Nicholas – Undergraduate Administrator Tel: 01702 328378

Patrick Gallagher, Graduate Administrator Tel: 01702 328388

Karon Galvin. Tel: 01702 328385

The GTA should also liaise with the module leader to agree to arrangements to reconvene the class when he/she is better, if possible, or make some alternate arrangement for the students involved.

Office hour

Every GTA will have a weekly office hour for each module for every week of teaching. The purpose of the office hour is for students to see their class teacher and discuss any module related problems.

If a GTA does not find one office hour per module per week sufficient he/she should contact the GTA Coordinator immediately.

The Colchester Campus: GTA office hours in the Autumn term are to be held in room 5S.4.16 and those in the Spring term in room 5S.4.8. These should be used for the weekly office hour on the basis of a timetable agreed with fellow GTAs. Please write your name down on the timetable on the office door to select the time slot that suits you best.

After arranging an office hour it is advisable that the GTA talks to his/her students to ensure that the office hour does not clash with a lecture or class that most of them have to attend. Please contact Lesley Baker, (email: lesleyb@essex.ac.uk), to advise her of any changes to your office hours.

The Southend Campus of the School has an office available for GTAs and visiting lecturers to use for their office hours. In case this office is occupied, a smaller office will be made available where one to one sessions may take place. Please advise Karon Galvin of your choice of office hour.

According to the School's regulations PhD offices are not to be used to see students as it may inconvenience fellow PhD students. All office hours are to be held in the allotted rooms.

Webpage

All PhD students will have a webpage and the GTA role (i.e. modules taught, office hours etc.) is going to be a part of that webpage. Please see Liz Gordon-Hancock (email: lizgh@essex.ac.uk) about this as soon as possible.

Familiarity with the Module

(a) Timetables – Lecture and seminar timings

Colchester campus: <http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/offices/tt/Colchester%20Campus%20Timetables.html>

Southend campus: <http://www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/offices/tt/Southend%20Campus%20Timetables.html>

(b) Structure and rationale, and how it links to other modules in the Business School

(c) The teaching methods being used – group discussions/class presentations etc.

(d) Arrangements for coursework and tests, deadlines, grade distributions, turn around time of coursework and test marking

(e) Completion of feedback sheets for coursework and tests

Moodle

The School will be using Moodle, a web based course management system to deliver its courses. Moodle facilitates interactive class design and as such we would like you to get involved. Please check <http://moodle.essex.ac.uk/> and contact your module lecturer to find out more about how you can contribute through Moodle.

Miscellaneous

Formal procedures within the School for matters such as complaints, plagiarism, late submission of essays, zero tolerance. For further details please refer to the link http://www.essex.ac.uk/afm/undergraduate/useful_information.shtm

Support systems - like photocopying, library back up, AV resources

Support for the GTA

The Mentor System

The Mentor is a member of staff of the Essex Business School. Every GTA will have a mentor who is responsible for overseeing his/her teaching and providing support as and when necessary. Normally, the Mentor will be the module leader of the module the GTA is associated with.

All GTAs are expected to contact their Mentors in the first week of the term.

The Mentor (or the Lecturer for a particular session) will ensure that the GTA receives the appropriate teaching material and guidelines for each session to be taught. It is not the role of the GTA to develop answers or prepare class materials by himself/herself. He/She is there to deliver classes planned and resourced by the academic staff responsible for the particular module. However, if a GTA is interested in designing classes he/she is more than welcome to get in touch with the Lecturer running the module.

The Mentor will also ensure that the Graduate Teaching Assistant is familiar with the various 'admin' duties discussed earlier.

Monitoring Progress

All GTAs are Peer Reviewed by a member of staff (usually their Mentors) once or twice during the year. A 'Peer Review' entails the Mentor sitting in one (or more) classes run by the GTA and observing him/her communicating with students. The observations are recorded in the GTA Peer Review form and filed with the School for future reference. A sample copy of the GTA Peer Review form has been provided under Appendix A (see pages 22-24)

The object of the Peer Review is to provide the GTA with constructive guidance on improving his/her teaching skills and helping him/her become a better teacher.

All GTAs are expected to arrange with their Mentors, in their first meeting, a mutually convenient date for the Peer Review.

Please note, the sooner the Peer Review the better it is for both students and teachers.

The Graduate Teaching Assistant Coordinator

The GTA Coordinator acts as the main link between the GTAs and the Essex Business School. His/her role is to ensure that all aspects of training, GTA support, teaching quality and administrative issues function appropriately and effectively. He/she is the point of contact in relation to all aspects of the GTA role.

Sumohon Matilal is the current GTA Coordinator, e-mail smatil@essex.ac.uk

Training for Graduate Teaching Assistants

All Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) of the Essex Business School are *contractually obligated* to complete necessary training successfully as specified by the School from time to time. Normally such training is provided at an early stage in the GTA's appointment and typically involves participating in a series of teaching and learning sessions and support discussions during their period of teaching in the School.

University's Code of Practice on Teaching and Demonstrating by Graduate Students

Departments should ensure that all new GTAs and Demonstrators undertake a Learning and Teaching Unit (LTU) training course, or an alternative programme of training proposed by the Head of Department and approved in writing by the LTU.

For training courses provided by the LTU, please click on the link below

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/ltu/pd/GTA2009MainPage.shtm>

Some useful hints on Teaching

Most GTAs in the School will be attached to modules where they are asked to take the classes but not give the lectures. The prime tasks therefore relate to stimulating the class into useful and constructive discussions around the lecture, the readings prescribed, and the broad syllabus for the week. In addition, support can be provided for essay work and general problems encountered. **It is important however NOT to use the session for 'another lecture' but to encourage student participation** (except perhaps on special occasions, like revision sessions). The sloppiest teaching just lapses back into 'lecturing the students' and this should be avoided.

One of the aims of classes should be to establish a friendly, talkative, supportive, informal group where members know each other, can easily talk to each other, and where fears and defences are at a minimum. Then good discussion should follow!

The following are a number of suggestions GTAs may find useful in their teaching role, however they will be provided with far more detailed advice and a range of suitable techniques during their training

General

- Use first names as often as possible. Encourage use of names. Draw a map of names on the board for the first few classes to help people to recall. Maybe even get them for the first few sessions to put names on cards in front of them: remember it is not only you who doesn't know names, but all the students too - they are often all new to each other. Help them to get to know each other and form working alliances. If they have e-mail addresses, encourage them to talk to each other - and you - about the class.
- Use eye contact!
- Sometimes change the furniture around - the same physical setting is not always suitable for different tasks.

Getting students to speak

- Pose your question in several parts. Divide class into working groups of perhaps three or four, and give them a few minutes to consider the question. (Leave the room if felt desirable). Get each group to report back. Encourage questions from the rest of class.
- Get people to talk in front of the class by e.g. reading out a question (people are usually not too shy to do that), they may be subsequently less shy about speaking in class.
- Brainstorming. Pose a question (e.g. Key meaning of 'Ideal Types'). Give everyone - in pairs perhaps - a minute only to write down an answer. Put all answers quickly on board. Then discuss. Link 'common-sense' answers to theories and texts etc.
- Give a handout. Ask questions of it, as above.

First Class of the Year

Most importantly: give students a chance to chat and get to know each other. Explain the module and deal with problems/questions arising. There will be a lot of anxiety - students want to be told clearly about everything to do with the module! The first class sets the tone for the rest of the year: it needs a lot of preparation. It should never just be a 'we'll get going next week' approach, as this sets a tone of not really being bothered.

Suggestions for 'breaking the ice' in the first class:

- Introduce yourself and give the students your contact details and office hours first. Then go on and ask them to introduce themselves to the class, asking for their name, degree and why they chose this course.
- 2-minute biographies. Get students into pairs and ask them to introduce themselves to each other. Maybe provide some basic questions; (e.g. earlier modules studied; possible project topic; interest in this module; other options, work experience, home town). The partners then introduce the others to the rest of the class. Encourage questions from the rest of the class.
- If you are teaching a subject close to your research try and tell the students why you love the subject. Ask them what interests them about it and from there explain the syllabus of the course.

But please bear in mind that the GTA has to start teaching right from the first class so make sure there is enough time in the first session for "real" work - i.e.: subject specialist work; and setting the group up for the coming week (readings, roles, your office hours, their next lecture etc). Mention the CMR, Moodle etc. If students have difficulty accessing these resources or have any problems using them, ask them to contact the computing helpdesk.

Graduate Teaching Assistants are advised not to turn the first class into a walk in-walk out session. The first class matters enormously - it sets the tone and the standard for the year to come. It is worth working very hard on it.....

Advice on Marking Undergraduate Essays

When you are required to mark material you will be provided with detailed advice by your module mentor or other members of the teaching team, however in the meantime the following will give you a flavour for the marking criteria

Grade descriptions

Marks are awarded for examinations and coursework in the range 0 – 100, consistent with the marking system and classes of degrees adopted by the Faculty of Law and Management:

70 – Upwards	1st	(First)
60 – 69	2.1	(Upper Second/ 2:1)
50 – 59	2.2	(Lower Second/ 2:2)
40 – 49	3rd	(Third)
0 – 39		Fail

Assessment Criteria

There is no comprehensive list of assessment criteria. Module aims are different and these different aims are likely to be reflected in marking criteria. However, the following are the sort of criteria that would normally distinguish between grade classifications:

First (1st)

A First Class answer is an excellent, but not a perfect, answer and should reflect ‘originality’ of thought. Numerical answers will be expected to be complete and free of errors. GTAs should expect a First Class answer to have the following features:

Structure

- Clearly written, well organised and signposted.
- Very strong relevant structure; sections follow a logical order.

Coverage

- Comprehensive coverage of issues in relation to question; good exposition.
- Unusually wide reading.
- Outstanding and thorough understanding of a wide range of literature or, if question calls for more detailed analysis of limited literature then a very thorough understanding of this.

Analysis

- Creative and sophisticated theoretical analysis.
- An original and refreshing argument, something that surprises in the depth of analysis, knowledge and understanding.
- Display of unusual lines of argument that are well backed up.
- Evidence of reflection and own analysis of the literature together with an ability to see how lessons learned could be applied to other contexts/examples
- Critical evaluation of a wide range of material; may make reference to other relevant issues.
- Outstanding depth of discussion. Repetition of standard information to facilitate this is acceptable.
- Clearly original conclusion.

Upper Second (2:1)

This is a very good answer, which demonstrates a good level of knowledge. However, answer does not necessarily show originality. Numerical answers will be complete and almost free of errors (excepting minor mistakes).

Structure

- Clearly written, well organised and signposted.

- Well-structured; sections follow a logical order.

Coverage

- Covers all the major issues and some minor ones. Completes tasks set in question and displays clear understanding of the main issues.
- Wide reading.
- Substantial coverage of relevant literature and comprehensive knowledge of topic; attempt to answer the question explicitly.

Analysis

- Ability to describe and analyse issues in relation to the question.
- Thorough understanding and clear critical argument; directly addresses question.
- Critical discussion and presentation of an argument, or problem using material to illustrate points made. Taking 'control' of the topic and dealing with it in own terms, rather than letting the material speak for itself!
- Showing evidence of an independent perspective, more than a literature summary.
- Critical commentary and clear conclusion. A certain degree of self-reflectiveness and attempt to contribute own thoughts.

Lower Second (2:2)

A Lower Second answer is a good one that commands a considerable mass of material but does not integrate it very well. Faithfully reproduces a good deal of what has been taught in class, but contributes little from independent reading or thinking.

Structure

- Not very well expressed, just addresses question.
- Poorly structured. Jumps about from topic to topic without any clear structure or signposting to the essay. There is, however, some kind of order with references and introduction and conclusion.

Coverage

- Completes most major tasks expected in question, but either too simplistic or lacking some co-ordination/structure.
- Understanding of lecture material & basic reading. Answers question adequately.
- Reasonable coverage of relevant literature but the sources are not always fully referenced. Introduction of irrelevant material will pull down to low 2:2.

Analysis

- Covers the basic reading, but summarising the literature rather than engaging critically with it. Descriptive and lacking an analytic form.
- Ability to grasp main issues, but not in any great depth.
- Some understanding but lack of critical thought.
- Descriptive rather than analytic focus.

Third (3rd)

This is an acceptable but weak answer. Has some knowledge, but it tends to be superficial, incomplete, non-integrated or poorly understood. Numerical answers will be relatively complete but with some errors.

Structure

- Poorly written and expressed.
- Badly structured and lacks co-ordination. No introduction; just a set of bits of reading, not in order, not much range.

Coverage

- Fails to address question or misses an important aspect of the question. Shows confusion but some basic knowledge and relevant discussion.
- Thinly researched. Shows knowledge of the major issues, but mostly not strictly relevant to the question.

- Poor or no reference to the literature; just rambles around the general theme of the question giving opinions without any organisation or substantiation. Shows intelligence but little knowledge of the module.

Analysis

- Major gaps in analysis.
- Demonstrates no widespread knowledge or analytical grasp of issues.
- Very superficial grasp of issues.
- Patchy knowledge of topic. Descriptive and sketchy in style of structure. Thin on quantity as well as quality but enough grasp to merit honours.

Fail (F)

A poor answer that neither meets key criteria nor provides an adequate level of work. Numerical answers will contain substantial errors or be incomplete.

An attempt at an answer (for example, one that is clearly very rushed or barely coherent, or one that largely misses the point of the question) should normally not receive less than 20%. Marks below 20% would normally be appropriate for extremely brief and/or wildly inaccurate answers. Non-existent answers should receive a mark of zero.

Structure

- Disorganised.
- Poorly written. Random shuffling of points.

Coverage

- Fails to address question.
- Reveals little or no evidence of familiarity with relevant literature.

Analysis

- Misunderstands question or does not make distinction between giving an answer to a question and throwing in anything one knows on a topic.
- Misunderstandings of concepts and major issues.
- No argument.
- Irrelevant or uninformed or "lazy" answers.
- Assertive, unsubstantiated arguments.
- Incoherent, unread, illiterate. Too short, given the time available. Incomplete. Repetitive!

The Key Criteria

- 1) Answering the question
- 2) Producing a coherent, clear argument and analysis
- 3) Revealing knowledge, reading and evidence
- 4) Demonstrating a critical ability
- 5) Writing lucidly
- 6) Providing clear frameworks, structures and signposts

Student Expectations

Students can expect that:

Comments will be provided on their essays. These comments will offer the teacher's broad rationale for giving the mark awarded, and where possible suggest some directions for further development.

Comments should be written on the EBS Coursework Feedback Sheet. A sample copy of the feedback sheet has been provided under Appendix B (see pages 25 – 26). Copies of these will be supplied by Fran Bysh (first year modules), Keeley Ortiz (second year modules) and Jo Lambert (third year modules) when GTAs collect the coursework from them for marking. Feedback sheets for Southend GTAs will be provided by Patrick Gallagher or Emma Nicholas.

A checklist of some common weaknesses in student essays

Answering the question

1. Need to be more focused.
2. You need to clarify what the questions wants you to do
3. Too many irrelevancies - you could have cut parts.

Producing a coherent and clear argument and analysis

1. Be clearer about what your argument is: try to say it briefly
2. It is not clear how all the parts of your argument connect
3. Weak arguments
4. Needs more logical organisation of argument
5. Key points needed further development

Revealing knowledge, reading and evidence

1. Read more widely
2. Need more evidence
3. Key reading not demonstrated
4. Insufficient connection to the module
5. Clarify sources and reading
6. Bibliography needed

Demonstrating a critical ability

1. Be more critical of what you read
2. Be more critical in your argument

Clarity of expression

1. Use active voice
2. waffle and verbosity
3. Watch out for:
 - spelling
 - syntax
 - sentencing and/or paragraphing inadequate
 - punctuation problems
 - legibility
4. Needs final checking for proofing/editing
5. Indent long quotations
6. Give page numbers for quotes
7. Improve bibliographical style
8. Clarify the meaning of the key concepts you use

Providing clear frameworks, structures and signposts

1. Need a better plan and structure
2. Needs clearer signposting and links
3. Stronger introduction needed
4. Weak conclusion
5. Avoid bringing in new material to the conclusion

Appendix A – Peer Review Form (subject to change)

Graduate Teaching Assistant Peer Review Report Essex Business School, University of Essex

Name of GTA:
Name of Lecturer:
Course:
Date of evaluation:

Time

Evaluation started at:
Evaluation completed at:

Was the class started on time: YES / NO

Attendance

Number of students in class:
Was an attendance register used to keep record of attendance: YES / NO

Please comment on the following aspects:

Preparation for the class:

(How well was the GTA prepared, both administratively and in relation to the content of the class? Did they have a firm grasp of the problems, cases, or readings being covered and relevant theories?)

Communication:

(This includes language and presentation skills involved in the clear communication of ideas to students, but also the GTA's skills in facilitating a dialogue with students and between students.)

Structure of the class:

(Was the class clearly structured with an introduction to the aims of the class, changes of activity, periodic summing up and reiteration of key learnings, and a conclusion where the class objectives were re-stated and connected to the lecture and course objectives? Did the class run to schedule?)

Student participation in class:

(Did all students have the opportunity to participate? How did the GTA deal with unprepared students, those who were reluctant to join in discussion and those who dominated it? Was the GTA aware of the dynamics of participation in the class?)

Any other observations:

(This should include recognition of excellence and good practice in teaching, as well as areas for improvement)

Feedback for the GTA:

Recommendations for further training (if any):

TO BE FILLED IN BY THE GTA

Reflection on the session

(This should include achievement of objectives, effectiveness of approach, engagement of students, areas for further improvement etc.)

Signature of GTA

Date

Signature of mentor

Date

Appendix B – Coursework feedback sheet (subject to change)

ESSEX BUSINESS SCHOOL
COURSEWORK FEEDBACK SHEET

2010/2011

SURNAME: _____

FIRST NAME: _____

REGISTRATION NO: _____

Course title: _____

1st Marker Comments

2nd Marker Comments (Where appropriate)

Mark awarded _____

(Students are reminded that all coursework marks are subject to confirmation by external examiners)

Signature (1st Marker) _____ Date _____

Signature (2nd Marker) _____ Date _____

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Structure and organisation	A polished and imaginative approach to the topic	Carefully and logically organised	Shows organisation and coherence	Shows some attempt to organise in a logical manner	Disorganised/ incoherent
Presentation	Superbly presented	Well presented	Adequately presented	Poorly presented	Careless and/or inconsistent presentation
Expression/ style	Fluently written in an appropriate academic style	Well written in an appropriate academic style	Well written but lacking the appropriate style	Poorly written	Incoherent
Knowledge	Has addressed the question comprehensively and imaginatively	Has addressed the question comprehensively and with some attempt to demonstrate imagination	Has addressed the main purpose of the question	Some of the work is focused on the aims and themes of the question	Fails to address the question set
Source material	Extensive evidence of reviewing relevant material outside of the core readings	Significant evidence of reviewing relevant material outside of the core readings	Some evidence of reviewing relevant material outside of the core readings	No evidence of reviewing relevant material outside of the core readings	No evidence of core or associated readings
Analysis	Excellent level of analysis	Good level of analysis	Some evidence of analysis	Little evidence of analysis	No evidence of analysis
Logical conclusions related to the wording of questions	Excellent conclusion that is directly related to the question	Solid conclusion that is directly relevant to the question	Some attempt at a conclusion that is relevant to the question	Some attempt at a conclusion however it has little relevance to the question	No conclusions or irrelevant conclusion
Referencing	Accurate and consistent referencing encompassing a very broad range of academic resources	Accurate and consistent referencing encompassing a wide range of academic resources	Referencing with few mistakes encompassing a narrow range of resources	Referencing with numerous mistakes encompassing a narrow range of resources	No referencing