

Supporting Academic Staff Guidelines

1.1 Introduction

Supporting Academic Staff is a term that classifies Lecturers and teaching Assistants. Both Lecturers and teaching assistants are vital components of the academic setting at Qatar University. Their assistance is essential to the fulfillment of the role, scope, and mission of academic programs. This Document provides a guideline for both academic positions. Qatar University lecturers and TAs should read this document thoroughly to understand their roles and responsibilities. The reference in this document to the duties of both Lecturers and Teaching assistants should be used by Department chairs as a baseline, and each department should develop roles and responsibilities for their lecturers and TAs based on this document

1.2 Lecturer

The Lecturer title is typically limited to individuals who have a Master's degree or higher and is contracted by the University for conducting teaching and other academic functions mainly relevant to teaching.

They carry complete responsibility for a course and function in the same manner as faculty (or instructional academic staff); e.g. choosing the course material and having full grading responsibilities. Lecturers are expected, in accordance with their contract, to devote 80–90% of their working time to teaching and instruction. The remaining 10 or 20% can be allocated to university service after consultation with the academic unit head.

Since the primary duty of a Lecturer is teaching, the main criterion for appointment is excellence in teaching. However, it is recognized that the diverse characteristics of the different colleges may make it appropriate for them to set additional criteria.

Areas and disciplines where academic staff is hired as lecturers:

- **Foundation Program:** Lecturers are hired to support the pre-college students to upgrade their learning skills and develop their proficiency in language, mathematics and computer skills that will result in laying a strong background for students' success in their studies thereafter.
- **Arabic For Non-Native Speakers Program:** Lecturers are hired to teach languages specifically, Arabic for non-native speakers.
- **Other Professional Disciplines:** Lecturers can be hired in other professional disciplines where longer contact hours, practical and hands-on teaching as

deemed required by the discipline E.g. Journalism, Radio and Television and Law.

1.2.1 General Regulation for Lecturers

1. For those who possess a Ph.D. and are eager to advance their career by being promoted to a higher academic rank, specifically Assistant Professor, they are encouraged to apply to any open position in their field of specialization if such vacancy is available on the university website.
2. Applications will go through the normal process of filling a vacant academic post in accordance with the university recruitment policies and procedures.
3. Performance of lecturers will be evaluated annually through the academic appraisal system.

1.2.2 Duty and Roles of Lecturer

QU established a base line for the major roles and responsibilities of a lecturer at any academic program. This base line is based on many years of experience with different academic programs, and is considered to be the minimum academic expectations from a lecturer at QU. Such base line summarizes lecturers' roles and responsibilities as follows:

1. Teach independently introductory and/or other professional and technical-based courses.
2. Prepare and deliver lectures, tutorials and practical classes
3. Assess and evaluate student assignments and grade student performance
4. Organize and conduct field trips and supervise internship and field studies
5. Serve on departmental or faculty committees dealing with general departmental and administrative concerns, as assigned by his/her superiors.

Teaching Assistants

QU values the role of teaching assistants in the overall academic process. In addition, teaching assistants are a supporting part of the QU academic human resources body. Teaching Assistants (TAs) are academic staff members who hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree, and they are hired primarily to support the undergraduate learning process at Qatar University under the supervision and guidance of a faculty member.

Teaching Assistants are expected to support undergraduate learning through a variety of activities including direct teaching, one-to-one and small-group activities, tutoring, conducting problem-solving sessions, delivering practical/lab sessions, overseeing and encouraging the use of University learning resources including printed, audio-visual and computer-based equipment, and such other learning support methods and materials as may be developed. A contribution to all aspects of

educational activity, including assessment of student work in courses for which Teaching Assistants are involved and as assigned by the principle course instructor, attendance at relevant meetings, and assistance with the development of learning materials, will be required. Teaching Assistants will be available for these duties for five days per week.

At QU there are two categories for teaching assistants::

1. **Nationals** are contracted by the University because they show great potential and promise for investment by the University in their careers. QU exerts no effort in attracting and reaching out to those young promising talents, who possess attributes 'to be future faculties' and commitment to pursue graduate studies abroad.
2. **Non-nationals** are contracted to assist mainly in the practical/lab sessions and to carry out duties outlined below.

1.3.1. General Regulations For National Teaching Assistants

1. Prior to applying to the University, he/she should possess a TOEFL score of at least 480 (paper based), and preferably an admission to one of the graduate Institutes on the Emiri/National List of Higher Education Institute in SEC (Supreme Education Council).
2. All national teaching assistants are committed to pursue graduate studies abroad within one year from their contract commencement and according to the following guidelines:
 - A. **National TA who is holding a BA or BS , and is expected to pursue a Master Degree (MSc, MA)**
 1. Once he/she acquires acceptance in one of the MSC/MA programs on the Emiri or National list or on the Higher Education Institute List and starts his/her graduate program he/she will be granted higher grade.
 2. A maximum of two years will be granted to him/her as clemency or grace period to allow him/her to obtain admission, and upgrade of his/her English proficiency up to the score stipulated by Higher Education Institute. Failing to do so, his/her contract will be terminated.
 3. Upon the completion of the MSC/MA degree, pursuant to undergoing a successful interview with the University-Wide Recruiting Committee, chaired by the President, and upon receiving the committee's recommendation, he/she will receive a salary raise up to 10% of the basic salary.
 4. Receiving full credit of a 10% salary increase depends on the completion time of the MSC/MA program and if it matches the intended one.
 5. Requesting a time extension to complete the MSC/MA program will adversely affect the salary raise.

6. If 2 years (or more, subject to program of study designated by the offering university) elapse from the start of the Master program and no MSC or MA is granted the University will have the right to terminate his/her contract.
7. After successfully obtaining his/her MSC or MA, he/she is expected to advance his/her career through obtaining an admission for Ph.D. studies in one of the graduate institutes on the list developed by Higher Education Institutes, within a year of his completion of his MSC/MA studies. Failing to pursue his/her advanced graduate studies, the University will have the right to terminate his/her contract.
8. During the time a Teaching Assistant is on campus, either during the period prior to starting his/her scholarship abroad (during the clemency period), or the period subsequent to receiving his/her MSC or MA, the period in which he/she might need to review the different options for pursuing his/her Ph.D., he/she is assigned with duties of a Teaching Assistant as outlined below.
9. During the scholarship, the teaching assistant has to sign a consent letter by which he/she does not object that his/her Head of department has the right to contact the TA's supervisor and request information such as evaluation report, transcripts, grades or any relevant information during the scholarship period.

B. TA who hold a MA or MS , and is expected to pursue a Ph.D.

1. Once he/she acquires acceptance in one of the Ph.D. programs on the Emiri or National list or on the Higher Education Institute List and starts his/her study program he/she will be granted higher grade.
2. Upon completion of the Ph.D. degree he/she will be eligible for promotion to Assistant Professor based on the University-Wide Human Resources Committee's decision.
3. If five years elapse and no Ph.D. is granted after receiving the scholarship, the University will have the right to terminate his/her contract.
4. If the Ph.D. holder lacks teaching experience, or his/her instructional capabilities need further enhancement, or if his/her command of English is not adequate for lecturing purpose, he/she will be not be entitled to be promoted to the rank of an assistant professor or he/she might undergo a probation period under her/his current academic grade for one year. Such a decision will be based on evaluation and recommendation by his/her academic unit, and the outcome of the interview of the University-Wide Recruiting Committee.
5. During the period before, between, and after obtaining a scholarship for pursuing graduate studies for MSC/MA or Ph.D., the national TA is expected to perform duties of a teaching assistant outlined below.
6. During the scholarship, the teaching assistant has to sign a consent letter by which he/she does not object that his/her Head of department has the right to contact the TA's supervisor and request information such as evaluation

report, transcripts, grades or any relevant information during the scholarship period.

1.3.2. General Regulation for Non National Teaching Assistants

1. Non-National TAs are being hired through the standard recruiting procedures for open positions being advertised, and their recommendation forwarded from the academic unit follows the same typical recruitment procedure for any other academic open position.
2. Appointment grade differs according to the qualifications, to the responsibilities he/she will be charged with, and duties expected from him/her. The qualification is not the decisive factor in determining the grade, rather the scope of the job he/she will be accountable to, and the outcomes expected to deliver, play the major criterion in the placement of the appointee.
3. For those hired on grade "F", they are expected to fulfill their duties outlined below, autonomously/individually, or with minimum supervision from a senior. Those placed in grade "F" are expected to take over independently practical session/labs/tutorial sessions, Introductory Service Courses, provided they have the ability to do so. TA hired on grade "F" is usually expected to hold at least an MSc or MA, or has equivalent professional qualifications and practical experience. For the latter to be appointed on this grade he or she must demonstrate proficiency, capabilities, and skills needed to perform the expected job objectives and outcomes.
4. For those hired on grade "G", are expected to assist in teaching under complete supervision and guidance of senior faculty. Assignment of teaching/instructional duties jointly with other academic colleagues of higher academic credentials is the decisive rationale in appointment of TA on grade "G". TA in grade "G" usually expected to hold at least a BS or BA. However, candidates with MS or MA can also be appointed to the "G" grade. Appointment of non national TAs to a particular grade is subject to job requirements and qualifications required as it is set by the department/program concerned.

1.3.3. Duty and Roles of Teaching Assistants

Note that these are general duties. Some will apply, others may not, as duties and responsibilities will differ from one department to another and from one college to another. However, what follows represent a general outline on the university level, and each department should develop roles and responsibilities for their TAs based on this document. Also for performance evaluation reasons all Heads of Department are expected to develop detailed Job description for their TAs.

1. Assists with instruction and supervision of students in field studies, field trips, internship, etc.
2. Compile and update manuals and guidelines related to practical sessions, lab sessions, internship, and field trips, etc. under the supervision of the instructor.
3. Prepare problem sheets and handouts needed for lab/practical setting under supervision of the instructor.
4. Provides tutorial support for students related to theory and practice components of their program.
5. Manage, operate and run laboratory. This includes but not limited to assistance in setting up equipment, maintaining laboratory supplies and resources, and organizing materials for laboratory practice experience.
6. Assists with the development of simulated laboratory and classroom learning experience.
7. Searches for, retrieves, and summarizes up-to-date literature related to topics addressed in courses or in practice experiences.
8. Prepares lists of useful resources for student use on selected topics.
9. Assists with grading student examinations, tests, quizzes, project laboratory exercises and assignments under the direct supervision of course instructors.
10. Provides academic assistance to students during office hours.
11. Assists with senior students' graduation projects and research related to the mission and service of the university.

1.4. Roles and Responsibilities of Academic Department/Colleges Regarding Their Teaching Assistants

Due to the fact that specific duties of the Teaching Assistants vary between departments, departments and colleges should:

1. Provide a clear strategic plan for recruiting the national TAs as part of Qatarization of the academic support staff. This should be based on the department academic plan and its future vision.
2. Provide specific job description detailing the specific courses (Problem-solving sessions; practical/lab sessions) which he/she will be assisting in its delivery.
3. Provide an orientation for **the Teaching Assistant** presenting them with guidelines on what it takes to be a TA in that department.
4. Assign a mentor for each Teaching Assistant, who in coordination with the Head of Department should develop, supervise, and monitor a customized Professional Developmental Plan for each Teaching Assistant to ensure that he/she is keeping up with the new advancement in his/her area of specialization, and acquiring the newly introduced effective instructional methodologies in his discipline.
5. Prior to traveling for scholarship, the department should exert all effort to support and advise the National TA, to ensure that specialization in the graduate studies, he/she would be pursuing will be aligned with the mission

of the Department. During the scholarship period, the department should remain in contact with the TA and his/her supervisor to follow up on his/her progress in her/his studies.

6. Department to collect and document progress reports from both the TA and his/her supervisor independently. These reports are essential, for the Head of department to decide on his/her annual increment.
7. The Head of Department is responsible for presenting his own evaluation for any request of scholarship extension period to the Dean. The evaluation, whether it entails approval or denial, should be a factual and evidence based decision, that takes into consideration the performance of the Teaching Assistant, his grades, his supervisor reports, circumstances, and factors that impedes him/her of completing his/her studies within the original period. The Dean should consider the report, confer his own assessment, and then forward it to the VP&CAO. The VP&CAO will then look into the report and decide either to grant or deny extension of the scholarship period.

1.5. Teaching Load.

1. All Lecturers are required to teach **16–20 hours per week**
2. All TAs who are expected to teach independently, need to cover not less than **15 hours and up to 20 hours per week**. These 15–20 hours should be contact hours (office hours as well as grading hours should not be calculated towards these hours)
3. Any other administrative work such as academic advising, committees' membership, assisting in department/college student survey/events etc. should not be counted towards the teaching load.
4. All TAs who are performing their duties jointly, or under supervision by other senior faculties should not be assigned less than **15 and up to 20 teaching hours per week**. Their teaching hours should be supervised and administered by the course instructor.

1.6. Procedures of Appointment/Promotion of TAs

All issues related to appointment/promotion of Qatari national Lecturers and Teaching Assistants are administered by the **Human Resource Committee For Teaching Assistant/Lecturer appointment and promotion**

1.6.1. HRC Term Of Reference

Rationale

The committee's main tasks are as follows:

1. Review and recommend the appointment and promotion of Qatari National Teaching Assistants.
2. Evaluate and assess the academic capabilities and interpersonal skills of applicants recommended for Teaching Assistants positions in Qatar University.
3. Evaluate and assess the academic capabilities and interpersonal skills as well as their potential to fulfill the duties and responsibilities for higher academic rank they are recommended to.
4. The decision of the committee is final and binding

Committee Members

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| Qatar University President | Chair |
| Vice President and Chief Academic officer | Member |
| Human Resources Director | Member |
| Director of Recruiting | Member |
| Human Resources Legal Advisor | Member |

The committee will invite the pertinent Dean or Academic Unit Director to present their case and dossier of the applicant for evaluation/appointment/recruitment for the HRC

Process

Following receipt of a Recruitment/Promotion application with relevant recommendation from the academic unit, HRC will meet to review/evaluate/recommend Qatari nominees only for the following academic posts: TA, lecturer, Assistant Professor. The merit of assessment will be based on the academic credentials, interpersonal skills, commitment, readiness and potentiality to fulfill the duties of academic rank; he/she is recommended for by their pertinent units in Qatar University.

Two different categories related to TAs are handled by the HRC and for which the committee convenes to decide on:

Recruitment:

TA/Lecturer positions

1. Review/assess application of candidates recommended for hire in an open academic position as a TA/lecturer. Evaluation and reaching a decision on his/her suitability for the appointment;
2. Evaluate Candidate future plans and commitment to pursue her/his graduate studies.

HRC Decision Process

Based on her/his credentials, to decide the academic rank he /she will be appointed in, the financial package he/she will be offered, and the duration of contract he/she will be offered, which stretches from one to two years.

Appointment/Promotion

HRC meets TA who has obtained a graduate degree from abroad. The committee convenes to evaluate and assess academic credentials, skills and readiness of Qatar University TAs who are returning to QU after completing their scholarship and obtaining their Ph.D. degrees:

1. Assess the report submitted by the Dean that outlines the achievements the TA has accomplished, and include the Deans recommendation regarding the promotion of the candidate to higher academic rank.
2. Evaluating a candidate's future plans to advance his/her career, either to pursue a higher graduate studies (if he/she did not receive his/her Ph. D), or to be involved in post doctoral research activities, in the case he/she received the Ph.D.
3. Evaluating his/her readiness to take over teaching responsibilities. Taking into consideration, his/her professional development needs in the area of teaching based on earlier experiences he/she had in teaching during the course of her/his studies in QU or abroad.

HRC Decision Process

Based on the above HRC will decide the academic rank he/she will be appointed to, and will decide the financial package he/she will be entitled. HRC may consider up to a 10% increase from the beginning of the salary scale, he/she is entitled to, for those who are considered by HRC as high achievers:

1. Those who received their graduate degree from prestigious universities on the Emiri list;
2. Those who received their graduate degree within a shorter period of the prescribed time by the scholarship;
3. Those who have been active in research and have published a number of papers in top tier journals in their discipline, during their course of graduate studies;
4. Any other academic achievement that is deemed consideration for reward by HRC.