

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures

Faculty of Humanities

University of Manchester

TEACHING ASSISTANT HANDBOOK

2018–2019

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School of Arts, Languages and Cultures

www.alc.manchester.ac.uk

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Contents

1	Introduction to the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures	3
2	Teaching within the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures.....	3
	2.1 Teaching Review	4
	2.2 Higher Education Academy	5
3	Your Role as a Teaching Assistant	5
4	The Role of the Course Unit Director	5
5	Contact Hours.....	6
6	Programme Administrators	7
7	The Student Support and Guidance Office.....	7
	7.1 Mitigating Circumstances	8
8	Academic Advisers	8
9	Protecting Student Information.....	9
10	Teaching Seminar Groups	9
	10.1 Before the Start of the Course Unit	9
	10.2 Week One.....	10
	10.3 Seminar Preparation.....	10
	10.4 Teaching materials	11
	10.5 Group Work	11
	10.6 Tips for Seminars.....	11
11	Attendance Monitoring	12
	11.1 Recording Attendance	12
12	Plagiarism and Academic Malpractice.....	13
	12.1 What to do if you find Plagiarism in an Essay	13
13	Discipline	14
14	Essays and Essay Submission	15
	14.1 Before Assessment Deadlines	15
	14.2 Electronic Submission	15
	14.3 Anonymous Marking.....	16
	14.4 Marking Essays	17
	14.5 Commenting on Essays.....	17
	14.6 Moderation.....	18
	14.7 Marking Scheme and Criteria	18
	14.8 Late Essays	18
15	Examinations	19
16	Feedback.....	19
	16.1 What is feedback?	19
	16.2 What means do Subject Areas in SALC use to provide feedback?	20
	16.3 When is feedback given?	20
	16.4 What is the difference between formative and summative feedback?	20
	16.5 What happens if a student wants more feedback?	20
17	Student Evaluations	20
18	Blackboard.....	21
19	Student System	21
20	Programme Administrator Contacts	22
	Appendix 1 – TA Pay Rates for Teaching and Marking	24

1 Introduction to the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures

Your subject area is part of the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures. SALC brings together an exceptionally diverse and successful concentration of teachers and researchers with the aim and ambition of positioning the Arts at the core of the University's mission and at the forefront of its international reputation. The School is single-minded in its vision to provide a global beacon for the study of the Arts and Languages. The School's outlook and performance, like its staff and student body, is both international and internationally recognised. Attracting the best research and teaching talent, it aims to set the agenda both in terms of its research and the educational environment it can offer. The School's objective is to give students a learning and teaching experience of the highest quality where they are taught and guided by inspiring academics, making its graduates highly sought after by employers. It has a strong commitment to social responsibility and public engagement and seeks to create and develop knowledge that makes a difference both to those researching and studying in the School and in the wider world. Staff are engaged in a broad field of scholarship in arts, languages, and cultures and are committed to inter- and multi-disciplinarity at all levels of study and research.

Undergraduate programmes within SALC are provided by the following different disciplinary areas:

- Art History and Cultural Practices
- Chinese Studies
- Classics & Ancient History and Archaeology
- Drama
- East Asian Studies
- English, American Studies and Creative Writing
- French Studies
- German Studies
- Linguistics and English Language
- History
- Italian Studies
- Japanese Studies
- Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies
- Music
- Religions and Theology
- Russian and East European Studies
- Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies
- Translation and Intercultural Studies
- University Language Centre
- World Literatures

The School provides teaching to over 6,500 undergraduates and postgraduates, and employs around 350 academic staff, more than a dozen postdoctoral research fellows, and a large cohort of teaching assistants, all supported by around 100 professional support services staff.

2 Teaching within the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures

As a Teaching Assistant you have an important part to play in the undergraduate student experience through teaching and example.

This includes:

- Treating undergraduate students, as well as academic colleagues and administrative staff, professionally and with courtesy at all times.
- Arriving promptly for all teaching duties.

- Maintaining good communications with your course unit director/s,
- Being well-prepared for seminar classes.
- Providing constructive feedback in a timely manner. Your feedback should be respectful and written in inclusive and non-discriminatory language. When you have written your comments look back at them and imagine if you would be comfortable saying them to the student in person.
- Ensuring students are aware of how to contact you if they require advice.

The School is committed to providing appropriate support for Teaching Assistants:

- **Course Unit Directors (or CUDs)** who coordinate the syllabus and teaching and usually deliver some or all of the lectures on a specific course. CUDs will be your first point of contact for any issues related to course material including lecture and seminar content as well as assessment tasks. CUDs hold regular office hours for students on the course.
- **Programme administrators:** coordinate the organization of teaching and assessment for a programme, including course unit selection, attendance monitoring, and assessment. They will have contact details of individual students' academic advisers and have an overview of student-related processes in general.
- **The TA Academic Coordinator** has overall responsibility over the development and training of Teaching Assistants. S/he may help resolve issues with the appropriate Head of Discipline/Division, and organises regular meetings with the TA representatives. S/he ensures that the TA Training complies with the University and HEA framework, and is appoint of contact for the HEA accreditation scheme. You can find the contact details of the TA Academic Coordinator on the front page of the handbook.
- **Undergraduate Programme Director** coordinates teaching for the subject area. The Undergraduate Programme Director is available for issues relating to undergraduate teaching and students more generally.
- **The Teaching and Learning Office:** Much of the administrative communication you receive throughout a course, including seminar and room assignments, will come through the Teaching and Learning Office.
- **PhD Supervisors:** Although your research supervisor has no direct role in your teaching, they can provide valuable and often more personal teaching advice. Your supervisor will also be required to observe one of your seminars near the start of term, and to provide you with practical feedback on your teaching

2.1 Teaching Review

Your PhD supervisor is responsible for giving you constructive feedback on your teaching. It is your responsibility to contact your PhD supervisor within the **first four weeks** of the semester to arrange a mutually convenient date and time for a classroom observation. Your supervisor will give you a brief statement about your performance, and a few minutes should be set aside in a supervision session to talk through your teaching methods and organisation.

The Teaching Review Form can be found here:

<http://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/faculty/tahub/Teaching%20Assistant%20Review%20Pro-Forma.pdf>

2.2 Higher Education Academy

The University of Manchester has developed a recognition framework, approved by the HEA, to grant Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy status to Teaching Assistants who attend the validated training and mentoring programme and submit a teaching portfolio/presentation. Details on the application process to the AFHEA status through the UoM framework will be made available in the course of the academic year. Please direct any questions regarding the training programme and the accreditation scheme to the TA Academic Coordinator.

3 Your Role as a Teaching Assistant

As a TA you are expected to contribute to and support seminars/workshops for course units utilising material set by the CUD. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the UG Director of the subject area, should TAs be allowed to undertake further teaching (individual lectures, for example). TAs should not be given sole responsibility for teaching a complete course unit.

If you have any questions the answers to which are not covered in this handbook you can:

- Consult the Teaching Assistant Policy (Faculty of Humanities)
<http://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/faculty/tahub/Humanities%20Teaching%20Assistant%20Policy.pdf>
- Look at the information on the Teaching Assistant Hub:
<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/humnet/our-services/teaching-and-learning/tahub/>
- Ask the TA Academic Coordinator (contact details on the front page of the handbook)
- Look at the information on the Undergraduate Intranet for Staff:
<http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/staffintranet/undergraduate/>
- Ask your Course Unit Director
- Ask your Programme Administrator

4 The Role of the Course Unit Director

As a TA you will be working with a Course Unit Director who is in charge of the whole course unit.

The Course Unit Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring that you receive all the documentation relating to the unit,
- Answering any questions you may have in relation to the course unit,
- Meeting with you in order to brief you on specific aspects of the course when necessary,
- Meeting with you and any other TAs to discuss marking and ensuring that marking is standardised across the course unit.

If you have any questions about the course unit your first point of contact should be your Course Unit Director.

Please note that your line manager is your Head of Division.

5 Contact Hours

The number of available 'contact hours' (i.e., the number of hours students are directly interacting with staff or being taught each week) is an important issue for many students. For this reason, student satisfaction with contact time will be specifically addressed on evaluations. However, because this issue has become increasingly central to students' general opinion of university study in recent years, especially in the Humanities, it is important that you remind students of resources available throughout the term.

These general resources, which can contribute to a student's sense of 'contact time', include:

Lectures and seminars: Although it may seem obvious that these are compulsory hours of contact, TAs should remind students at the start of a new term that their attendance in lectures and seminars is the primary source of contact with staff. Attendance in seminars is monitored for all units. See Section 11 on Attendance Monitoring.

Consultation hours and appointments: You may find that students need extra encouragement to take the initiative to meet with their CUD or with you outside of their seminar hour. Remind students of the CUD's office hours and of your availability when you schedule consultation hours or encourage them to contact you for an appointment. Please note that TAs are not required to have weekly office hours, and can use the allotted 'out of classroom' time they are paid for more flexibly, e.g. by organising multiple consultation hours in a week leading up to an assessment and by answering emails in other weeks at the start of the semester.

If you want to organise a consultation session, bookable rooms are available in the Graduate School, which is located in the Ellen Wilkinson Building.

Email: Students should feel free to contact you via email, and should be able to count on thoughtful responses within a reasonable amount of time. Sending a weekly email to your entire student list is another good habit to get into from the start of a course. Without inundating students to the point that they might ignore crucial messages, a brief message with a subject line like 'Reading Literature – Week 7: King Lear' can be a good way to remind students of material to prepare, and to make them feel generally more connected.

Marking and feedback: A surprising percentage of students fail to read their feedback on Turnitin (often they only check their mark and don't click on to the feedback). Be sure to remind students (by email or in seminars, as appropriate) to do so, emphasising the importance of your feedback, and that you are available to discuss it. You may want to discuss generic feedback on recurring good practice and errors with the entire group.

Other events: It can also be helpful to students (and to seminar discussion and rapport) to be reminded of other events that might relate to their studies in some way. These might include special lectures or events at the university, or relevant local cultural events.

Independent study: Although it obviously isn't 'contact time', it is important to emphasise the central role of independent study in the Humanities, or in any university study. Students (especially first-year students) may benefit from some explanation of how lectures, seminars, and other forms of 'contact' are all intended to supplement their own reading and work.

6 Programme Administrators

Programme Administrators provide programmes and assessment administrative support for your subject area. It is very important that you respond to any emails from your Programme Administrator promptly. See Section 20 below for Programme Administrator contact details.

7 The Student Support and Guidance Office

The Student Support and Guidance Team (SSGO) are very familiar with the processes and requirements of programmes within the School and can advise the students you teach on managing any difficulties they have. They also operate as part of the wider University's support network and can help student to access more specialised and targeted help if that is needed. You should refer any students experiencing difficulties coping with their studies to the SSGO. Students can call into the SSGO in Room A15, Samuel Alexander or contact the team by email (salc-studentsupport@manchester.ac.uk). The SSGO team is as follows:

Sara Latham – Student Support and Guidance Manager

sara.latham@manchester.ac.uk

Hannah Brookfield - Student Support and Guidance Coordinator

Hannah.brookfield@manchester.ac.uk

Natalie Lankester-Carthy - Student Support and Guidance Coordinator

natalie.lankester-carthy@manchester.ac.uk

Bernadette Cunnane – Student Support and Guidance Administrator (interruptions of study/withdrawals from study)

Bernadette.cunnane@manchester.ac.uk

Jemma Cope – Student Support Administrator and Disability Coordinator

jemma.cope@manchester.ac.uk

Information on the Student Support and Guidance Office can be found at: <http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/support/>

Jemma Cope is the School's Disability Co-ordinator for UG and PGT students. The Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) assesses students with disabilities and provides the School with University support plans (USPs) for individual students. These are made available to all Course Unit Directors who are responsible for disseminating this information to all staff teaching those students on their course units at the start of each semester. You must familiarise yourself with the needs of any students with

disabilities in your classes, and speak to the students about their support needs. If anything is unclear or you need further advice you can speak to Jemma, your Programme Administrator or the Disability Advisory and Support Service directly by emailing dass@manchester.ac.uk or calling 0161 275 7512. Please be aware that it is a legal requirement to conform to the support plans for students registered with the Disability Advisory and Support Service.

7.1 Mitigating Circumstances

During the course of their degree programme some students will encounter issues (e.g. health problems, bereavement) that can have a serious negative impact on their studies.

If a student alerts you to what they consider a legitimate circumstance for late submission or non-submission of an assignment, or for an examination being affected or missed, it is **not** your responsibility to handle these requests directly. You should refer the student to the Student Support and Guidance Office and advise them to submit an online mitigating circumstances form.

Information about Mitigating Circumstances and the online form is available from the student support section of the student intranet:

<https://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/student-intranet/support/mitigating-circumstances/>

8 Academic Advisers

All undergraduate students with the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures are assigned an Academic Adviser. You should be aware of the function of the Academic Adviser as you may, after discussion with your Course Unit Director, need to suggest to one of your seminar students that s/he discusses certain aspects of her/his programme with her/his Academic Adviser.

Academic advising consists of:

- Providing information and guidance on academic choice;
- Assisting students with the planning of short-term and long-term targets for development;
- Pro-actively monitoring both academic performance and student engagement and advising on constructive strategies for improvement as necessary;
- Helping students both to identify the skills being acquired and to recognise progress towards fulfilment of academic objectives;
- Encouraging students to productively reflect on their academic development through the use of a *personal portfolio* or a *personal development plan*;
- Working with students to build personal academic relationships;
- Making regular contact with students using an appropriate combination of face-to-face meetings, e-mail, on-line communications, etc., in order to address all of the above on a regular and developing basis;

- Ensuring insofar as is possible that any student facing academic and/or personal difficulties does not lose contact with academic teachers or tutors or become isolated from student support staff and facilities.

The University's Academic Advisement Policy can be found at:
<http://www.tlso.manchester.ac.uk/advising-information/>

9 Protecting Student Information

The University needs to hold and process large amounts of personal data about its students, employees, alumni, contractors, research subjects and other individuals in order to carry out its business and administrative functions. This data is subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and concerns all administrative, academic and commercial areas within the University.

The University must ensure that it fully complies with the provisions of data protection law. It is important that all staff members who work with personal data familiarise themselves with data protection principles and our obligations. Failures or weaknesses in our processing of personal data can result in significant harm and distress to individuals who may be affected and may also cause significant reputational damage to the University.

Further information about the Data Protection Act and the University guidance to staff is available online at:

<http://www.dataprotection.manchester.ac.uk/>

No personal or confidential University data should be stored on unencrypted laptops, computers, memory sticks or other portable devices.

Information stored on the hard-disks of desktops and laptops and stored on USB sticks and other portable media can be encrypted to protect it in the event of the device being lost or stolen. Due to their portability and widespread use, two of the biggest risks to information security come from unencrypted laptops and USB sticks.

You can find information about encrypting laptops on the University Knowledge Base at:
<http://www.itservices.manchester.ac.uk/secure-it/encryption/>

10 Teaching Seminar Groups

10.1 Before the Start of the Course Unit

Even before the first week of teaching, there are several important things to consider as a TA:

Seminar room: Once you have been assigned your seminar group(s) by the undergraduate office, you will be provided with the room assignment for your seminar. It is important not only that you know the location of the room before the first seminar, but, if possible, that you visit it and familiarise yourself with the layout and available equipment.

Course materials: It is essential that you familiarise yourself with the reading list and gather materials before the course. The syllabuses for specific courses can vary in the amount of material they require students to read, and in the means by which these

materials are made available for students (and TAs) (e.g. photocopies of material (hard-copy or on Blackboard), students are expected to purchase or acquire some texts from the library),

Meeting with Course Unit Director (CUD): You should aim to meet with your Course Unit Director before teaching begins. A lecture schedule and assessment schedule should be provided at (or before) this meeting, along with crucial information about course structure (e.g. how the course makes use of Blackboard).

Scheduling your preparation: You may want to think about when you will set aside time to prepare your weekly seminars, taking into account the times of (and between) the lecture and your seminar(s). You are paid for 2 hours of preparation time per unit per week (irrespective of the number of groups you teach).

10.2 Week One

The start of the seminar in Week One is an important time for introductions, both personal and to the structure of the course.

Make sure you plan some time this first week to introduce yourself and have the students introduce themselves to each other. In the long run, the connections made and the atmosphere established in an ice-breaker activity this first week can prove crucial – even one as simple as asking students to name the last book they read, or say what they expect to get out of the course. (This is also a great chance to start putting names to faces.) Some informal group discussion of the syllabus, pointing out key issues and assessment deadlines, will also be very useful to students.

With first-year, first-time university students, it will also be important to spend a few minutes explaining how the lecture, seminar, and their individual study are meant to work together, as this structure will likely be new to them. For any course, a review of library and online resources, especially the Blackboard components of the course, will be very useful to students as well.

10.3 Seminar Preparation

Preparation for a seminar will usually involve carefully reading (or re-reading)/working through the course material for that week, taking note of how assigned material relates to the expected topic of that week's lecture, and to the course as a whole. It will also be important to note potential questions which students might have, or which you can plan to address in the seminar.

Your teaching plans should be considered very different from a presentation, however. Generally speaking, seminars are not intended for delivery of additional new material, but rather to provide students with a framework within which to discuss material they have read or prepared in relation to the lecture. In this regard, it is important not to 'over-prepare', so that you have too many or too rigid a list of points you wish to make. The most productive seminars are often those in which the discussion gathers its own momentum and encourages debate among the students themselves.

On courses which involve a number of TAs, while preparing seminars, you might also find it helpful or reassuring to consult with others teaching, especially those who have taught the course before.

10.4 Teaching materials

In addition to putting together your own rough outline of a few clear main points for seminar discussion or of seminar activities, you may find it helpful to prepare a slide show and/or a hand-out for students. This will often include an abbreviated version of your outline, along with some discussion questions, exercises and, where appropriate, key quotations (from the lecture or readings) and references. You are able to photocopy such handouts via the printer in the Graduate School's first floor computer cluster.

The School encourages all teaching staff to make teaching materials available to students via Blackboard. Core readings should certainly be made accessible to students via Blackboard or via the Library, either digitally or for loan. It is important that, when instructing students to read course materials on Blackboard, you do not require them to print them off (though of course they may wish to do so themselves), as it is University policy that students on taught programmes must be able to complete their studies without incurring any significant additional study costs, over and above the tuition fee for that programme. If printing is required, this should be arranged in consultation with the Course Unit Director.

You will be notified by the Course Unit Director of any students with a disability with additional support needs. Please see section 7 under Student Support and Guidance for further information.

10.5 Group Work

Especially when working closely with specific texts or on specific exercises, working in smaller groups (often in order to present ideas to the whole group later) can be a very productive framework for part of a seminar (maybe 10-20 minutes). Many students find discussion in smaller groups quite rewarding, and it can be a great way to bring students into debate who speak less often in the whole group. You will have to prepare for group work, of course, with copies ready of exercises, tasks, or three or four key passages, either from the assigned reading or something they have not seen.

10.6 Tips for Seminars

- Learn names: Learning and referring to students by name is very important for encouraging discussion. Aside from ice-breaker activities in the first week, one trick for learning names is use the option to include photos of students in the roster on the Student System (Campus Solutions). Go to 'Faculty Centre' – Select 'Class Roster' – Select 'Include photos in list' – Once the photo of the first student appears, click 'View All' in the blue bar. This will show all names along with their ID photos.
- Ask open-ended questions: It may seem obvious, but as suggested above, you will want to avoid a situation where the students are expecting you to provide them with information, as in a lecture. Rather than respond directly to a point or question put forward by a student, re-direct questions to the group whenever possible. In this way, you can encourage and moderate lively discussion, but without giving the impression of only looking for 'correct' answers or interpretations. Often this means waiting through 'awkward silences' before students volunteer the answer.
- Emphasise the group aspect of seminars: In the long run, it can prove helpful to emphasise the importance of every student's contribution from the start. Make it clear that it is not only for your sake or the sake of their marks that they attend every lecture and seminar, do all the reading, and make an effort to participate in discussion; the usefulness of seminars for the whole group depends on it.

- The beginning of each weekly seminar is a good time for dealing with important course issues, such as upcoming assignments or reading material/preparation which might require extra time.

11 Attendance Monitoring

Attendance at lectures, seminars, tutorials and other classes within the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures is compulsory.

The current work and attendance policy can be requested from the Student Support and Guidance Office: salc-studentsupport@manchester.ac.uk

NB: Persistent non-attendance at seminars/classes can result in students failing to meet the attendance requirements and therefore being prevented from taking resit examinations or excluded from the University.

You are required to complete all the attendance rosters in the student system / Campus Solutions and you should ask students to contact you if they are not able to attend a seminar for good reason. Please note that attendance at lectures is not recorded.

If a student does not attend a seminar and does not contact you about this you must ensure that you have recorded the student as an 'unauthorised absence' on the student system. We recommend that you also follow this up by emailing the student to check why they were absent.

Please be aware of the importance of recording attendance. Some students who do not attend may have personal problems and it is important that these students are referred to the Student Support and Guidance Office as soon as possible so that appropriate support can be arranged.

Please see detailed information in the Work and Attendance Policy (UG): Information for Staff 2018-19.

11.1 Recording Attendance

It is **very important** that lecturers and tutors keep a full and accurate record of student attendance, not only for pastoral reasons but also for reasons relating to student performance and progression. Therefore, after each seminar, it is your responsibility to log into Campus Solutions to register your students' attendance online.

To do this, go to 'My Services' on My Manchester (my.manchester.ac.uk). Under 'Faculty Center' on the front page of the portal click on 'My Schedule' which will lead you to a list of your seminar groups. From here, click the icon under 'Attendance Roster' for each seminar group. Then on the Attendance Roster menu, click 'View' next to the appropriate week. (You may need to click 'View All' at the top of the table to see some weeks.) On the roster for that week, make sure only students who were present are marked as such. (You can ignore the 'Tardy' and 'Left Early' options.) Then, using the drop-down menus under 'Reason', make sure any absentees are marked as either 'Authorized' (if the student has contacted you in advance, or provided a doctor's note for an illness) or 'Unauthorized'. (**NB:** Do not use other options on this menu, as the School system which automatically sends out reminder letters to students who have missed a number of seminars only recognises these two options.)

After you have completed the attendance rosters on Campus Solutions, please give your list to the CUD at the end of each week and highlight any possible problems with them, so that the CUD can write to students directly if need be.

A staff guide to attendance recording in Campus Solutions can be found at:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/protected/display.aspx?DocID=11218>

A School guide is available here:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=25698>

12 Plagiarism and Academic Malpractice

Students should already be aware of what constitutes plagiarism and academic malpractice, and about the serious consequences for any student found guilty of plagiarism or academic malpractice. This can range from a reprimand and warning about future behaviour to a mark of zero for the essay or course unit and, in the most serious cases, to expulsion from the University.

General guidance for students about plagiarism and malpractice is available at:

<http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/guidance-to-students-on-plagiarism-and-other-forms-of-academic-malpractice/>

12.1 What to do if you find Plagiarism in an Essay

If you suspect that an essay, or part of an essay, that a student has submitted has been plagiarised you should check against the below to clarify whether the case is malpractice (which need to be handled at School or Faculty level) or poor academic practice (which are better handled at subject/programme level).

(a) Instances of poor academic practice include:

- inadequate referencing, e.g. failure to repeat footnote or in-line references each time a text is drawn on
- an incomplete bibliography, which as a result of carelessness fails to include sources mentioned in the main text and references, or gives inadequate or inaccurate information about them.
- isolated examples of the omission of quotation marks from quotes (i.e. cases where it is clear that sloppiness or a misunderstanding of academic conventions is to blame)
- close paraphrasing of a phrase or sentence of someone else's material without direct and immediate acknowledgement (again, brief and isolated examples, where the source is referenced properly elsewhere in the work)
- failure to give a complete record of the sources drawn on (e.g. omitting reference to the secondary source when using secondary quotations)

(b) Instances of malpractice (plagiarism) include:

- referencing whose inadequacy vitiates the integrity of the work
- a bibliography that omits texts drawn on in the main body of the work (compounding the failure to cite them in the main text and/or references)
- more than isolated examples of the omission of quotation marks from quotes
- close paraphrasing of phrases or sentences of someone else's material without direct and immediate acknowledgement (anything more than isolated examples where the source is referenced properly elsewhere)

- extensive misuse of secondary quotations
- copying the work of another student, or submitting material from 'essay banks'

Poor Practice

Instances of poor academic practice normally stem from a misunderstanding of academic conventions, inadequate preparation, or sloppiness in presentation. These kinds of cases should be referred to the Course Unit Director. Generally, in such cases, students should be informed by their marker why they fall below the standards required, and urged to discuss the piece of work with the Course Unit Director of the unit in which the practice has been identified. In these cases, the work should be penalized through the normal assessment criteria (which explicitly mention the need for the use of quotation marks, adequate referencing, and the provision of a complete bibliography).

Malpractice

Instances of malpractice should be referred to the Course Unit Director and subject area Assessment Coordinator. If they confirm that it is malpractice the work should be marked up as per the instructions below and sent to the subject area Assessment Coordinator.

Staff must adhere to the following procedures:

- underline the plagiarised passages in the essay in black pen
- annotate the written work so it is clear whether the material has been copied word for word or lightly reworded (you may wish to use the abbreviations 'WFW' and 'LW')
- identify the main sources and underline the plagiarised passages, inserting cross references to the piece of assessed work
- Complete the SALC referral form
- Markers should normally record a pre-penalty mark on the feedback form, indicating that this is the notional mark that the piece of work would receive if there was no plagiarism present. However if the work is not possible to mark due to the malpractice, this can be noted instead of a mark being noted.

Because of the investigation, the student may not receive their marked essay with the rest of the cohort. You should, therefore, refer the student concerned to the Course Unit Director who will explain to the student the procedure in a case of alleged plagiarism.

In the case of other types of suspected academic malpractice, such as collusion, you should always bring this to the attention of the Course Unit Director in the first instance

13 Discipline

In most cases, disciplinary issues will be confined to dealing with repeated lateness or absences. If it does become necessary to speak individually with a student who has frequently been late or absent, has not submitted assignments, or is causing a disruption in some other way, most students will respond best if you do so discreetly, either by email or briefly after the seminar.

If any other discipline issues arise, your first point of contact will be the Course Unit Director in most cases. It is important to remember that each student is assigned an Academic Adviser for the length of their undergraduate study. The Undergraduate

Programme Director (or possibly CUD) will determine whether it would be helpful for the student's adviser to intervene.

14 Essays and Essay Submission

When an assignment is due, students are required to submit online, never directly to you in seminars). Student names should not appear on the assignment itself, only the students ID number. (In other words, all assignments will be marked anonymously.)

14.1 Before Assessment Deadlines

Although you may have discussed assessment deadlines informally in Week One seminars (see above), it is important to remind students of approaching deadlines and where they can find the assignment itself. (This will often be on Blackboard.)

Other things to remind students of before assessments are due:

- Submission procedure: While you don't necessarily need to go over every question choice for the assignment in your seminar, it may be helpful, especially to first-year students, to make sure all their questions about the basic submission procedure have been answered, as these will often be questions shared by others.
- Formatting and referencing: Likewise, with first-year students, it may be helpful to them (and it can save you time and frustration when marking) to spend a few minutes in the last seminar before a deadline reviewing some basic formatting issues. This can be as basic as reminding students to double-space their work and to include page numbers, but it is also important to review the appropriate referencing system for your subject area and how to apply it to the assessment.

14.2 Electronic Submission

All summatively assessed coursework that can be submitted online is submitted online in SALC. Staff should contact the Faculty e-learning team in advance of using online submission for the first time in order to receive advice and training. For details of Faculty training for Turnitin and Grademark, see:

<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/tandl/elearning/training>

Staff with disabilities which prevent them from marking online should contact the DASS and, when dispensation has been agreed, inform the School Assessment Manager so that appropriate administrative support can be given to them.

All information about the use of Turnitin and Grademark is available on the University Knowledge Base. See 'Turnitin and Grademark (STAFF)' for the main information, including the setting up of an assignment. A generic folder entitled 'Submission of Coursework' is by default in place in all courses in Bb (via the standard course structure) under the 'Assessment' area. For consistency purposes, all inboxes are set up by administrative staff. This folder also contains links to the Knowledge Base guidance documents for students; these links ensure that students are directed to the most up-to-date documents.

Online submission deadlines are set to **12.00 noon**, Monday to Thursday, to facilitate the correction of any technical problems that might occur.

Useful Information:

- Announcements can be placed on Blackboard and communicated via email, informing students and staff of any changes to assignment submission dates.
- It is each student's responsibility to keep a copy of the digital receipt containing their unique ID number.
- Students must be informed that they must retain an electronic copy of their work.
- Late submissions to Turnitin must always be permitted.
 - The submission date and time are always recorded and therefore appropriate penalties for late submission can be applied during the marking process
- It is the responsibility of PSS staff (normally Programme Administrators) to apply the penalty; academic staff should not apply the penalty themselves.

- Course unit directors should make all reasonable efforts to ensure that anonymity is preserved throughout the submission and marking process.
- In order to preserve anonymous marking the post date of Turnitin assignments must not be changed.
- For large cohorts / multiple markers, it is recommended that Bb groups are created and Turnitin assignments are viewed by groups.
 - Where administrative staff will be grouping students for submission in team-taught course units, no submissions can take place until the beginning of week four.
- In order to avoid impacting anonymity for second markers the post date must not be changed in order to facilitate the release of feedback earlier than the specified date; feedback and marks must be released on the publicised date and not before.
- Moderation of marks must be undertaken outside of Grademark.

Students cannot routinely submit their own work to Turnitin for plagiarism checking. **The Turnitin setting that allows students to view the originality report must be set to 'do not allow'.**

Since the default position is that students should access their feedback and grades online, students should be advised that they must download their marked assignment and feedback from Bb. Course tutors can deliver feedback face to face (e.g. by setting selective release conditions in Bb and asking students to collect their feedback during office hours). Access to the assignment / feedback is only available for the duration of the Bb course unit (i.e. the current academic session). Feedback must be returned to students in accordance with the timescales specified in the University's Feedback Policy (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=6518>).

14.3 Anonymous Marking

It is important that all pieces of summatively assessed work (i.e., work that counts towards the overall mark for the course unit) are marked anonymously where possible. This helps to assure students that marking is done fairly.

All marking should be done privately (i.e. not on the bus or in the library café). It is strongly encouraged that you make use of either the TA Rooms or the Graduate School Clusters, which have been designated for this purpose.

The University of Manchester Policy on Marking can be found at:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/practice-of-assessment/policy-marking/>

14.4 Marking Essays

One important aspect of the student experience is receiving feedback. Students receive feedback in a number of ways throughout their degree programme. One way of receiving feedback is through comments provided on essays and Feedback Forms. If you are responsible for marking essays, you should bear in mind the following:

- Feedback must be returned to the student within 15 working days in order for it to be of most use.
- Feedback should be positive and encouraging. This does not mean that you should ignore any weaknesses or errors in an essay, for example, but it does mean that you should provide positive information for the student which will enable improvement in subsequent essays,
- Essay feedback should provide enough information to enable a student to understand and act on areas which need to be improved. This is the case even where you are marking a strong or outstanding essay: ensure that the student is aware of elements are particularly successful and why. It is never enough to provide one-word comments such as 'Excellent' or 'Poor'. This is not helpful to the student.

Both the School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures, and the University of Manchester have a feedback policy.

The University of Manchester Feedback Policy is available at:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/assessment/practice-of-assessment/feedback-to-students/>

The School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures Feedback Policy is available in the policies section of the staff intranet at:

<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/salc/policies-guidance/teaching-and-learning/>

Feedback Forms

Copies of the SALC feedback forms can be requested from the Course Unit Director.

The standard marking form contains a free text space for comments and a space for advice on 'How to improve your work in future assignments'

14.5 Commenting on Essays

It is usual practice to provide the student with comments on the essay itself. Aside from comments about their argument, these annotations might also include (for first-year students especially) specific corrections and advice regarding essay writing, grammar, and presentation.

A good rule of thumb is to trust your judgment about what sort of comments would be most helpful to a particular student. For example, you don't want to put so much focus on sentence construction that it detracts from more important flaws in their response to

the assigned question. At the same time, however, calling some attention to repeated typos will encourage a student to spend more time proofreading.

14.6 Moderation

It is important to bear in mind that a representative selection of all essays marked for an assignment will be moderated by Course Unit Directors. Your CUD should explain the process of TA moderation beforehand, and notify you of any special procedures required on your part. In most cases, TA moderation will look at a selection of each component marked by each TA to ensure consistency of marking. When all the assessments have been completed course unit moderation happens where all fails and a representative sample from each 10% band is selected to send to an internal moderator then on to the External Examiner. Course Unit Moderation does not require TA involvement.

As noted above, if you do have any questions regarding a particular script (e.g., an assignment done on the wrong text, or a potential case of plagiarism, etc.), it is best to discuss this with your CUD before submitting the marks to the CUD.

It is also helpful to speak with students about the process of moderation generally, in order to explain the submission and return procedures, and to explain why the marks they receive initially are provisional until moderated.

14.7 Marking Scheme and Criteria

The School of Arts Languages and Cultures has introduced a new step (or stepped) marking scheme and criteria (or grade descriptors) for undergraduate examinations, coursework essays and other forms of assessed work at all levels

Step marking means using a restricted number of marks that represent the lower, middle and upper ranges of the standard classification bands (First, 2.1, 2.2, etc.). For each classification band, work may meet the criteria minimally (lower range), well (mid range) or very well (upper range). To facilitate the best spread of marks along this spectrum, the new scheme uses figures ending in 2, 5 and 8 in each band (e.g. 52%, 55% and 58% in the 2.2 band, 62%, 65% and 68% in the 2.1 band and so on).

The new marking scheme and criteria have been designed with several objectives in mind, chief among which are the following:

- To make the marking bands and marking criteria/grade descriptors more transparent and easier to articulate.
- To encourage markers to use of the full range of marks.
- To simplify assessment and moderation decisions.

The new marking scheme and criteria are available at the below web address:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=33382>

14.8 Late Essays

Your Programme Administrator will notify you of any late essays to be marked. These should be evaluated, commented on, and marked as normal. The office will complete the adjustment of marks based on lateness where required.

15 Examinations

Part of your duties as a TA may involve marking examination scripts. Exam marking is very similar to coursework/essay marking, with a few special considerations:

Exam booklets: Exam booklets are usually handwritten by the student, and will not be returned to the student with the marks. Therefore, except for noting things that will help you with the basic feedback, it will not be necessary to comment on the script itself.

Exam marking form: The marking form for exam marking has space for only a few general comments in response to each exam question, and does not require you to address the categories covered on the essay marking form.

You should remember that **students are entitled to receive a copy of their exam marking form**, and that they can also request to see their exam booklets. It is therefore very important that comments on the exam marking form and on the examination booklet are constructive. However, the exam script comments are primarily to assist the moderator and External Examiner and do not have to be written to give feedback to the student.

16 Feedback

Students do not only receive, or expect to receive, feedback through comments on their essays:

16.1 What is feedback?

Feedback is information which enables students to improve their skills. Seven principles of good feedback practice have been identified.

Feedback:

- Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;
- Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning;
- Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);
- Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performances;
- Delivers high quality information to students about their learning;
- Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self esteem;
- Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching.

Enhancing student learning through effective formative feedback Charles Juwah, Debra Macfarlane-Dick, Bob Matthew, David Nichol, David Ross and Brenda Smith The Higher Education Academy (2004).

As a member of the teaching staff within the School of Arts, Languages, and Cultures, you should aim to provide feedback which is:

- Prompt;
- Related to the learning outcomes of the assignment;
- Individualised to the assignment.

It is important that students are aware of the ways in which they receive feedback and you may find it useful to include this in seminar discussions.

16.2 What means do Subject Areas in SALC use to provide feedback?

Feedback can be provided in a number of different ways. In SALC these may include:

- Written
- As general advice given in class when discussing essay or presentation strategies;
- As part of an on-going discussion about research and writing (for example, during supervision meetings in preparation for an undergraduate dissertation);
- As written comments on coursework assessment, including essays. Advice given during and following discussion in seminars; this advice can be spoken or via email;
- Advice given on a one to one basis during your consultation hours.

16.3 When is feedback given?

Feedback can be given at a number of points during the course unit or degree programme, for example, comments after the submission of a coursework essay or the completion of a class presentation.

16.4 What is the difference between formative and summative feedback?

Formative feedback is feedback which can be used in order to help improve performance in future assignments. Feedback that is purely formative does not carry a mark that counts towards the final course unit mark.

Summative feedback is feedback given for summative work (work that contributes to the overall unit grade).

Feedback can be both formative and summative. This means that the mark given for the piece of work submitted counts towards the final course unit mark (summative) and that the comments given can help you to improve performance in future assignments across a number of course units (formative).

16.5 What happens if a student wants more feedback?

If, having received written feedback from an essay a student would like to discuss the essay further s/he is entitled to ask for more information. As a TA, you should facilitate this discussion and provide constructive information which will help the student in future assignments.

17 Student Evaluations

Each term, students will be asked to complete a Unit Survey for each course unit they have completed. Students complete the questionnaires in the final weeks of the semester, and access them via a link on Blackboard. Please encourage your students to complete the questionnaire, and remind them that there is space for them to add comments on the course unit and its delivery. Allowing students a short time to complete the surveys in class, on their laptops or mobile devices, can help to ensure a high completion rate.

Within SALC, the Course Unit Survey for 18-19 may consist of some of the following questions:

Main questions (each to be answered using a 1–5 Likert scale)

- 1) Overall, I would rate this unit as being excellent
- 2) The feedback that I received on my work was helpful

- 3) This unit was well organised
- 4) Classes were clearly structured and well presented
- 5) Teaching staff displayed a keen interest in the subject
- 6) The course unit provided opportunities for participation and discussion
- 7) The material I studied was engaging and intellectually stimulating
- 8) The assessment activities were well designed and clearly explained
- 9) Teaching staff were readily available and approachable
- 10) The resources available online and in the library significantly enhanced my learning
- 11) I have acquired intellectual and practical skills which will be useful in further study or employment

Lecturer/tutor question (to be answered using a 1–5 Likert scale)

X's teaching was excellent

[note that students have the opportunity to comment on all the tutors teaching on a particular unit]

Lecturer/tutor comment question (free-text response)

What aspect of X's approach to teaching best helped your learning

[note that students have the opportunity to comment on all the tutors teaching on a particular unit]

Comment questions (free-text response)

Please provide details of what you valued about this unit

Please provide details of what you think could be improved on this unit

18 Blackboard

All course units are required to have a Blackboard section. You will be given access to the Blackboard section for the courses you are teaching on. You can login to Blackboard via my.manchester.ac.uk

Information about the Faculty of Humanities eLearning can be found at:

<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/tandl/elearning/>

Training and assistance is available from the eLearning team, details available on the Faculty eLearning website (see above link).

19 Student System

You can access the student system, 'Campus Solutions', from Staff Net: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/> - see section 'Staff Systems' and choose the link to Campus Solutions.

20 Programme Administrator Contacts

Teaching and Learning Management Team

Position	Name	Number	Email address	Room
Teaching and Learning Student Operations Manager	Emma Wilson	61789	emma.wilson@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander S3.9
Programmes Manager	Fiona Fraser	53157	fiona.fraser@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander, S3.8
Assessment Manager	Morag Guilfoyle	61645	morag.guilfoyle@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander S3.13
Student Experience Manager	Louise Stewart	50321	louise.stewart@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander W1.8
Student Support and Guidance Manager	Sara Latham	58056	sara.latham@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander A17
Curriculum Manager	Nick Prideaux	58980	nicholas.prideaux@manchester.ac.uk	Mansfield Cooper 4.09

Undergraduate Offices

Area	Number	Email address	Room
History of Art and Cultural Practices	53055	ahcp@manchester.ac.uk	Mansfield Cooper MC4.02
Classics & Ancient History and Archaeology	53148	caha@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander S2.3
Drama	54982	drama.administrator@manchester.ac.uk	Martin Harris Centre G51
English Literature, American Studies and Creative Writing	58590	Eac.administrator@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander W1.12
Linguistics and English Language	61728	Lela.administrator@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander W1.12
All Modern Language subjects	58311	Salc-languages@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander W3.12
History	53171	History.administrator@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander W2.12

Music	58964	Music.administrator@manchester.ac.uk	Martin Harris G51
Religions and Theology	53151	relt@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander S2.3
World Literatures	58590	Eac.administrator@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander W1.12

Postgraduate Taught Administrators

Area	Number	Email address	Room
All subject areas	53604	Salc-pgt@manchester.ac.uk	Ellen Wilkinson CG.13

Student Support and Guidance

Position	Number	Email address	Room
Student Support & Guidance Office	61254	Salc-studentsupport@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander A15

School Office

Position	Name	Number	Email address	Room
School Operations Manager	Kim Hunter	58070	kim.hunter@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander A5
PA to Head of School, Professor Alessandro Schiesaro & PA to Head of School Administration Jayne Hindle	Bethany Pedder	53283	Bethany.pedder@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander A2
Senior Divisional Support Administrator	Martin Bardell	53222	Martin.bardell@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander A6
Senior Divisional Support Administrator	Stephanie Holmes	53092	stephanie.holmes@manchester.ac.uk	Samuel Alexander A6

Appendix 1 – TA Pay Rates for Teaching and Marking

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures TA Pay Rates for Teaching and Marking

TAs in SALC are provided with individual work contracts, which specify their duties and their pay. TA pay is based on the University pay scale, grade 5 (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=30037>). This has 6 spine points. HR assigns spine points to individuals on the basis of previous experience at the University of Manchester. All the duties that are specified in the School letter (contact hours, preparation and marking) are remunerated. TAs are also paid for out of classroom contact with students, and they receive holiday pay.