

Title: **Exploitation or Inclusion: are we supporting part-time academic staff?**

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Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

- Reflect on the outcomes of LJMU's research and be aware of the strategies that have been implemented to support part-time staff within the university, particularly in the context of the professional standards agenda
- Evaluate the findings with regard to their applicability to participants' own institutions

Session Outline

This session will consider the level of support that is offered to part-time academic staff with particular reference to their staff development needs. Following national interest in the working conditions of these staff (e.g. Allen, 2001; Bryson, 2004) a HR Strategy Report into the development support (teaching and learning) needed by part-time staff within Liverpool John Moores University was issued in December 2004 with a number of specific recommendations. Since September 2005 further research and development work has been carried out within the Learning Development Unit and Centre for Staff Development. In line with more recent research such as *Widening the Circle* (2003) staff development has been identified as an important need for many part-time lecturers. It has been argued that casualised employment as is the case with sessional lecturers fails to support high quality teaching (Bryson, 2005). In addition the need for clarification as to the roles and responsibilities for such staff and their involvement with the whole academic community in which they work have also been highlighted (Bryson, 2005; Coombe & Clancy, 2002). Consideration will also be given to the induction and on-going support that should be provided for part-time staff Blackmore, Gibbs & Shrivess, 1999) and examples will be given from the development work carried out at LJMU.

Issues that will be covered in the session include:

- Recruitment, particularly of sessional staff
- Roles and responsibilities of part-time staff
- Induction, mentoring and on-going support
- Access to and motivation for staff development
- Professional standards

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

- Introduction – 5 minutes
- Overview of research findings with opportunities for questions – 20 minutes
- Group task – sharing of experiences relating to support for part-time academic staff and how the findings of the research carried out at LJMU relates to that experience (see questions below) – 15 minutes
- Conclusion & opportunity for further questions – 5 minutes

Indicative questions (in order to make comparisons with LJMU experience)

- What strategies are in place for supporting part-time academic staff?
- Are there clear guidelines regarding the duties of part-time staff, both fractional and sessional?
- What support is given to part-time staff with particular regard to induction, mentoring and staff development?
- What plans are there relating to part-time staff with regard to the new professional staff, and how do these differ for fractional and sessional staff?

References

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