Edinburgh Law School

Online Support Tutor/Content Developer Job Description – 2019/20

1. Job Details

Job title: Online Support Tutor/Content Developer

School/Support Department: Edinburgh Law School

Line manager: The Line Manager of Online Support Tutors will be the Course Organiser of the course on which tutoring will be provided.

2. Job Purpose

The purpose of this job is to provide support for teaching on Edinburgh Law School online courses and programmes, through the development or updating of online content; online tutoring; formative assessment feedback, and summative assessment marking as required for specific courses or programmes.

3. Main Responsibilities

Depending on the support requirements for specific courses/programmes, the job will involve one or more of the following responsibilities. The time required for specific activities, and how time is split between different activities, would be decided and communicated by the Course Organiser or Programme Director.

1. Develop new online content, to meet defined teaching objectives for the course or programme;
2. Update existing online content, to ensure its accuracy, currency and effectiveness;
3. Tutor students online, to support the main academic tutor including monitoring and support of online activities such as discussions; activities and exercises;
4. Assessing and providing feedback on formative assessments;
5. Assessing and providing feedback on summative assessments.

4. Planning and Organising

Plan schedule of work required, according to the timetable agreed with the Course Organiser or Programme Director.
5. **Problem Solving**

   - When developing new content or updating existing content, relate understanding and knowledge of developments in the disciplinary field to teaching objectives for the course or programme.
   - When tutoring, respond directly and autonomously to comments, issues and queries presented by students.

6. **Decision Making**

   In conjunction with the Course Organiser or Programme Director, decide how to communicate the substance of the discipline and help students achieve the learning objectives for the course or programme, through written content and/or through online tutoring.

7. **Key Contacts/Relationships**

   - Contact with the Course Organiser or Programme Director on the content of materials and/or tutoring contributions.
   - Contact with the Online Learning Team to ensure consistency with the established approach to learning and teaching online.

8. **Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job**

   - Extensive and in-depth knowledge and understanding of relevant areas of the law;
   - Post-graduate level degree and/or professional experience in a relevant area;
   - Excellent legal research skills;
   - Previous experience of working or learning online is highly desirable, as is experience of developing or maintaining learning materials in an online environment.

9. **Dimensions**

   - The amount of materials to be developed or updated will vary, from one teaching week up to an entire semester-long course.
   - On average, five hours per week should be spent on the key tutor activities:
     1. preparation time required to ensure familiarity with weekly materials and learning activities;
     2. checking and update of materials, resources and links;
     3. tutoring of weekly discussions and activities;
     4. provision of formative feedback where applicable;
     5. reporting any student engagement issues to the Online Learning Team
• The typical size of group tutored online is 18-25, although Support Tutors may work with more than one group at a time.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information

• The jobholder must understand the implications and opportunities of online learning and teaching, in terms of access to online resources, efforts to build a sense of community among students learning online, and the potential use of new tools to support online learning.

Further information: detailed guidance for Online Support Tutors

This guidance is intended to help Online Support Tutors understand the requirements of the role, what is expected of you; what support you can expect from the Course Organiser of the course on which you will be tutoring, and from the Online Learning Team.

Before the course begins:

The Online Learning Team will ensure that:

1. A Learn account is set up for you. Learn is the online learning environment used to deliver all online courses;

2. You are briefed on how to access course areas in Learn;

3. You understand the process by which you will be paid;

4. You are briefed on the approach to assessing and providing feedback on students’ performance in course discussions;

5. You are briefed on how to access student work for feedback and marking;

6. You are put in contact with the Course Organiser of the course(s) on which you will be tutoring, if you are not already in contact, so that you can discuss and agree your joint approach to teaching on the course.

As an Online Support Tutor you will be expected to:

1. Familiarise yourself with the course content, and its aims and learning outcomes, so you know what is coming up and can provide guidance and explanation to students accordingly;

2. Ensure you can access all relevant materials and key readings;

3. Review, for your information, the course assessment structure and specific assessments set on the course;

4. Read the guidance related to assessing and providing feedback on students’ performance in the course discussions, and agree with the Course Organiser your joint approach to assessment and teaching on the course.
During the course:

**Online Support Tutors will be expected to do the following.**

1. Check over all weekly materials before they go live and make updates and amendments as necessary. This includes checks for minor substantive amendments that may be required, as well as checks for broken links and typos. This must be done in time for the content to be updated/amended before it is released to students, at midnight on the Friday before the week goes live.

2. Monitor and tutor discussions throughout the week when that week’s content is live. The timing and nature of your contributions to discussions will be subject to discussion with the Course Organiser before the course begins, and should be guided by the assessment criteria and guidance.

   However, generally, your postings should be designed to:
   - Share meaningful insights from your substantive knowledge and understanding, gained through research, previous teaching and/or professional experience;
   - Help students develop their critical thinking and analytical skills, as they engage with readings and questions posed within the session materials;
   - Identify questions or issues that the students have not yet addressed, to help discussion to progress and develop throughout the week;
   - Maintain an active tutoring presence throughout all sessions of the module;
   - Create a positive environment that encourages all students to contribute;
   - Demonstrate good practice in engaging with other participants in the discussions, i.e. by acknowledging student postings and responding in a positive and encouraging way to all contributions from the class;
   - Encourage good practice in referencing sources and including citations;
   - Correct misperceptions and errors on the part of students;
   - Aim to draw out contributions from students who have not yet posted.

Your activity in the discussions should complement the main academic tutor’s contributions, which will aim to direct students towards achieving the week’s learning outcomes.

3. Monitor and tutor students in weekly exercises and activities. The timing and nature of your support will be discussed with the Course Organiser before the course begins.

4. Provide feedback on formative assessment activities in a timely manner. This will depend on the point at which formative assessment activities are released to students during the semester, and should be discussed with the Course Organiser. Provision of feedback should follow the School’s policy on assessment feedback. Guidance and support materials will be provided to help you write the feedback, which should be reviewed by the Course Organiser and finalised in time for students to access promptly.
5. Mark and provide feedback on summative assessments in a timely manner. Guidance will be provided to help you prepare this summative assessment. Grades and feedback will be reviewed by the Course Organiser and/or by another colleague involved in online teaching. Grades and feedback must be reviewed and finalised in Learn and communicated to students in accordance with the School policy on assessment feedback.

6. If you are using the eTime system, you need to record the number of weeks that you have tutored each month, and apply a multiplier of five. The Edinburgh Law School Finance team will provide support with the eTime system if needed (please see contact details in the Support Tutor Handbook).

If you are invoicing us for your support tutoring, or if you are being paid via the casual workers’ form 100, we must receive your invoice or completed form 100 promptly after the point that the final marking has been completed.

If you have an existing contract with the University, we will request additional payments through your contract.