

Job Description

Teaching Associate

Writing Centre, University of Waterloo

Primary Purpose

The Teaching Associate is accountable to the Manager, Writing Centre for providing writing and communications support to individual students, as well as classroom support to students, Teaching Assistants, and instructors as required. The Teaching Associate works in a collaborative environment with responsibilities for information sharing and team work on projects, including taking the lead on organizational initiatives as required. The position requires exceptional communication and organizational skills, as well as flexibility, resourcefulness, approachability, and an understanding of the university and its community.

Key Accountabilities

Direct Student Communication Support

As a member of the Writing Centre team, the Teaching Associate helps undergraduate and graduate students develop their writing and multi-modal communication skills. Because the Teaching Associate sees a variety of work, including discipline-specific assignments, papers, reports, résumés, proposals, presentations, and technically and theoretically complex dissertations, this person must be knowledgeable about a range of genres and disciplinary conventions. He or she must be able to respond to students at different levels and with different skills. The Teaching Associate sees students in many contexts:

- Individual appointments: the Teaching Associate works with the student to establish goals for the appointment, provides feedback, teaches skills and strategies, coaches and supports the student as needed, suggests activities or further action
- Group appointments: the Teaching Associate works with a group of students to establish goals for the appointment, provides feedback, teaches skills and strategies, coaches and supports the group as needed, suggests activities or further action.
- Drop-in sessions: the Teaching Associate quickly assesses the student's work and goals for the session, prioritizes and provides feedback, teaching and/or coaching, suggests activities or further action. In drop-in sessions, the Teaching Associate must often manage requests from multiple students in a tight timeframe.
- Writing tutorials: the Teaching Associate works with a student to establish goals for a series of appointments over several weeks, plans the sessions, teaches skills

- and strategies, mentors and supports the student as needed, suggests activities between appointments, and recommends further action as needed.
- Online appointments: using a synchronous online meeting technology, the Teaching Associate provides the same assessment, teaching, and support as in on-campus sessions, but does so through video conferencing, file- and screen-sharing, web-chat, and other virtual means.

Academic Program and Course Support

As part of the Writing Centre team, the Teaching Associate may provide writing and communications support to students in a designated program or course. The support may consist of one or more workshops, presentations, or appointments, or it may consist of a set of different collaborations over a term. In all cases, the Teaching Associate works together with an instructor, teaching assistant(s), course administrator, liaison librarian, Writing Centre staff, and/or the Writing Centre Manager to design, adapt and deliver material(s) and/or teaching appropriate to the targeted students and the defined learning outcomes. This work may include the following:

- Workshops and presentations: the Teaching Associate may design, adapt, and deliver workshops and presentations on topics related to enhancing reading, writing and communication skills for both graduate and undergraduate students.
- English language conversation programs: the Teaching Associate may design, implement and facilitate a range of programs that offer non-native English speakers (NNES) the opportunity to practise conversational and academic English.
- Writing Groups: the Teaching Associate may foster and facilitate writing groups – interdisciplinary, discipline-specific, and/or creative – that encourage writing practice and process, peer review, and progress towards writing goals.
- Dissertation boot camp: the Teaching Associate may help organize and facilitate an extended program for dissertation writers that emphasizes both peer review and writing practice and process to help graduate students achieve their writing goals.

Learning Aids and Resources

The Teaching Associate relies on a variety of resources (books, handouts, electronic materials etc.) to support student learning. As part of regular Writing Centre team activities, the Teaching Associate:

- Creates and develops such resources as reference sheets, activity sheets, and tip sheets which reflect current best practices.
- Locates and assesses resources and aids developed by writing centres and other relevant professional bodies with the goal of recommending those which best support Writing Centre activities.
- Ensures that the library and supply of aids and resources is kept organized, accessible, complete, and up-to-date.

Mentorship and Collegiality

The Teaching Associate works closely with colleagues to support everyone's continued professional development. This collaboration includes mentoring newer team members including co-op and work-study students. The Teaching Associate participates in regular team meetings and teaching discussions, sharing research and expertise when appropriate. The Teaching Associate recognizes and values diversity in teaching situations, the workplace, and the University and actively works towards integrating the goals of cultural competence into strategies for teaching, learning, and working. On occasion, the Teaching Associate may be asked to take the lead on a project and is expected to model good leadership, inclusivity, collaboration, and consensus building.

Outreach

The Teaching Associate may help to plan and facilitate the Writing Centre's participation in campus activities, including representing the Writing Centre on organizing committees, working groups, and task forces. The Teaching Associate assists with English language competency projects and initiatives, including but not limited to ELP exam development, delivery, and marking.

Administration and Special Projects

The Teaching Associate supports the day-to-day activities and operations of the Writing Centre as needed, and may be asked to assume responsibility for administrative tasks and special projects including but not limited to:

- Assessing and evaluating the success of a program/service in a formal report.
- Documenting all professional activities including tracking attendance, compiling and assessing statistics, and maintaining records.
- Assisting with scheduling of Writing Centre activities and/or building online appointments and events for student registration.
- Helping to manage the communication needs of the Writing Centre by managing content for the website or social media platforms, advising on graphic design projects, and/or writing copy for outgoing communications.

Professional Development

The Teaching Associate is a member of a professional community and is responsible for staying current on research and best practices of that community. As such, Teaching Associates:

- Participate in relevant professional development opportunities where possible, such as conferences, workshops, and presentations.
- Keep current with teaching and composition theory and research, and suggest innovative, effective, efficient strategies for providing writing support to students.

Qualifications

The position of Teaching Associate requires exceptional communication, interpersonal, and organizational skills, as well as flexibility, initiative and resourcefulness, approachability, and a knowledge and understanding of the university and its community.

The ideal candidate will have:

- A Master's degree or equivalent in writing or composition studies, TESOL, Education, or a related field.
- Experience tutoring or teaching students at the post-secondary level, ideally at both undergraduate and graduate levels
- Demonstrated ability to design clear, engaging and accessible learning resources including design and delivery of interactive workshops
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team environment