PSAC 901 (Unit 1) COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (revised April 28, 2016)

During the training sessions on the TA/TF (Unit 1) Collective Agreement held in June, 2010, a number of questions were posed and answers provided. Below is a summary of the Q & As (updated as of April 28, 2016) which you may find useful.

Q1.	What's the difference between Employment Supervisor and Employer?	**A1.**	Employment Supervisor signs an Employee's TAF or TFF; Employer is Queen's University in its capacity as the employer of TAs and TFs.
Q2.	Can a student be a member of Group A and Group B?	**A2.**	Not simultaneously. They are in preference group A because a commitment has been made that a TAship forms part of the funding package; once that commitment is filled, then the same individual is in preference group B for any additional TA opportunities.
Q3.	Incoming international students may not have the required info (e.g., SIN) – what about the timelines?	**A3.**	If the required information is not provided in time, then the E-Contract cannot be completed to ensure payment at the end of the first month.
Q4.	What if a student holds more than one TAship – can one TAF be filled in?	**A4.**	One form per TAship must be used, not one form per person.
Q5.	For TAs, is the Employment Supervisor normally the Course Instructor?	**A5.**	Yes.
Q6.	Is training paid?	**A6.**	Yes, if the Employment Supervisor identifies a requirement for specific TA training, then that training will be paid. See Q8.
Q7.	Are departments still required to provide a minimum amount of TA training?	**A7.**	Any training that University employees are required to take must be successfully completed by TAs and TFs.
Q8.	Is AODA training provided for TAs and TFs?	**A8.**	AODA training consists of a number of modules. All employees must successfully complete this training. The time should be allocated on the TA Form, or must be paid by One-Time Payment Form (PAY-FRM-048). For TFs, any such required training must be compensated using the One-Time Payment Form.

Q9.	If a Term Adjunct with GRoR has a GRoR for 1.5 courses and they are teaching 1.5 courses, do they still take priority over a Teaching Fellow?	**A9.**	No. Once the Teaching Load Entitlement (TLE) of a Term Adjunct with a GRoR is fulfilled, the Term Adjunct no longer takes priority over a Teaching Fellow.
Q10.	Do departments/programs have to notify TAs and TFs of postings on the Central Posting Site?	**A10.**	It would be good practice for units to inform their graduate students about TA and TF employment opportunities and how to access the postings.
Q11.	Who should get the original copy of the TAF?	**A11.**	The original TAF should be kept in the Personnel File.
Q12.	Can the Personnel File be electronic?	**A12.**	Yes.
Q13.	Is Union Representation required at meetings between a TA/TF and their Employment Supervisor held to request information or ask a question?	**A13.**	Meetings and informal conversations between a TA/TF and his/her Employment Supervisor are common practice and would not require union representation. Please review the Collective Agreement to ascertain whether a meeting may require attendance by a union representative.
Q14.	Is it true that TAs must be given at least 60 hours each?	**A14.**	No. There is no minimum number of hours for a TAship, only a maximum. The maximum is an average of 10 hours per week.
Q15.	How is the average of 10 hours of work per week calculated?	**A15.**	This would be an average of 10 hours of work per week calculated over the year (September to August).
Q16.	Are TF positions restricted to doctoral students?	**A16.**	The hiring department sets the qualifications required of a TF, which may be enrolment in a doctoral program or enrolment in a graduate program in the unit or in an interdisciplinary program with TF budget resources.
Q17.	If a student is a graduate student when they apply for a TF position and not a graduate student when the term starts, will this pose a problem?	**A17.**	To hold a TFship, the incumbent must be a registered graduate student when performing their duties; otherwise their work may result in their categorization as Term Adjuncts, subject to the QUFA Collective Agreement.

Q18.	Will departments be expected to fill out the new Teaching Fellow Form for the students they have already made commitments to?	**A18.**	Yes – all new TAs and TFs must have a TAF or TFF filled out.
Q19.	Can a registered full-time student, who has been a TF for the past 6 years, apply for any TF postings we have (the student has already taught a course)?	**A19.**	They could. They would be in preference Group B for TFs and if no one above them in the decision tree was qualified and available, they could be given the opportunity.
Q20.	When we advertise, can we group all the courses together and offer one person the equivalent of 2.0 + positions?	**A20.**	Assuming the question is in reference to TAships, each TA opportunity is independent of all others. It is also important that you adhere to the preference groups; that is, preference group A must be exhausted before you can consider preference group B. Furthermore, once the commitment for a TAship has been met then that student moves into Preference Group B. So with the above in mind and adherence to the maximum number of hours it is possible that one person could hold more than one TAship.
Q21.	Is there a template for postings?	**A21.**	Not at this time; however the posting must include the following in accordance with Article 12.12: a) information regarding the courses for which there will be TA and TF opportunities; b) any information required from graduate students in connection with such TA and TF opportunities beyond copies of transcripts and curriculum vitae; c) information that may assist applicants in understanding the nature of the work to be performed and the time(s) at which it might be performed, when such information is known at the time of posting; and d) the required date of submissions (as per Articles 12.05 and 12.09).
Q22.	Some graduate students do a full TAship in one term. Can they work for the 4 months but get paid over 8 months?	**A22.**	No. This would artificially extend the employment relationship and would affect entitlement to leaves, etc.

Q23.	Can an appointment end date be extended to one month beyond the end date? Can the appointment start date be moved ahead to have hours for prep?	**A23.**	The CA states that hours can extend up to one month beyond the end date of the term. If you have work that would be required up to a maximum of one month before the start of the term, discuss it with the TA and if they are agreeable, that's fine. Remember though that the total number of hours must be consistent with what is reported in Section A of the TAF.
Q24.	Every year we get an exchange student from France. They are a grad student in their system, but take an undergrad course in the Fall and one in the Winter, plus teach for the department. We have already sent the letter stipulating the terms of the contract. They get an award ($6500) and we pay $6000 to teach each half course. Can we continue the same way next year?	**A24.**	Exchange students are not graduate students. If they are employed as TAs, they are not part of the PSAC bargaining unit. If they teach a course, they will require a term adjunct appointment.
Q25.	If a TA is going away for a month, can you replace them?	**A25.**	This would likely have been discussed with the Employment Supervisor when completing the TA Form and duties for that period would have been reassigned as appropriate.
Q26.	What if we determine that we require Undergrad TAs?	**A26.**	These decisions are the unit's to make, but should be made prior to posting. Undergraduate students who are employed as TAs are not subject to the Unit 1 Collective Agreement. If a TA position is posted as a PSAC opportunity then it is a graduate TA position.
Q27.	What about attending lectures? Are they paid?	**A27.**	If it is a requirement for the TA to attend, then they are paid to do so. If it is not a requirement and they choose to attend, then payment is not required.
Q28.	If someone is instructing a course, are there additional duties?	**A28.**	There would be a discussion when filling out the Teaching Fellow Form as to the duties associated with the position.
Q29.	What happens if marking exams is taking longer and an extra 20 hours is needed?	**A29.**	As soon as the TA is aware that this could be an issue they should request a meeting with their Employment Supervisor. There may be the potential to modify the remaining tasks such that the marking can be accomplished within the remaining hours available. If that is not possible, a new TAF may be required reflecting a revised allocation of hours. This action requires approval of the Department Head.

Q30.	What happens if marking exams is taking longer and the hours can be moved around within the total allotted hours?	**A30.**	See Q&A 29 above. Minor changes can be made to the existing TAF to reflect the duty changes within the allotted hours. See Article 16.07(g).
Q31.	When does the TA get a copy of the TAF?	**A31.**	Once the form has been completed and within two weeks after the Academic Term begins. See Article 16.07(f).
Q32.	Does the TA fill out the TAF? How do they know what their duties will be?	**A32.**	The TA and the Employment Supervisor discuss the duties and the Employment Supervisor fills in the TAF.
Q33.	We already evaluate TA's – can we still do that?	**A33.**	You may continue to evaluate TAs.
Q34.	What is the date of hire?	**A34.**	It is the date on which the E-Contract is completed.
Q35.	How are Union Dues collected?	**A35.**	Dues are collected through payroll.
Q36.	If the minimum guarantee is $20,000 for two years and includes a TAship, what would they actually receive?	**A36.**	Unless you have specified elsewhere, the student would receive $20,000 in the first year. In the second year, they would receive $20,000 plus an amount associated with the TA wage increase.
Q37.	If graduate students are told that their financial package includes three TAships, they would be in Group A. What would happen if they wanted to have a fourth TAship?	**A37.**	When applying for any subsequent TAships which were not included in the funding package, they would be in Group B.
Q38.	What is included in pay?	**A38.**	Pay is for the performance of all duties/activities specified on the TAF or TFF (including any required training for TAs) and is inclusive of vacation pay and stat holiday pay.
Q39.	Where would copies of course evaluation feedback be kept?	**A39.**	In the Personnel File.

Q40.	Do full job descriptions need to be posted?	**A40.**	No. See the requirements listed in Article 12,12. If there are specific qualifications needed, this should be included. Number of TAs per course does not need to be posted.
Q41.	Which processes need to be followed in posting an undergraduate TAship?	**A41.**	Undergraduate TA positions are not PSAC postings and therefore are not subject to the processes outlined in the CA. Departments should follow their usual process for filling undergraduate TA positions.
Q42.	Where can I find the PSAC agreement on line?	**A42.**	The PSAC 901 Collective Agreement can be found on the Faculty Relations website at http://www.queensu.ca/facultyrelations/teaching-assistants-and-fellows/collective-agreement (along with templates and diagrams).
Q43.	Is it okay to use a form that is similar to the TAF or TFF?	**A43.**	No. The TAF or TFF must be used.
Q44.	We have funding arrangements for students based on their taking TAships (not TFships) in various departments. What would happen if a student applied to do a TFship in a department in which we had intended for them to do a TAship? Are we obliged to provide the funding for a TFship and not a TAship because it is the student's preference?	**A44.**	No. If there is no commitment for a TFship and they get one in another department, the other department would pay the TFship and it would be above the commitment. Your department is still responsible for providing them with a TAship (if that's what is promised). Consideration must be given to whether or not this could put someone over their 10/hour per week average.
Q45.	If we write letters saying "Your financial package includes a TAship and QGA" or "Your financial package includes a SSHRC and QGA" or "Your financial package is a SSHRC" – would this work to preclude students from assuming they could either receive an advertised TF funded by CUST and/or a TAship (if they have a SSHRC) funded by CUST?	**A45.**	It is only the first scenario that would put the student in preference group A for a TAship. None of the scenarios reference TFships so no commitment was made. These are important distinctions as it determines the preference group of the student within the position category (TA or TF). A student could apply for any position, but the likelihood of being offered the position is dependent on the respective pools of applicants in each of the preference groups and the preference group of the individual student.

Q46.	If we have part-time registered graduate students, are their hours of work per week restricted to a maximum of 10 hours?	**A46.**	No, they are not, but keep in mind that the collective agreement recognizes the desire to maximize opportunities for graduate students to TA.