



Western  
UNIVERSITY · CANADA

# GTA Collective Agreement

September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2027

# Agenda

- Article 10: Services and Facilities
- Article 13: Appointments
- Article 17: Hours of Work
- Article 18: Pay Rates
- Article 25: Leaves of Absence
- Article 30: Training

# Update

- The tentative agreement was reached April 25 and ratified by PSAC 610 members April 29.

## Article 10.08 - SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Provided prior written approval for the travel has been given by the person designated by the Department, the Employer shall reimburse the employee for all reasonable travel expenses incurred for employment-related activities conducted outside the **away from the main campus in the** City of London.

# ARTICLE 13 — PLAN

## STEP 1

### UNDERSTAND YOUR OBLIGATIONS

Determine which GTAs you have an obligation to rehire following the order below.

#### A Based on initial appointment (13.05)

For GTAs who meet program conditions for progression and successfully complete the probationary period (see Article 15), the Employer shall provide the following assurances:

- (i) Having once received an initial appointment as an employee shall receive annually a GTAship for at least the same number of hours of employment, or equal support, during the expected duration of the program, including the probationary period.
- (ii) Master's program up to two years (6 terms)
- (iii) PhD student up to four years (12 terms)
- (iv) Direct entry PhD student or Master's to Doctoral Transfer up to five years (15 terms)

#### B Based on External Scholarship (13.04 a and b)

- (i) A GTA who receives a one- or two-year external scholarship is not guaranteed a GTA (as per section 13.05) while holding the scholarship.
- (ii) A GTA who receives a three- or four-year external scholarship shall be guaranteed a GTA (as per section 13.05) for at least one year.

#### Examples of 'initial appointment':

##### Year 1:

- Fall 140 hours, Winter 0 hours

The program can meet that obligation in one of the following ways in **Year 2:**

- Fall 140 hours, Winter 0 hours
- Fall 70 hours, Winter 70 hour
- Fall 0 hours, Winter 140 hours
- Or provide equal support as Graduate Fellowship, etc.

## STEP 2

### SOLICIT INPUT

Ask for input from your former GTAs (13.02 b).

Prior to the start of the fall term, Graduate Students who have completed at least one (1) GTAship will be solicited for their input into course assignment preferences. Departments and interdisciplinary programs shall give GTA course assignment preferences due consideration. If a preferred course is not assigned, the department shall endeavour to assign a course that aligns with the GTA's research interests and/or skill sets.

# ARTICLE 13 — ASSIGN

STEP  
3

## ORDER OF APPOINTMENTS

Using your pool of GTAs, and knowing their preferred assignment(s), appoint your GTAs from last year according to your obligations. For students who are new to a GTA position, follow the order of appointments below.

### WITHIN FACULTY

Department-based, funding-eligible, full-time, qualified, registered graduate students.

Faculty-based, funding-eligible full-time, qualified registered graduate students who do not already have a GTA appointment, or who do not have a GTA assignment of at least 70 hours.

Department-based, non-funding eligible, full-time, qualified, registered graduate students.

### UNIVERSITY-WIDE

1. Opened to competition among registered and qualified PhD and Masters students across campus who hold a current GTAship of 70 hours per term or less, including those who do not hold any GTAship and do not hold an external scholarship.
2. Opened to competition among registered and qualified PhD and Masters students across campus who hold an external scholarship.

*\* A GTA can work no more than 140 hours in any one term.*

# Article 13.06

## APPOINTMENTS – OPEN COMPETITION

b) Opened to competition among registered and qualified PhD and Masters students across campus who hold a current GTAship of 70 hours per term or less, including those who do not hold any GTAship and those who **do not** hold an external scholarship.

**c) Opened to competition among registered and qualified PhD and Masters students across campus who hold an external scholarship.**

(i) As soon as the likelihood of such a competition is known **in b) or c)**, a notice of position vacancy, including a brief description of duties and the necessary educational qualifications, shall be forwarded electronically to the Union and the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), where it will be maintained for public scrutiny for a period nine (9) days from the issue date on the notice. The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will also post the position for this period on its web site.



## Article 13.08

### APPOINTMENTS – WELCOME LETTER

**a) In the official “welcome letter” issued simultaneously to the official “offer letter”, the University shall inform, in writing, each graduate student of the total annual amount of their funding package, the number of annual GTA hours and the estimated cost of tuition for their program. The number of GTA hours assigned will not decrease from that promised in the welcome letter except as per clause c) below. If the number of GTA hours increases above the number in the welcome letter clause b) below applies. This article will become effective for September 2024/25.**

# Article 13.08

## APPOINTMENTS – UPDATED WELCOME LETTERS

As a result of the changes to article 13.08, the following actions **are required**:

- For all incoming funding eligible students, graduate programs must re-issue all Welcome Letters, or send out an addendum\* with the new GTAship details, before August 31, 2024.
- For **all continuing students who will be funding-eligible** for 2025-2026, graduate programs must issue funding letters (in compliance with the new GTA Collective Agreement) before August 31, 2024.
- The revised Welcome Letter and funding letter can be sent to students via email.
- For future offers of admission for funding eligible students, all Welcome Letters issued must use the revised template in the SGPS Operations Guide, and be uploaded to PeopleSoft as per the usual process.

*\*You could send an addendum if it is too cumbersome for your program to re-issue the full Welcome Letter i.e. having difficulty securing a signature from the Thesis Supervisor. In this case, please refer to page two of the Welcome Letter template, and select Option #1 or Option #2 for your addendum. The Graduate Chair (or equivalent) must sign the addendum.*

Not included:

- Professional Program Students
- Doctoral Flex Time Students
- Internationally Sponsored Students

## Article 13.08

### APPOINTMENTS – WELCOME LETTER (EFFECTIVE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026)

- b) Upon an employee securing any additional GTA appointment or hours, this additional amount shall be considered above and beyond the initial funding package and will not decrease any other source as in 13.08 a).**
- c) GTA funding may be reduced when equal financial support, is provided.**
- d) There shall be no reduction to any other funding received from the University as a result of a Graduate Student successfully securing an appointment under Article 13.06 b) and c).**

# Article 13.08

## APPOINTMENTS – REVISED WELCOME LETTERS

# Revised Welcome Letter Template

You can now choose two options as per the requirements of the collective agreement.

You will receive **X** hours of GTAship for the fall/winter term in your **X** year of your studies. This is your initial appointment. In subsequent years, during your funding-eligibility period, you will receive an annual GTAship for at least the same number of hours of employment or equal financial support. If you secure additional GTA employment hours, this additional amount shall be considered above and beyond the initial funding support packages.

Your GTAship for the fall/winter term studies will be as outlined below:

Year of Studies	Total number of <u>GTAship</u> hours for fall/winter terms

If you secure additional GTA employment hours, this additional amount shall be considered above and beyond the initial funding support packages.

Western's graduate funding support packages rank as some of the most competitive packages



Mark Wolfe



OPTION #1: This is new language (effective fall 2024) as per the GTA Collective Agreement (September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2027) Article 13.08. If you do not offer a GTAship as part of your funding support package, please delete this paragraph.

@mention or reply



Mark Wolfe



OPTION #2: This is new language (effective fall 2024)

# Article 13 - APPOINTMENTS

## 13.08 Letter of Understanding

**Clauses b) and c) of 13.08 will be fully implemented in the 2025-26 academic year using a welcome letter issued to incoming graduate students or a revised funding letter issued to current graduate students who will remain funding eligible in the 2025-26 academic year. The revised funding letters must be issued before the start of the Fall 2024 term. These letters will be used to set the parameters of the 2024-25 base year as per 13.08 a).**

## Article 13.08

### APPOINTMENTS – FUNDING LETTERS

# Funding Letter Template

Dear [Student Name]:

We are providing you with this revised funding letter, as a result of the recently negotiated GTA Collective Agreement.

As part of your total funding support package, you will receive X hours of GTAship for the 2024/2025 fall/winter terms. In subsequent years, during your funding-eligibility period, you will receive an annual GTAship for at least the same number of hours of employment or equal financial support. If you secure additional GTA employment hours beyond X, this additional amount shall be considered above and beyond your initial funding support package.

For full details about your funding support package, please review your Mercury Funding Plan.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Graduate Chair Signature

## Article 17.03 - HOURS OF WORK - PROCTORING

**\*Note: Proctoring which does not require the graduate student to have the knowledge of the course material/content is not considered GTA work. If a GTA is assigned Proctoring as part of their Duties Specification Agreement, then it shall be considered GTA work.**

# Article 18.01 - PAY RATES

- **January 1, 2024 - \$48.64**
  - **PLUS \$600 lump sum\* (Bill 124 repeal) and \$400 signing bonus\***
- **September 1, 2024 - \$50.10**
- **September 1, 2025 - \$51.35**
- **September 1, 2026 - \$52.38**
  
- **Lump sum payments:**
  - **May 2024 - \$200\***
  - **April 2025 - \$100**
  - **April 2026 - \$100**
  - **April 2027 - \$100**

**\*issued in May 2024**



# Article 25 - LEAVES OF ABSENCE

## 25.02

Effective ~~September 2021~~, **January 1, 2024**, Employees shall be entitled to take up to ~~two (2)~~ **three (3)** paid days per calendar year of Emergency Leave in the event a family member experiences a medical or health emergency.

## 25.09

c) Where the expected date of delivery or adoption occurs after the expiry of the employee's most recent contract(s), but within eight months of that expiry, the employer shall pay an employee pregnancy or parental or adoption leave benefits as outlined above in 25.09b). Such paid benefits shall be based on the appointment contract(s) held in the previous session, provided that upon the date of the leave, the employee meets the department and program conditions for **funding and** progression.

## Article 25.14 - LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Employees who have a current appointment shall be granted up to ~~fourteen (14)~~ **twenty (20)** hours of paid sick leave per one hundred and forty (140) hours of appointment, prorated based on number of hours in the appointment. Such sick leave will only apply to regularly scheduled classroom or laboratory contact hours and no additional absences due to medical reasons shall be with pay. To qualify for sick leave, the employee must notify the person designated within the Department, School or Faculty where the employee works as to the duration of the illness or injury. Wherever possible, the employee should attempt to arrange for a substitute as provided for in shall reimburse the cost of medical certificate. Leave earned but not used shall be carried over to the next working term to a maximum of ~~fifteen (15)~~ **ten (10)** hours at any point in time.

# Article 30 - TRAINING

## 30.01

The first appointment of an employee shall include participation in a training program as determined by the Department. **All training shall take place during the Employee's contract period.** Employees required to supervise students in a laboratory setting shall receive health and safety training appropriate to ensuring the safe operation of a laboratory of students, if such training has not already been required and completed for the GTA's graduate education. Teaching assistants shall be paid for participation in such training determined by the Department and/or required for Health and Safety in accordance with Article 18.

## 30.03

Any employer-required training or orientation shall be included in the hours of work as outlined in the Duties Specification Agreement, per Appendix "B" and shall **normally** take place during the contract period of the appointment. ~~If the training can not be scheduled during the contract period, the teaching assist will be notified of the training in a timely manner.~~

# GTA TIMELINES

## COURSE SUPERVISORS

Department plans for upcoming term and assigns GTAships as per Article 13.



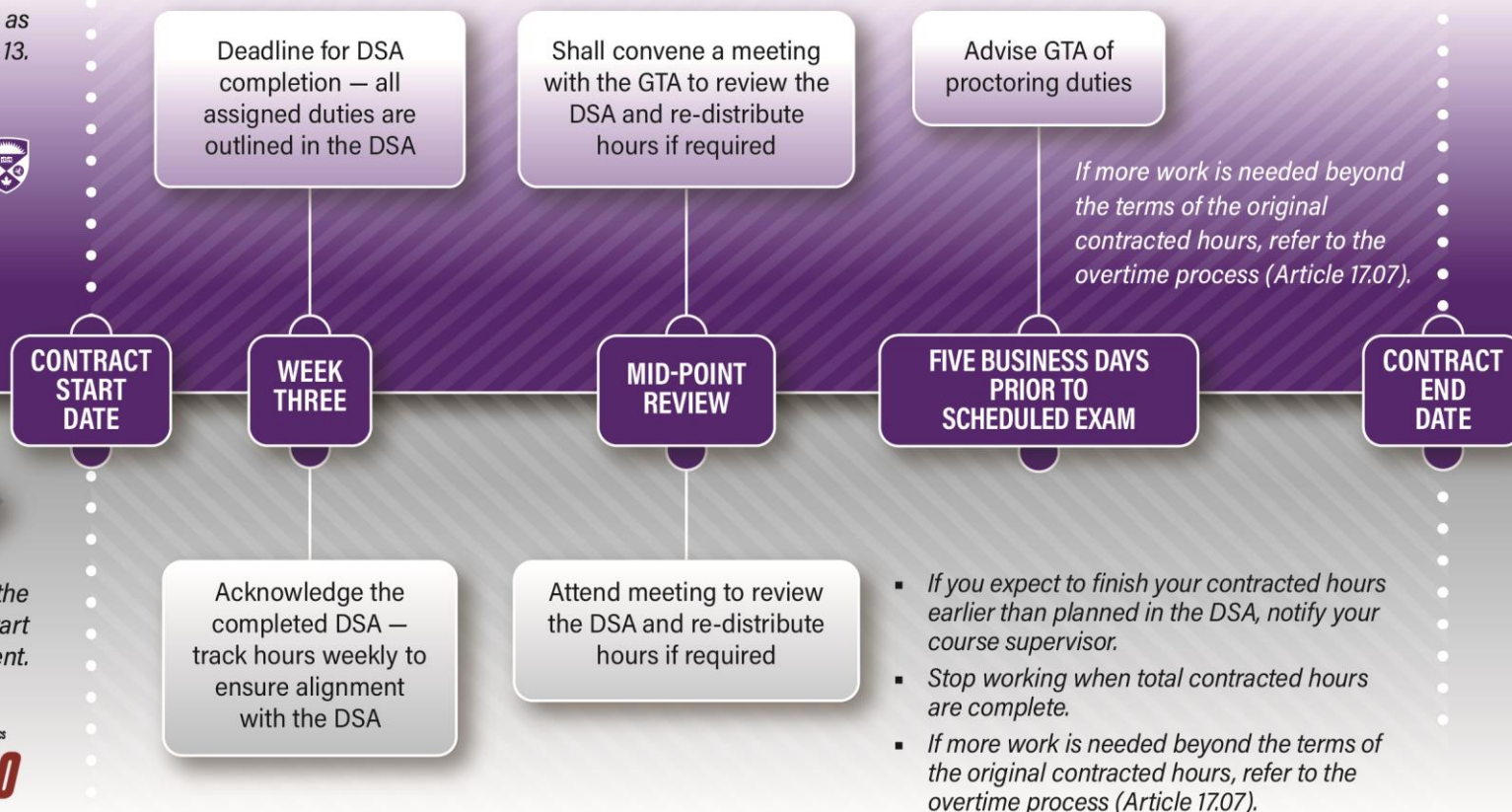
## GTA's

GTA signs the contract prior to start of employment.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ▶ Department must issue contracts at the beginning of the term or prior to the start of employment.
- ▶ Duties Specification Agreement (DSA) must be completed by the third week of the term.
- ▶ It is expected that there will be ongoing communication between the course supervisor and the GTA, including performance feedback, and evaluation if requested.



GTA's who have questions for their union executive can contact [staffpsac610@gmail.com](mailto:staffpsac610@gmail.com).

# Questions?

Ron Wagler

Director of Administration

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