About Swinburne Online

Swinburne Online is a 50:50 partnership between SEEK Ltd and Swinburne University of Technology, created to deliver world-class online learning to Swinburne students. Both partners are committed to building an organisation that delivers online degrees specifically designed to meet the educational needs of Australians who are too busy to undertake university studies on campus. It leverages SEEK’s online capabilities and Swinburne’s course curriculum and academic quality control in a unique public-private partnership.

The fundamental premise underpinning the learning design and delivery of Swinburne Online programs is the theory of social constructivism, with individuals constructing knowledge through social processes (conversation, dialogue, sharing of ideas). Students in all units of study will be engaged in an active learning environment, participating regularly in communication and collaboration with staff and peers. This is quite different from, and should not be confused with, traditional models of distance education.

A Swinburne Online student will undertake a highly supported, socially connected, pedagogically sound educational journey. The design process is undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team, including discipline knowledge experts, learning designers, educational technologists, library, language and academic skills advisors. This process brings together current thinking in online unit design with the highly respected and research informed curriculum of Swinburne University. The result is a suite of programs specifically designed for an online audience of people with competing work, life and study priorities.

What is an eLA and what will they do?

Frontline in the delivery of Swinburne Online units are our eLearning Advisors (eLAs). An eLA draws on a combination of both teaching and facilitating. Like teachers, our eLAs are content experts who help students acquire new skills or knowledge and rely on measurable outcomes (assessments) to facilitate learning; however, like facilitators, our eLAs model learning, emphasise practical applications and encourage students to construct knowledge collaboratively by building on what they already know.

eLAs will be allocated one or more Learning Groups, each of approximately 30 - 34 students whom they will work with closely over the 12 week teaching period. They will be expected to log into Blackboard (the Learning Management System) regularly, at least 3-4 times per week. The average time the eLA is expected to spend on their duties is 4 hours per week per Learning Group, although the actual hours may vary from week to week depending on the particular tasks in which students are involved.

eLAs are required to mark student work, both throughout and at the end of the Teaching Period, according to marking schemes which will be provided. The marking component of this role is remunerated separately, and will be paid at the conclusion of the teaching period.
Their duties include:

- Delivery of the unit academic content, learning activities and assessment tasks (including e-moderation, assessment and feedback);
- Marking, processing and submitting assessment results according to established guidelines within requested timeframes.

**Expectations of the role**

**Hours:** 4 hours per week per group. The average time eLAs are expected to spend on their duties is 4 hours per week per learning group, although the actual hours may vary from week to week depending on the particular tasks in which students are involved.

**Number of Students per group:** 1 group will have approximately 30 - 34 students whom they will work with closely over the 12 week teaching period. If groups are more than 35 students, eLAs will be remunerated for 5 hours per week (1 hour extra per week). New eLAs will be allocated 1-2 groups within their first Teaching Period, experienced eLAs are able to facilitate multiple groups (as approved).

**Logging in:** eLAs are expected to log into Blackboard (the Learning Management System) regularly, at least 3-4 times per week to be able to respond and facilitate effectively. The benchmark is 4 hours per week per group.

**Marking:** There are existing marking schemes and calculations set up per unit which will be available. eLAs are required to mark students' work, both throughout and at the end of the Teaching Period. The marking component of this role is remunerated separately, and will be paid at the conclusion of the teaching period.

**Typical online teaching activities (may not apply across all units) of an eLA would include:**

- Respond to student queries within 24- 48 hours
- Understand and be able to engage students with the content, activities and assessments of the unit
- Ensure that the online group is set up with a welcome message and icebreaker
- Provide a structure for online communication e.g. agreement of group rules, etiquette
- Encourage quieter members and browsers (sometimes called ‘lurkers’ or ‘read only participants’) to join in
- Create meaningful, relevant and dynamic online discussions. This is achieved through weaving, summarising and synthesising the content of multiple responses of a virtual group.
- Involve students in structured activities which have been developed to promote group learning
- Ask a variety of open ended question that encourage dialogue and debate
- Encourage the online group to develop its own life and history. Welcome shared language, metaphors, rituals and jokes.
- Promote reflection on different learning processes (individual and group)
- Provide timely and constructive feedback to students
- Encourage group members to question theory and practice e.g. links (or lack of connection) between theory and work-based practice
An eLA is NOT required to do any of the following:

- Establish curriculum
- Design learning activities
- Schedule learning and teaching
- Set assessments (including examinations)
- Develop marking schemes

Who are we looking for?

An eLA will minimally have a Bachelor’s/Master’s degree in the discipline area in which they are teaching, complemented by either academic professional experience, work experience in their related field, higher degree study or both. A Masters is required to facilitate all Masters subjects.

They will need to understand the potential of the online environment for learning individually or in groups, while at the same time having empathy for the challenges of becoming an online learner. They will be positive and encouraging in their interactions with students.

Reliable broadband access to the Internet is important, as well as online communication skills such as the ability to write concise, encouraging, personable online messages and to pace and use time appropriately.

An eLA does not need to have previous experience in teaching or tutoring, as the necessary skills will be developed through participation in our online training program.

Payment Breakdown

- Training rate: $33.86
- New eLA rate: $44.32
- Experienced eLA rate: $49.00
- Unit Co-ordinator rate: $51.33
- Marking Rate: $42.74

An eLA in their first teaching period will be remunerated for 4 hours per week at a rate of $\textbf{44.32}$ per hour for each Learning Group plus.

An additional marking amount is paid based on the number of student assessments marked and whether the marking is detailed or basic at a rate of $\textbf{42.74}$ per hour. This hourly rate is based on a time allocation per assessment as detailed in the eLA notes for each unit.

*Annual leave and loading accrued will be paid out at the conclusion of the teaching period.

Swinburne Online has a payment model which reflects the actual hours an eLA will work, rather than the traditional university tutoring model which pays tutors per contact hour, but has an implicit expectation of 1-2 hours of associated work. E.g. A traditional university tutoring model may pay
$120.00 per hour. With 2 hours of associated/preparation work, this becomes $120.00 divided by 3 hours = $40.00 per hour.

The teaching payment will be broken up into fortnightly payments over the teaching period, and the marking payment will be made at the end of the teaching period.

After successful completion of the first Teaching Period, experience will be recognised by a higher pay rate in the following teaching periods, subject to course demand. An eLA in their second teaching period will be remunerated for 4 hours per week at a rate of $49.00 per hour for each Learning Group. If for any reason the Learning Group is cancelled, payment will be made for weeks already worked, however future teaching and marking payments will be cancelled.

Training Program – compulsory

Duration: 3 week online training program, 6 hour per week commitment. The training program is compulsory and must be successfully completed by all eLAs prior to commence working with students. There is only 1 training program running per teaching period.

Where? Online/Remote (in your own time). Once you have been selected to join the training program, you will be given instructions and a username/log in details.

Payment: The training is paid based on time commitment of approximately 6 hours per week for 3 weeks. The hours must be evenly spread across the week and there should not be more than 48 hours between log on.

Payment - Training

The training rate is $33.86 per hour. Applicants who are selected to participate in the eLA training program, and who satisfactorily complete all of the associated activities will receive a Certificate of Participation & Completion and will be remunerated for 6 hours per week for 3 weeks. Annual leave accrued will be paid out at the conclusion of training.

Once the training has been completed satisfactorily, allocations are then based on enrolment numbers which are finalised closer to the start of the teaching period. Once the eLA has successfully passed the training, and there is a learning group/s available they will be assigned to Learning Groups. A Unit Coordinator will be assigned to provide support in each unit and each eLA will also be assigned a mentor to give advice with respect to engaging and supporting students, online moderation and feedback.