

POLICY ON POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS EMPLOYED TO DELIVER TEACHING AND OTHER PAID WORK FOR THE UNIVERSITY

1. General principles

The University recognises that student involvement in teaching, research projects and other paid work at the University provides a career development opportunity for students and makes valuable use of their specialist knowledge and research training. However, we also need to be mindful of workloads and the impact on a student's wellbeing and on their ability to complete their degree within the normal permissible timescales.

Full-time students are therefore restricted to a maximum of 180 hours of paid work for the University over the course of an academic year, and normally not more than 6 hours in any one week. If a student wishes to do more than 180 hours of paid work for the University they are not necessarily prevented from doing so but must have the permission of their Director of Studies **and** Head of Research Degrees, and will be expected to evidence how they will accommodate the paid work alongside their studies to ensure they meet the normal timescales for completion of their thesis.

Approval to undertake more than 180 hours work will only be granted where the student is making satisfactory progress and the Head of Research Degrees is content that the plan for completion is realistic. Approval should be sought for each new piece of work or extension to agreed hours, and may be revoked if there is an indication that the student's progress or wellbeing has been affected.

The maximum of 180 hours does not apply to part-time students but students will need to ensure that any paid work does not impact on their ability to meet the normal timescales for completion of their thesis. Restrictions on the amount of work undertaken for the University may be imposed on individual students if the Director of Studies or Head of Research Degrees has concerns regarding the student's progress.

All students who are engaged in an employment capacity should be paid at the appropriate rate. The Department or Research Centre must follow all relevant HR policies and guidelines, including confirming eligibility to work prior to any paid work being carried out.

Students who receive a scholarship or other form of sponsorship must adhere to any restrictions on paid employment imposed by their sponsoring or other relevant body.

International students who are studying on a student visa must also observe the limits on paid work imposed by their visa conditions.

This policy does not apply to students who are primarily employed as research or academic staff at the University and registered as staff full-time doctoral candidates.

Whilst the University aims to provide postgraduate researchers with opportunities to gain experience in teaching or research work, the availability and scope of opportunities varies between subject areas and the University cannot guarantee that such opportunities will be available.

2. Students employed to deliver teaching activities

This section of the policy outlines the key principles for the selection, training, support and payment of postgraduate research students employed in a teaching capacity at the University.

As above, students are restricted to a maximum of 180 hours of teaching-related activity over the course of an academic year and this includes all preparation, delivery and marking time. Students' supervisors should be informed about teaching allocations so that they maintain oversight of their students' workloads.

2.1 Duties

The nature of the teaching activities should reflect the individual's skills and experience, and are generally expected to be at the level of Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA). Activities which utilise the research experience or skills of the student are particularly encouraged.

Departments should give careful consideration as to whether research students should be involved in marking and assessment. Adequate guidance, including clear criteria and marking schemes where appropriate, must be made available to the student and their marking must be comprehensively monitored and moderated.

Assessment design must remain the responsibility of the Module Leader. Research students may assist academic staff in the design of assessments but this should be carried out under close supervision and guidance from the member of staff involved.

Module design should remain the responsibility of academic staff. However, research students may be involved in programme and module review by being invited to report back on the structure, level and content of modules on which they teach.

2.2 Selection of students

Departments may define their own criteria and processes for allocating teaching to postgraduate research students, but must have a fair and transparent process in place that is open to all PGR students and overseen by the relevant Subject Group Leader.

2.3 Training and mentoring

Departments must ensure that postgraduate researchers complete all necessary training, including any equality and diversity training mandatory for teaching staff, before they are allowed to teach. The student's development needs should be assessed and students should keep a record of all training undertaken.

The University offers online and face-to-face training to prepare doctoral researchers for teaching and lecturing in higher education. Students are generally expected to take the face-to-face course before they undertake any teaching, but if this is not possible (due to timing or capacity issues) they may take the online course as initial preparation.

Departments must ensure that appropriate induction, guidance and support is provided by members of the University's academic staff who are experienced in teaching. Students should be assigned a mentor who will act as their first point of contact and provide advice.

2.4 Pay, contracts and access to resources

Students will be paid at the appropriate University rate for the hours agreed in advance with the Subject Group Leader, including all teaching delivery time and hours as agreed for preparation and assessment. This is normally on an Associate Lecturer contract and arranged by the relevant Subject Group Leader.

2.5 Monitoring and review of performance

Departments are expected to monitor the teaching performance of postgraduate students through the Module Review process as part of the University's academic quality procedures. Subject Group Leaders (or Heads of Research Centre) should monitor performance against the agreed duties and provide appropriate, constructive feedback to students. If a student's performance gives cause for concern, the student should be supported to improve through additional training, guidance and mentoring.

Departments should ensure there are clear routes for students to raise queries and concerns, and that these routes are communicated to students.

2.6 Graduate Teaching Assistants

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) are PhD students whose University scholarship provides structured opportunities for development and experience in learning, teaching and assessment. The University's Framework for University Scholarships with Teaching or Research Support sets out the principles under which the GTA schemes are managed. GTAs do not receive payment for the teaching activities that are carried out as part of their GTA award as this forms part of their training and development. However, GTAs should be paid for any additional teaching activity that is undertaken outside of their GTA award.

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