

Policy statement on the employment of postgraduate research students as teaching assistants or demonstrators

Background

1. This policy statement covers current postgraduate research students of the University who are working to support the teaching and learning activities of other registered students, normally undergraduates, of this University. It encompasses activities such as laboratory or computer class demonstrating, running problem-solving sessions, taking tutorial classes or seminars, giving lectures, performing assessments and providing feedback.
2. This policy primarily applies to postgraduate research students whose primary status is that of a university student. Staff appointed as Graduate Teaching Assistants with a formal contract of employment from the University which encompasses PhD study and teaching responsibilities with an associated salary, may be covered by some aspects of this policy depending on the length of the employment contract.
3. The decision on whether or not to utilise postgraduate students in support of undergraduate teaching rests with individual Schools or units responsible for curriculum delivery. Where postgraduate research students are involved, there is a need for consistency in the selection, training, support, monitoring, and payment of those employed in these roles. The purpose of this policy statement is to provide a framework for this.

Principles of Policy and examples of practice

4. The selection process used to decide which postgraduates will contribute to teaching activities should be fair, transparent and open to all in the full spirit of the University's Equality & Diversity Policy.

11. Records of training undertaken should be kept by the student and the SDTL
12. Postgraduates should be provided with on -going support mechanisms throughout their teaching activities. This should normally include some form of mentoring .
13. There should also be some level of monitoring of how allocated teaching duties are carried out, for example by seeking feedback from relevant undergraduate students , or staff 'observers' . Any such feedback should be discussed with the postgraduate research student concerned in a supportive manner.

Payment

14. All postgraduate research students engaging in teaching duties beyond those expected as part of the research training experience will need a contract of employment appropriate to the duration of the work and will be paid by timesheet.
15. Students will be paid, at the appropriate University Student Demonstrator Rate, for all contact hours and for time spent in preparation and marking,