

Employment of Postgraduate Researchers who Teach - Policy

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The University has adopted the principles of **Designing For Diverse Learners**, and all policy documents should be written with reference to these principles. Further information is available at [Designing for diverse learners.info](https://www.hull.ac.uk/designing-for-diverse-learners/info).

An Equality Impact Assessment must be considered for all new and amended policies. Further information is available from the [EIA section of SharePoint](#).

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Employment of Postgraduate Researchers who Teach

1. Introduction and purpose

1. This Policy sets out the principles, expectations and requirements regarding the employment of postgraduate researchers who teach (PGWT) whilst they are registered as a student at the University of Hull (UOH).
2. This Policy aligns with the University Regulations, Procedures and Codes of Practice as contained in the University Quality Handbook, particularly in relation to Research Degree Provision, which can be found [here](#).
3. This Policy has been developed with reference to the *Quality Assurance Agency UK's Quality Code for Higher Education, 2018*, with particular reference to *Guiding Principle 4, Research students are afforded opportunities for professional development*:

‘..... Providing research students with an opportunity to support learning and teaching, develops a range of skills and reinforces their own knowledge of the subject. Providers may offer research students non-compulsory teaching opportunities; these may be limited and not necessarily available to all research students. For their own benefit and to safeguard the experience of the taught students, research students receive appropriate training, support and mentoring if they are teaching. Mentoring can be provided by membership of larger teaching teams, and support should ensure that teaching duties are not so intensive or time consuming as to affect completion.’

4. University of Hull staff are expected to follow the guidance provided in this Policy to ensure that wherever postgraduate researchers are involved in teaching activities, we are safeguarding the quality of both their experience and that of students who they teach.
5. The contribution of Postgraduate Researchers (PGRs) is not intended to be a replacement for the normal teaching undertaken by academic staff, but as a positive addition benefitting all parties.

2. Scope and policy exclusions

1. This Policy **applies** to the employment and teaching activities of postgraduate researchers who are registered on doctoral research degrees, with the **exceptions listed below**.

2. The Policy **does not apply** to:

- Existing full-time or part-time members of academic staff who are also registered as PGRs.
 - Those registered on taught or research Masters degrees.
 - Graduate Teaching Assistants.
 - Postdoctoral Researchers.
3. Postgraduate Researchers Who Teach (PGWT) will not be involved in any teaching activity where this is prohibited by a Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body.
4. PGWT must not teach on any module which contributes to the Post Graduate Training Scheme, to a programme on which they are registered, or to any other level 8 programme at the University of Hull.
5. PGWT should not teach on Postgraduate Taught PGT (Master's) programmes or at Level 7 of an integrated undergraduate Master's programme. Exceptionally, PGWT may "demonstrate" on PGT/Level 7 programmes, if they have a Master's Degree or have successfully completed the first year of their PhD.
6. PGWT are typically expected to have a qualification at or above the level they are teaching. Where they do not, an exceptional case can be made to the Associate Dean for Education (ADE) who will record the information and submit a copy to the Doctoral College. The ADE will be mindful of inclusivity issues in deciding. For example, the University recognises that not all individuals registered for a PGR degree will have been awarded a taught Master's qualification. In these circumstances, successful completion of Y1 of a PhD (as recorded in the annual progress monitoring process) may, at the discretion of the ADE be considered equivalent to a Master's.
7. For the purpose of this Policy, **Academic Unit** refers to department, school or institute.

3. Faculty leadership responsibilities – making the policy work

1. Ultimately, the senior academic leadership team within each faculty/institute is responsible for ensuring that a fair and equitable system of providing opportunities for PGRs to teach is supported, recognised, embedded, and managed across their faculty/institute. Associate Deans for both Education and Research (and their Institute equivalents) will work closely to support Heads of Academic Unit and Graduate Research Directors/PGR Directors/PGR Tutors/Graduate Research Officers to make the scheme successful.
2. Graduate Research Directors/PGR Directors/PGR Tutors/Graduate Research Officers with their existing responsibility for PGRs within academic units will play a crucial role as the "PGR Teaching Lead". They will have day to day oversight of the role that PGWT play in the delivery of teaching support across the programmes in their academic unit. They will work closely with their Head of Academic Unit, Module Leaders, PGR Supervisors and other members of staff to ensure that opportunities for PGR teaching are identified, advertised, recruited to and managed effectively and in accordance with this policy.

3. PGR Supervisors already play a key role in discussing career development with the PGRs they supervise. This should include career development in relation to opportunities for PGRs to support learning and teaching. Their responsibility extends to ensuring that PGRs are signposted to the relevant training, development and procedures for participating in the scheme.

4. Key principles

This policy is underpinned by a number of key principles, expectations and requirements which are summarised below.

1. [Creating and identifying opportunities to teach](#)

1. The University places significant value and importance on its commitment to provide PGRs across the institution with access to teaching opportunities. Associate Deans for Research, PGR Teaching Leads (Graduate Research Directors/PGR Directors/PGR Tutors/Graduate Research Officers) and PGR supervisors will work with Heads of Department, Programme Directors, Module Leaders and other relevant staff in Academic Units to identify the opportunities for involving PGRs in teaching activities. It will be the responsibility of the “PGR Teaching Lead” as mentioned in 2.1 above to ensure that this happens.

2. *Advertising of opportunities*

All Academic Units will operate a fair, transparent and equitable approach to the advertising of teaching roles, so that PGRs can easily see the opportunities that are available and are given the appropriate time to apply for them. Academic Units will use the Temporary Staffing Service and recruitment policies and processes of the University as managed by Human Resources. All teaching opportunities will be advertised to PGRs across the faculty/institute.

3. *Equality, diversity and inclusion*

1. This Policy fully embraces the University’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion as outlined in the Education Strategy 2020-2025, the University’s Inclusive Education Framework and the range of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and Access and Widening Participation policies currently in force.
2. All PGRs will be given an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of the scheme. independent of their background or demographic characteristics.
3. The processes outlined in this Policy will ensure that EDI principles are implicitly embedded across the whole of the scheme, particularly (but not exclusively) in relation to: the types of opportunities offered, the advertising of opportunities, the recruitment and selection of PGWT and access to teacher training.

2. [Recruitment, selection and fair pay](#)

1. All Academic Units will operate a fair, transparent and equitable approach to the recruitment and selection of PGWT.

2. PGWT will be treated as employees of the University and will be issued with temporary contracts of employment for the teaching they undertake.
3. PGWT will at all times be paid a fair rate of pay and will be paid for preparation time (and marking where appropriate) and all this in line with sector norms and best practice.

3. [Regulatory requirements](#)

1. The University requires that the PGR, their supervisor and Academic Unit must ensure that all funding body, legal, statutory limits on teaching/working hours and other regulatory requirements are adhered to before teaching commences.
2. All Tier 4 immigration requirements (where they apply) and standard employment checks are met and completed before the commencement of any teaching duties by PGRs.
3. PGWT **cannot** undertake formal teaching activities on any module that formally contributes to a programme of study on which they are a registered student.

4. [Managing the teaching workload](#)

1. Any teaching undertaken by PGRs must not impede the successful completion of their research degree programme. PGWT and their supervisors are jointly responsible for ensuring that progress is not negatively affected by teaching responsibilities.
2. Involvement in teaching activities is not compulsory on the part of PGRs.
3. PGR Teaching Leads (Graduate Research Directors/PGR Directors/PGR Tutors/Graduate Research Officers) will act as a point of contact for PGRs who feel uncomfortable about the responsibilities they are being asked to take on.

5. [Training, development, quality assurance and English language requirements](#)

1. Training and development opportunities and quality assurance are key in ensuring both the quality of the taught student experience (and in addressing any concerns about value for money amongst an UG population) and that of PGWT involved in the scheme.
2. Before commencing teaching, all PGRs who wish to teach must undertake the Passport to University Teaching (PUT) run by the Teaching Excellence Academy (TEA). Depending on their previous teaching qualifications and experience, PGRs may need to undertake the PGTS Teaching Module in order to undertake certain teaching roles. Further information is provided in the teaching roles table in Section 6 below.
3. All PGWT will be given an Academic Unit induction into teaching which includes appropriate teaching, assessment/feedback techniques, specialist equipment and software specific to the disciplinary area in which they will be providing teaching support. The ADE will ensure that this happens.
4. All PGRs involved will be given access to a peer observation scheme. There will be opportunities for some PGRs to work towards HEA associate fellowship/fellowship using

their teaching experiences. However, “demonstrating” alone is unlikely to provide sufficient experience for HEA membership.

5. An individual teaching mentor will be assigned to each PGWT in order ensure they can carry out their teaching duties effectively to ensure excellent teaching quality across the University. This will normally be the Module Leader but academic units may wish to assign the activity to another role within the unit.
6. It is anticipated that PGWTs work alongside academic staff to deliver modules. It would not be considered appropriate that the bulk of the teaching on any modules or programme was delivered by PGWTs.
7. Monitoring of performance and quality assurance
 - i. Heads of Academic Units and PGR Teaching Leads (Graduate Research Directors/PGR Directors/PGR Tutors/Graduate Research Officers) will ensure that the performance of PGWT on their programmes is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
 - ii. Module Leaders are responsible for the reviewing quality of teaching by PGWT on their module and will involve PGWT in the module review process.
 - iii. The University will only continue to employ individual PGWT if their performance is judged to be satisfactory. Any skills or development needs should be discussed in progress review meetings between the PGR and their supervisor.
8. Required standard of English and communication skills
 - i. All PGRs involved in delivering teaching must demonstrate a good standard of written and spoken English language, so as to demonstrate the ability to be able to communicate clearly in an academic class setting. This is normally equivalent to a minimum of IELTS 7.
 - ii. Further skills development may be necessary in some cases to reach a satisfactory level. The Global Engagement Team are looking at providing free in-session English Language support sessions which may be of use to those PGRs whose native language is not English.

6. [PGWT activities and roles](#)

1. PGRs can be involved in a range of teaching support activities subject to them completing the relevant training and meeting the relevant conditions specified in this Policy.
2. This policy provides a set of relevant job roles (below) that recognises the range of current teaching support activities that take place across the University. They have been allocated the banding and job title that fairly and appropriately reflects the work undertaken.

Table 1: Summary of teaching support roles, activities, qualifications and experience

TSS Teaching Support Assistant	TSS Demonstrator	TSS Assistant Teacher	TSS Teacher
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/ Assistant Demonstrator Band 4	Band 6	Band 6	Band 6
Provide general assistance under the direction of an academic member of staff where large numbers of students are participating in the activity. Supporting/assisting the use of practical equipment, software, experiments and processes within a laboratory or workshop setting, as part of a demonstration session led by someone else. This could also be in other contexts such as workshops, classes, computer labs, field trips and in the virtual environment.	Demonstration of the use of practical equipment, software, experiments, processes within a laboratory or workshop setting to groups of students, and typically under close supervision and presence of a member of staff. This could also be in other contexts such as classes, computer labs, field trips and in the virtual environment.	Teaching small group learning activities to support the main lecture/teaching content by leading and facilitating seminars, tutorials, workshops, and field trip groups. Independent delivery of materials designed by an academic.	More experienced PGRs may be asked to deliver primary small group teaching and lecture/s (as agreed with the Module Leader) on more complex topics drawing on their research and/or professional knowledge. Some more experienced PGRs may be asked to deliver primary small group teaching and some lecture delivery (as agreed with the Module Leader) which deals with the core knowledge base of the discipline. In both cases, this is likely to include design of teaching materials (with support, as appropriate, from module leader).
Can demonstrate to UG Years FY, 1, 2 and 3 (FHEQ Levels 3-6). Exceptionally, PGRs who have successfully completed the first year of their PhD programme can demonstrate to PGT (Level 7) students. Must complete the TEA Passport to Teaching Should have broad experience in the subject areas in which they are demonstrating or providing teaching support.	Can demonstrate to UG Years FY, 1, 2 and 3 (FHEQ Levels 3-6). Exceptionally, PGRs who have successfully completed the first year of their PhD programme can demonstrate to PGT (Level 7) students. Must complete the TEA Passport to Teaching. Should have good knowledge of and broad experience in the subject areas in which they are demonstrating or providing teaching support. Should receive locally delivered training and development relevant for demonstrators. PGWT who are “leading” demonstration sessions	Can teach UG Years FY, 1, 2 and 3 (FHEQ Levels 3-6). Cannot teach at PGT level 7 in this role. Must complete the TEA Passport to Teaching Must have experience of shadowing in a number of roles and observing a range of types of teaching. It is expected that those offered a role of this type will undertake the PGTS Teaching Module as part of their training.	Can teach UG Years FY, 1, 2 and 3 (FHEQ Levels 3-6). Cannot teach at PGT level in this role unless they already have an existing recognised higher education teaching qualification, or have registered teacher status from the UOH. Must complete the TEA Passport to Teaching Must have worked in the Band 6 Assistant Teacher role, and have completed PGTS Teaching Module Or, Already have an existing recognised higher education teaching qualification, or have registered teacher status from the UOH.

	should also complete the PGTS teaching module, or have undertaken the Assistant Demonstrator (Band 4) role for at least a year.		
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7. [Marking and assessment](#)

1. PGRs can be involved in marking and assessment processes in order to provide them with the full range of teaching experience. PGRs' involvement in marking and assessment is, however, a key issue for quality assurance.
2. PGWT can mark summative assessments provided that they have received training and guidance in this area, including clear marking criteria, training in the marking conventions in use within their academic unit, and importantly, that second marking processes are fully in place for all assessments they mark (see: *Code of Practice on Assessment Procedures*).
3. Module design and assessment design remains the responsibility of the Module Leader at all times.

8. [Roles and responsibilities of the Academic Unit](#)

1. All academic units must ensure that PGWT have access to the relevant training including local inductions. Where local inductions do not currently occur for teaching staff, they must be introduced for PGWT. The ADE will ensure that this happens.
2. All academic units must ensure that PGWT, acting as contracted members of staff in this role, must be provided with information on and access to the centrally offered staff training opportunities to enable them to carry out their teaching in line with best practice and without risk to themselves and their students (e.g. Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion).
3. PGWT will be provided with access to the essential course information including on Canvas and all the relevant teaching materials relating to the aspect of the module they will be teaching on.
4. PGWT will receive constructive feedback (through the use of the University's Peer Support for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching Scheme) on their performance from the Module Leader.
5. An individual teaching mentor will be assigned to each PGWT in order ensure they can carry out their teaching duties effectively to ensure excellent teaching quality across the University. This will normally be the Module Leader but academic units may wish to assign the activity to another role within the unit.

6. Module leaders should provide opportunities for PGWTs to discuss their teaching experiences and to provide feedback via Module leaders to their teaching teams and relevant committees.
7. Module Leaders must ensure that PGWT are viewed as an integral part of their teaching team and may be invited to relevant staff meetings and activities depending custom and practice within the Academic Unit and to accommodate PGWT needs and interests.

9. [The role of the supervisor](#)

1. As supervisors provide the first line of academic support for PGRs, they are expected to discuss whether a PGR is interested in undertaking the relevant training and pursuing opportunities to teach. There may be valid reasons for a supervisor to have concerns about a PGR teaching, particularly if the PGR is not making satisfactory progress, or if participating in teaching would hinder the progress of their research degree. Where a PGR feels that they are not being supported to in their desire to teach they may speak separately to PGR Teaching Lead (Graduate Research Director/PGR Tutor/Graduate Research Officer).
2. Supervisors should signpost PGRs to the teacher training modules offered by the TEA and the Doctoral College, as well as outline how opportunities are typically advertised in their academic unit.

10. [Pastoral support](#)

1. The provision of pastoral support is not the responsibility of PGWT.
2. Any pastoral advice and guidance provided by PGRs to UG and PGT students will be minimal and will normally involve signposting to relevant services and support, or referring to Personal Supervisors.
3. The main responsibility for pastoral support for UG and PGT remains with their personal supervisors. PGRs must, however, be briefed in this area as part of their training and induction to teaching.

Version Control

Version	Author	Date approved	Relevant sections
v3.2	Doctoral College	July 2023	New document