

POLICY ON POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS (PGRs) AS TEACHERS

Revised, June 2015. Approved by Academic Board, July 2015.

Rationale

It is recognised that for PG research students wishing to develop careers in academia, obtaining teaching and assessing experience is important. However, concerns have been expressed at the variety of practice within and between Schools with regards to the use of PG research students in teaching and assessment duties. The following principles have been designed to ensure that the University provides appropriate support to PG research students in teaching and assessment duties whilst allowing for flexibility in offering such opportunities.

Definition and Scope

Whereas part-time PG research students will often be employed to perform teaching and assessment duties to supplement their incomes, full-time PG research students have restricted time available outside their study time. The following principles apply *primarily* to full-time students, but apply to *both* full-time and part-time students in the requirement to receive training prior to undertaking assessment duties. The principles apply to teaching and/or assessment duties taking place on either of Teesside's campuses as well as at partner institutions.

Principles

- 1) PG research students should not be required to perform teaching or assessment duties if they do not wish to do so;
- 2) Opportunities for PG research students to gain experience of teaching and/or assessing should be offered fairly and where opportunities for teaching and/or assessment are not available, other opportunities for gaining experience of academic practice should be offered;
- 3) PG research students should not be asked to undertake teaching or assessment duties unless they receive appropriate support to do so; any support provided by the academic School should be documented formally.
- 4) Any teaching duties undertaken by PG research students should be appropriately monitored; particular care must be taken to ensure monitoring when PG research students are marking the work of other students; the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) in the relevant School should be informed of teaching duties undertaken by PG research students.
- 5) No assessment duties may be performed by PG research students without prior training, in accordance with QAA recommendations; completion of required formal training should be recorded on the research student record and staff assigning teaching should ensure that research students have been trained..
- 6) Except where other contractual obligations apply, the maximum hours per week that full-time PG research students can be involved in teaching and assessment duties is 6 hours per week, and not more than 180 hours during term-time or across the whole year, inclusive of Summer Schools, up to a maximum of 30 weeks. The combination of elements (preparation, teaching, assessment) within the 6 hours may vary according to discipline and/or School requirements;
- 7) PG research students should not be required to undertake teaching or assessment on subject matter which is not within their expertise or directly related areas;
- 8) Care should be taken when assigning PG research students to teaching above level 6;
- 9) Any PG research student funded by a Research Council studentship must be paid when undertaking teaching and assessment duties, in accordance with RCUK policy. Best practice for all other PG research students who are asked to undertake teaching and assessment duties is that they should normally be paid unless other contractual obligations apply.