

City Graduate School Committee

Research Students Who Teach: Revised Policy

Summary

The paper (Item 10, Paper E(ii)) circulated with the agenda for the City Graduate School Meeting on 20.06.17 was considered by the Executive Team at its meeting on 19.06.17.

The view of the Executive Team was that the paper did not fully satisfy the requirement of Senate which was to propose a revision of the policy to reflect:

- The situation for Tier 4 students who teach
- The discussions about contracts between HR, the SU and the UCU

An alternative paper is presented for discussion.

Recommended action

It is recommended that the City Graduate School Committee:

Considers and comment on the revised draft, prior to its consideration by Senate

Policy on Research students who teach

Senate Regulations:

Regulation 24 – Doctoral Programmes

Regulation 23 – Masters Degree by Research

Date approved/re-approved:

APPSC June 2010 (as a Statement of best practice)

Senate March 2013 (as a Senate Policy)

[Amendments to the policy following the comments of Senate are shown in red]

Definition

Teaching activity includes teaching and/or assistance with teaching; preparation time; assessment and feedback on assessment; and tutorial and seminar support.

Policy

The University requires all research students to have received adequate and appropriate preparation before undertaking any teaching activity within the University and that they are fully equipped with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience in the subject area being taught. Schools and Departments/Centres are required to monitor the preparedness and performance of their research students in accordance with the principles set out below.

Principles

- In accordance with the Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers, and the QAA Quality Code, the University recognises the value that postgraduate research students can bring to the student experience through engagement in the full range of teaching activity. The University additionally recognises the value that teaching experience can bring to the career and professional development of its research student population.
- Schools, Departments and Centres are responsible for ensuring that research students engaged in teaching activity are adequately and appropriately prepared, normally through attendance on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment module on the MA Academic Practice, delivered through the University's Learning Enhancement and Development.
- Engagement of a research student in teaching activity should not jeopardise the progress and completion of their research studies or the experience of the students in receipt of this activity.
- Research students in receipt of funding from the University or an external body (such as a University Studentship, RCUK grant and charities) are required to observe the requirements of the sponsor.
- Any teaching or teaching related activity that a research student undertakes must have the approval of the first supervisor, where appropriate, and/or Head of Department/Centre.
- Full-time research students are permitted to undertake no more than an average of 6 hours per week of teaching activity in each academic year. Such activity includes teaching, preparation time, delivery, assessment, and feedback on assessment, and seminars and/or tutorial duties. Averaging may occur but may not exceed the total annual allowance over an academic year.

- Part-time research students may undertake teaching activity in agreement with the first supervisor and Head of Department/Centre subject to consideration of workload requirements.
- Research students are required to operate in accordance with the University's regulations, policies and procedures.
- The scope for teaching activity varies between different Schools and Departments/Centres and opportunities may not always be available. Decisions on the allocation of teaching duties will be made based on the qualifications, experience, aptitude and skills of each individual.
- ~~International students, and staff with a responsibility for the supervision and progression of international research students, are required to seek advice from the Student Centre on any visa implications in undertaking paid teaching duties.~~ **Tier 4 Students are required to seek advice from the International Visa Advice Team on before undertaking paid and unpaid teaching duties to ensure they are aware of the requirements and restrictions of their visa.**
- Research students must be given clear information on their teaching duties, total hours and pay in writing before they may be employed to undertake teaching activity. **Contracts will be issued by HR following agreement between HR, the Students Union and UCU.**

Monitoring and evaluation

- The supervisory team, Senior Tutor for Research and Head of Department are responsible for monitoring the preparedness of their research students to teach and in ensuring that any teaching activity is peer reviewed at least annually by a member of academic staff in the Department/Centre in accordance with the University's policy on peer review.
- Research students should receive regular and constructive feedback on their performance by the module leader, through the module evaluation process or from another member of academic staff and should be allocated a mentor within the School, Department or Centre who shall provide further guidance and advice.
- School Boards of Studies or appropriate sub-committees of School Boards of Studies are responsible for overseeing the quality and standards of taught provision, including consideration of the contribution of research students to any teaching activity, through regular analysis of the outcome of the module evaluation exercise and any other appropriate measures. **Data related to the training, preparation and support provided to GTAs should be compiled within Departments/Centres on an ongoing basis and reported to BoS termly. A pro forma for monitoring the activity is used.**
- The Graduate School Committee will receive and consider a report from each School on the preparedness of its research students to teach and its peer review activity annually.