

PhD Students as Associate Tutors

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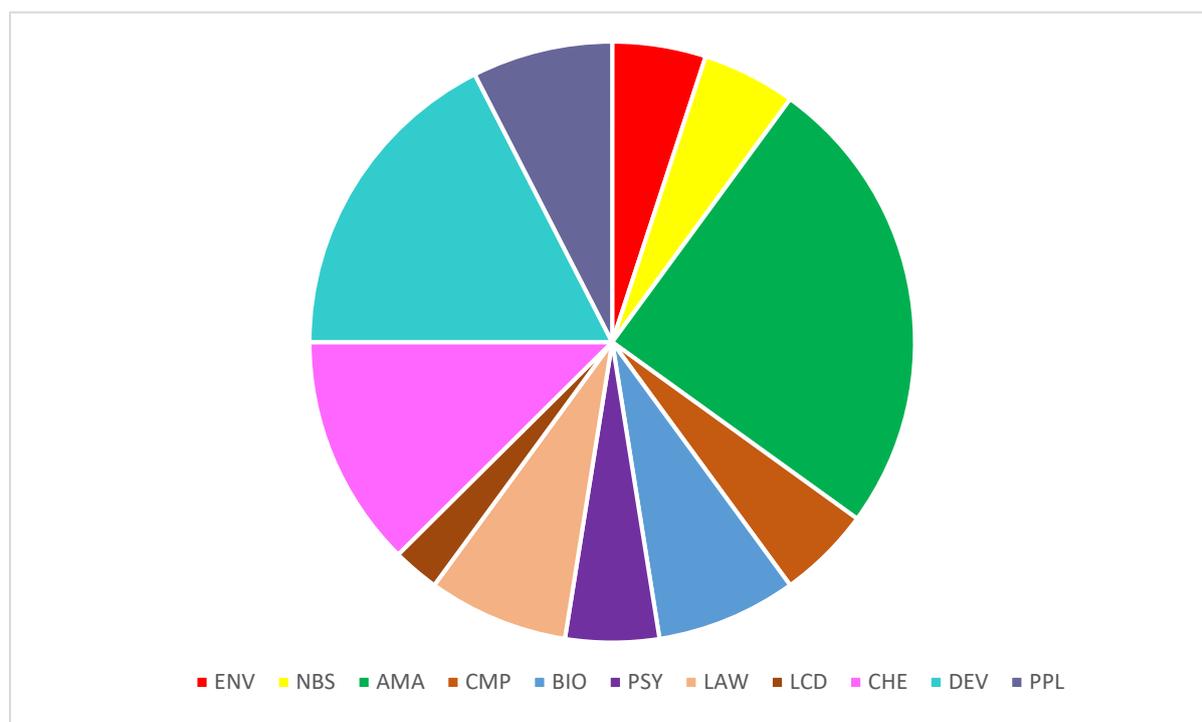
Preward and introduction

Through online consultation and at January's Graduate Assembly, we were made aware of PhD students' concerns around the employment rights of Associate Tutors at UEA. From the anecdotal accounts they gave, there seemed to be a lack of consistency in how Associate Tutors (referred to hereafter as AT) are recruited, trained, paid, and supported across schools and Faculties.

This prompted uea|su to do a wider consultation of PhD ATs to gather further feedback. The methods used were:

- an online consultation (results as appendix A)
- a focus group to collect anecdotal feedback (notes as appendix C)
- an in-person consultation at January's Graduate Assembly (transcript of conversation as appendix D and written responses as Appendix E)

Through all these methods of consultation we have had feedback from 56 students from 11 schools as follows:



This report outlines these findings, key areas of concern, and recommendations to UEA going forward. The report is thematic, and uses evidence from all research conducted in each chapter, and aims to provide an overview of the key points from the raw data.

Theme 1: recruitment and selection process

One of the areas our research focussed on was around recruitment and selection, in terms of aspects such as how PhD students were made aware of AT opportunities, how they were chosen, how they were selected, and what information they received throughout this.

1.1 Notification of AT positions

All consultation (combining online, in-person and focus groups) revealed the following information:

- 58% were notified of AT positions via department email or bulletin, usually for the expression of interest should positions become available rather than individual vacancies.
- 18% found out through word of mouth via other students or colleagues.
- 15% were asked or notified by their supervisor.

The range of ways that students are notified illustrates that there is no centralised process for informing students of available positions. Although it is acceptable for students to be notified in a variety of ways, notification by supervisor alone does not translate into a reliable or formal process: 90% of students who were told of vacancies by their supervisor said that there was no formal application process. This is in contrast to those who were told by email or bulletin, 75% of whom said that there was no formal application process.

This may put some students at more of a disadvantage in terms of accessibility to apply for the role: those who were notified by their supervisor saw it as more of a job offer, rather than an available opportunity. Those who only received email notifications from their department or in a school bulletin may be less likely to investigate further than if they have the opportunity to discuss it in person with their supervisor. Respondents from Chemistry in particular had incredibly varied answers in terms of how they were notified of vacancies. 50% were notified by email, 30% by contacts / word of mouth, and 20% by their supervisor. This indicates a lack of consistency even within schools about how AT positions are advertised, which could disadvantage students by there not being a fair process.

The transcript from the in-person discussed (Appendix E) includes participant 6's description of how they found out about AT positions available:

*"An email was sent to everyone which said: these are the hours available to AT this semester for PHD students, submit an application detailing what you would want to do and why you are qualified to do it. Half of those hours were taken by a Post Doc after all. So a large block of it was not actually for AT but had already been allocated to a role that a university knew it was employing and knew it was going there."***(PPL student, Graduate Assembly discussion: participant 6)**

This quote indicates that this particular student, and other PhD students in PPL, may have been given misleading information about the opportunities available and that this may have therefore given some students an unfair advantage. Participant 6 then goes on to say:

"...this year I sent an email to [staff member] asking what the teaching structure would be for the next semester so he said ... you can teach introduction to contemporary politics and give you a seminar hour here and there is some more teaching if you would like to have it here or there to which I said I can only do x amount. On top of that I got an email, because I'm teaching module that is organised outside of any possible AT contact because my supervisor ran international politics and ethics, which is a 3rd year module."

This shows that, firstly, the student was teaching a 3rd year module which shouldn't be allowed for ATs. Secondly, there seems to have been no process by which the student's performance was reviewed before they were able to continue teaching, and that they were told of specific opportunities available rather than finding out through a student email. This indicates that PhD students already teaching may have easier access to AT opportunities available, putting them at an advantage over those who have not yet taught.

We are also aware anecdotally that a large amount of teaching is not allocated at the start of the year. This means that teaching opportunities often are last minute and not regulated by the advertising that occurs earlier on. As such, there is no way of measuring the percentage of all AT work and how it has been allocated.

1.2 Application process

Overall statistics showed that 77% said that there was no formal application process:

"I registered my interest and was assigned to a course" **(FTM student, an AT since October 2016, online consultation)**

"An email was sent around asking for students' interest in teaching in the next academic year. I replied saying I was interested. That was it... I was not told that I would be teaching by anyone. I only found out after a 'staff' profile was added to my Evision. I was told to come and sign a contract only a couple of weeks before I was supposed to start teaching. This was not enough time to start preparing for teaching. Organisation in the school around teaching seemed awful." **(AMA Student, an AT since January 2016, online consultation)**

"I responded to an email. There was no formal application, just an informal sit down chat initially. However, after the first 8 month contract, there was no further process. I was just asked if I wanted to teach and given the teaching" **(PSY Student, an AT since October 2014, online consultation)**

"No, I replied to the email, expressing my interest and my fields of expertise, which were not taken into consideration" **(AMA Student, an AT since**

January 2017, online consultation)

"None at all. Supposedly there is now but I know people are given lecturing work and TA work without it being advertised" **(CMP Student, an AT since October 2014, online consultation)**

"No - informal discussion then arrangement of contract" **(DEV student, an AT since October 2014, online consultation)**

"I did not apply. I was approached for coursework by ATA" **(PPL student, Respondent 4, written response in Graduate Assembly)**

"in my department, which is PPL SCS, I am in my 3rd year and I have never been presented with or knew that applications exist." **(PPL student, participant 7, Graduate Assembly consultation).**

The range of schools that students' responses are from indicates that the lack of formal application and selection process is an institutional problem. The range in time which they have been teaching indicates too that this is not a new problem, and that in many cases steps have not been taken to improve the situation.

Of those who answered that there was a formal process, the majority were from LAW, and all said that there was a formal application process and that they were notified of vacancies centrally via their school's PGR service. AMA students, on the other hand, *all* said that there was no formal process in applying or being selected for AT positions.

1.3 Contracts

21% of respondents to the online consultation said that they either didn't receive a contract before starting, or that they received it very close to the start of term. The respondents who said this were from AMA, PSY, CHE, PPL and CMP.

UEA's policy on Postgraduate Research Student employment in teaching at UEA document¹ states:

"Successful applicants should receive a contract stating the working hours; the amount of pay; the timing at which payment will be made; provision for sickness and holiday leave; and the recognised trade union"

This indicates that UEA knows the importance and reasoning for issuing contracts including these factors but the results of all consultation indicates that there is no real consistency in whether contracts are even issued or on what they include.

It is interesting that, out of those who said that they didn't receive contracts, only 40% found out about the position/s through email; the majority got their position through their supervisor or heard about it through word of mouth. This further

¹ Available at

file:///C:/Users/thg15dju/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/9510AKJ4/Policy%20on%20Postgraduate%20Research%20Student%20Employment%20in%20Teaching.pdf

supports the argument that notification by supervisor or word of mouth tends to lead to a more informal application process.

Some comments from the online consultation around contracts included:

"I receive a contract at the start of each school year, so have not been employed since October 2014, but instead have been employed under 3 separate 8 month contracts." **(PSY student)**

"We always get our contracts just before we start (but it is often very late)" **(AMA student, an AT since October 2016)**

Sometimes get a contract before starting work but not always **(DEV student, an AT since September 2012)**

"Variable Hours" - it was quite Laissez-faire" **(CMP/NBS student, an AT since October 2012)**

"I received my TA contract usually a week before or during the first week of semester" **(AMA student, an AT since January 2015)**

"Whilst I feel that temp and zero hour contracts are a bad thing, if they were taken away and the people who lose them are not provided with a better alternative they would be in an even worse situation. For instance, there are rumours that should a more permanent contract be required for ATs, the school would just not employ them and would instead have their roles subsumed by lecturers who would lead seminars instead. This would reduce temporary contracts, but it wouldn't actually better the situation for ATs." **(PSY student, an AT since October 2014)**

"...the hours and activities on one of my field trip TA contracts were not broken down and I didn't feel confident enough to ask for this to be rectified at the time as I was told that that as just the way things were done (the contract stated the rates equivalent to a lecturer's)" **(DEV student, an AT since November 2014)**

"signing a contract for so many hours work beforehand does not work. I was signed up to work a set number of hours and only worked 1 and only got paid 1 hour. If you sign a contract you should work and be paid that many hours." **(CHE student, an AT since October 2015)**

"I think it worked far better back when we had zero hour contracts. It is now very confusing, time consuming and PG students are still having their "fixed hours" cut down last minute so it's had no positive impact at all." **(CHE student, an AT since October 2014)**

"TAs shouldn't be on temporary contracts. If you want decent teaching staff, whom have postgraduate qualifications and potentially industry experience volatile work isn't suitable." **(CMP Student, an AT Since September 2014)**

Because of these findings, particularly comments around zero hour contracts, the focus group explored the more formal element of right and validity to work and the specifications of the contract. Each participant, all from different Faculties, had slightly different contracted hours. All had set hours that they were supposed to keep to, but felt that this did not always happen due to the varying lengths of time taken up by marking.

Participant 3 in particular felt that AT contracts should not be zero hours because of the lack of reliability in the length of time needed for marking. Participant 2, a DEV student, highlighted that her contract is not flexible to allow her to work even slightly flexible hours; if she works even 1 hour over has to go and get a contract adjustment. This is often not a practical approach particularly when the contracted hours are supposed to include marking time.

Uea|su are also aware, through both this consultation and through other staff-based meetings, that right-to-work forms are not always being properly collated, stored and updated when necessary. This means that there is a high risk of some Associate Tutors unknowingly working illegally or without updated checks. If the recruitment and selection process is tightened and centralised this should hopefully ensure that this is avoided.

1.4 Recruitment and selection process recommendations

1. All Associate Tutor positions available must be advertised centrally through the school's mailing system to allow for fair and equal access to opportunities.
2. UEA should develop a centralised application process with minimum standards and guidelines for schools or AT recruitment.
3. UEA must develop a template contract to be used by all schools recruiting Associate Tutors.
4. All Associate Tutors must receive a contract with at least 2 week's notice of their start date.
5. There should be new and clear policy on collation of right-to-work and other documents that are legal requirements to ensure legal and consistent practice.

Theme 2: training and preparation

Many students across all consultation methods said that they received little or no training before starting teaching. Via the online consultation, 21% answered that they had no training and 17% said that they had training after they started / "on the job". This is a slight decrease from UEA's research in 2013 on Associate Tutor experiences based on the 2013 PRES, where 29% answered that they did not receive training², however still indicates that training provision is still not consistent.

Respondents in our online consultation who answered that they did not have any training or were trained on the job are from the following schools:

CMP (21% of students not trained or trained on the job)

BIO (7%)

AMA (7%)

CHE (21%)

DEV (36%)

PPL (7%)

DEV and CMP therefore have the highest proportion of students involved in the consultation who are starting their AT positions with little or no training.

Many students in the online consultation make reference to the PPD and / or CSED courses available. Whilst it is positive for those students for which these are being offered, there is still inconsistency between schools in how or whether these courses are followed up:

"Yes - only a couple of hours through a PPD course. But this did not tell me how to teach. It did not teach me how to mark essays, merely referred me to the senate scale." **(AMA, AT since Jan 2016, online consultation)**

"A training PPD course was offered, indeed it is generally mandatory for teaching in my school, but as I was deemed to have sufficient HE teaching experience I was not required to attend". **(AMA, AT since September 2015, online consultation)**

"no "formal" per say - difficult to get on DTS course. But I have considerable industry experience as a tutor, so a lot of transferable experience and skill" **(CMP, AT since September 2012, online consultation)**

"I completed the initial modules for the teacher training CSED scheme - available at the time free to those students who had AT contracts. I had not had training for my supervisory work with MAs but had lots of support from peers. I had completed the CSED training before I led seminars and found I needed to draw on many of the sessions in my actual teaching" **(PPL, AT since June 2014, online consultation)**

² Please see

<file:///C:/Users/thg15dju/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/9510AKJ4/LTC%20M arch%202015%20-%20Research%20Students%20who%20undertake%20teaching.pdf> for full data

Participant 3 of the focus group stated that she didn't know about the existence of CSED. Had to get a PPD credit for CHEM and BIO- very much focused on the practical side.

Had absolutely no idea about marking- after talking to her supervisor she was given a 'tick sheet' (CHE, AT since September 2016, focus group).

"We had a one hour non mandatory PPD which was utterly useless." (CMP, AT since September 2014, Online consultation)

"I do not think UEA has provided adequate training of support for teaching. I think the minimal/zero time paid for preparation has left me felt unprepared unless I work for free to prepare my teaching." (DEV, AT since October 2010, Respondent 6, written response in Graduate Assembly)

One of the aspects of training to consider is the type of training that is being offered by UEA. Several students in the online consultation said that they were not required to attend training because of previous teaching experience. Although this does make them trained to a higher level than those who have never taught before, excusing such students from training could create a lack of consistency in both teaching and marking. The CSED and PPD training is currently not mandatory centrally, meaning that some schools' students are more thoroughly trained than others. The comments infer that some students have not found them useful when they have taken them, perhaps because of them not being mandatory and so not being reviewed regularly.

Feedback from the in-person consultation (Appendix D) illustrates that there is inconsistencies even within schools. Participant 6 stated

"When I initially came to UEA to do the PHD 1st years initially weren't allowed to teach within PPL because you have to have taken the 'preparing to teach PPD', that was the requirement for any teacher within PPL" (Respondent 6, written response in Graduate Assembly)

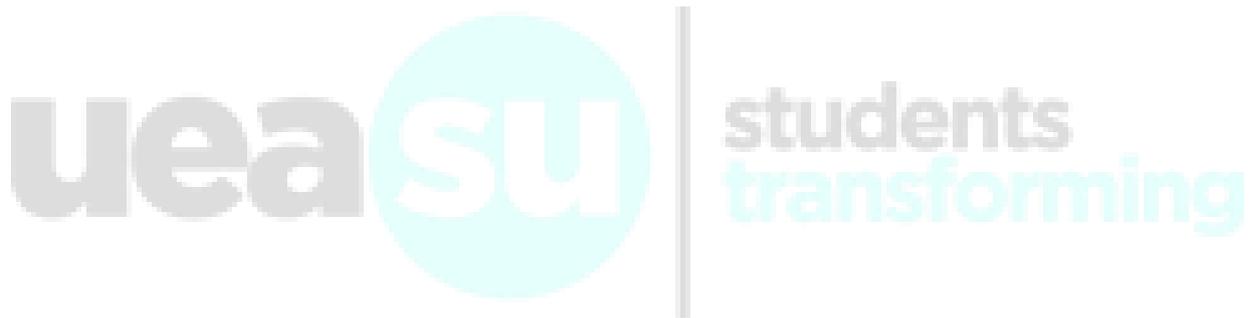
However, PPL is one of the schools where some students said that they did not receive any training (see statistics on previous page). This juxtaposition indicates that either PGR students within PPL are not being trained consistently or offered the same training opportunities, or that the training isn't formalised enough for students to recognise it as training.

A recommendation on the training provisions would be to ensure that the CSED training and PPD training are reviewed, updated where necessary and made mandatory for Associate Tutors before they start teaching. Although promoted through schools individually, training should be coordinated and held centrally for allowing the sharing of best practice and a consistent introduction to teaching at UEA.

Where there are schools with more specific teaching requirements (such as science subject where teaching may be lab-based), more focussed training sessions should also be offered.

Recommendations: training and preparation

1. UEA must ensure that there is a centralised training provision for all Associate Tutors which is mandatory for any new ATs.
2. Schools should consider providing specialised training based on the needs of their Associate Tutors (eg. Lab-based teaching as opposed to classroom).
3. ATs with 1 or more years' experience should have the opportunity to help train and support those in their school



Theme 3: Recognition and Support

Through discussions surrounding the terms of AT's contracts and lack of consistency in these terms, themes emerged around the structures available to support associate tutors.

3.1 Time / pay recognition

One element of recognition is in terms of the recognition given around pay and hours. This was explored more in qualitative feedback, however question 7 of the online consultation provides some figures on whether ATs receive extra payment for marking.

Of those who answered that they **do** receive payment recognition for additional marking, only **3%** had not received a contract.

Of those who answered that they **do not** receive payment recognition for additional marking, **13%** had not received contracts.

Schools with respondents saying that they do not receive payment recognition are:

AMA (32%)

BIO (5%)

PSY (5%)

CHE (18%)

DEV (32%)

LAW (9%)

CMP (5%)

This indicates that there may be a correlation between monitoring and being paid for extra hours worked and having a formalised contract. Although this may not be surprising, it does indicate how one factor can affect another and that, if the contracts process was more consistent, students may also be more likely to be paid more consistently. All Associate Tutor contracts should make reference to working hours and whether these include time for marking and lesson preparation.

Comments around payment recognition are as follows:

"The unspoken rule is that you don't claim for time spent preparing for demonstrating, only for the time in the classroom. Not only does this mean you effectively don't get the advertised rate of pay, but it also makes it very hard for new demonstrators to judge how much time they need / should spend preparing. When the position is advertised a guideline amount of prep hours should also be stated." (ENV student, AT since October 2015, online consultation)

"The pay scheme, signing a contract for so many hours work beforehand does not work. I was signed up to work a set number of hours and only worked 1 and only got paid 1 hour. If you sign a contract you should work and be paid that many hours." (CHE student, AT since October 2015, online consultation)

"I know myself and other ATs have felt undervalued for some time. Our pay does not accurately reflect the hours that we work and we feel like our job has little

security. For example, we did not find out if we had any teaching in the spring semester until the final week of term before Christmas which makes it hard to plan ahead and manage our finances.” (AMA student, AT since October 2016, online consultation)

“...I am also frustrated that an AT teaching 10 students in a seminar with 1 summative assessment receives the same pay for marking as an AT with 18 students with 2 summative assessments, when the latter is going to do nearly twice the amount of marking.” (AMA student, AT since September 2014, online consultation)

Participant 1 has set hours and that doesn't include enough time for marking. (AMA student, focus group consultation)

Participant 3 is concerned about prep pay- not enough enforcement of people not doing the prep considering the hourly rate sort of covers this - more structure needed. Participant 3 always gets paid a set amount no matter whether she finishes early or late - a fair arrangement as it averages out but not always consistent. (CHE student, focus group consultation)

From the comments above, the main reoccurring theme around pay recognition is discrepancy in monitoring hours of work and ensuring that pay reflects these. For those on set contracts, it seems that the hours set are often not enough to include preparation and marking times, thus meaning that often ATs are doing work that they are not technically being paid for. For those on zero hour contracts, there is lack of clarity on how much time they should be spending on preparation and marking given that it is not built into their contracts. Whilst it is not necessarily practical to have a one-size-fits-all approach to contracts, given that different schools may have different requirements, UEA should consider developing different template guideline contracts for schools. There should also be detailed information on the rates of pay and tier system available to Associate Tutors to explain where any justified differences occur.

Another issue with pay which was highlighted in the discussion at Graduate Student Committee (appendix E) is that of incorrect and informal processing of payments. Participant 6 from this discussion said:

“... within PPL generally if someone can't do a seminar they will contact someone and say 'can you do those hours for me?' and then you pay them cash in hand for their time, so at the rate they are usually paid[...]. Other people at the university who I won't name have said, right, I can't make this day; [NAME], you are on an AT contract, will you come in and teach that seminar for me? And I say, oh, that'll be £30 because I have to make it all the way in ... and that's generally how cover work works as a whole within PPL.” (Graduate Assembly Discussion, participant 6, PPL student)

This student is making the point that cover for lessons and resulting payment has been done ad-hoc and in cash and that it is becoming somewhat of a culture in PPL. This indicates that, even if there is policy on payment for ATs, it is not easily accessible and not always being followed by career or AT staff.

3.2 Staff support

Support available for Associate Tutors is a theme which arose as a result of students' feedback that they do not feel part of the community of staff within schools as an AT:

"TAs are indispensable contributors to the workings of HE but have a lower ranking in the hierarchy of staff hierarchy." **(AMA student, AT since January 2015, online consultation)**

"[Recommendations include] trying to create a more cooperative, collaborative and supportive environment for ATs, starting with a shared teaching resource bank. Improving communication channels with convener, in a wider effort to incorporate PGR into the staff affairs" **(DEV student, AT since January 2012, online consultation)**

"I have never once received any constructive feedback (more than 'great thanks guys') on my work as an associate tutor, from the staff" **(ENV student, AT since October 2015, online consultation)**

Focus group participant 2: DEV student. *Stated that they had to actively seek out feedback rather than there being a structured process. Also had no idea on who to contact if they were ill and couldn't teach*

"Generally treat AT's with more respect and integrate into staff. Help foster collaborative whole of team teaching/ reflection and support" **(DEV student, written response in Graduate Assembly)**

Focus group participant 3: CHE student *said that she did not feel valued by staff; they 'ensure you feel well below them'*

These comments, taken from all consultation methods, indicate that many AT students would appreciate more respect from and inclusion in the teaching community within their schools. Uea|su knows, from work on the Honest Project in 2015/16³, Postgraduate Research Students both at UEA and nationally are vulnerable to feelings of isolation and loneliness – 45% of respondents to the Honesty Project said that they have suffered with isolation. Although there is work to be done around fostering a community of students among PGR students, the comments above indicate that being part of a staff community may also be beneficial for ATs' wellbeing.

There were also comments made in the consultation around a lack of clear supervisory structure:

"Well there does seem to be two circles of teaching that go on right. The teaching that is applied for with applications or whatever or is knowingly given out to the body and people who organise it with their supervisors" **(PPL student, participant 6: verbal consultation in Graduate Assembly)**

³ Please see <https://www.uea.su/pageassets/postgraduate/thehonestyproject/Honesty-Project-Report.pdf> for the full report

"PGRs sometimes feeling obliged to do teaching when asked by supervisors"
(DEV student, AT since January 2012, online consultation)

"I contact (sic.) my supervisor and he invited me to help him" **(PPL student, online consultation)**

This indicates that, as previously mentioned, some students are recruited to AT positions through their supervisors thus meaning that the supervisors are going to be able to take much more of an active hand in supporting them. Those who did not go through their supervisor to become an AT may therefore not get the same level of support. While a formal application process should exist, all supervisors should be notified if their supervisee is teaching so as to be able to actively support them.

The last of the 3 comments above indicates that PhD students may be asked to support their supervisors, which raises the point of schools being under extreme pressure to deliver UG courses. With the planned increase in student numbers, there is a real risk of further pressure being put on PhD students to teach if schools do not have the resources to allow for an increase in taught student numbers. If ATs are not properly or appropriately supported through this there could be impacts on their own mental health and wellbeing as well as a potential detriment to the UG student experience.

There was also a discussion in the verbal consultation in the focus group and Graduate Assembly around observation of their teaching:

In the focus group, Participant 2 (CHE) stated that they would like to be peer observed but that this has never been an option. Participant 1 (AMA) had been observed by the module convenor and found it helpful. Participant 3 (DEV) would like to be peer observed but currently hasn't been. This not only shows a variety of practice but also indicates that observation, whether peer or by staff, is generally seen in a positive light.

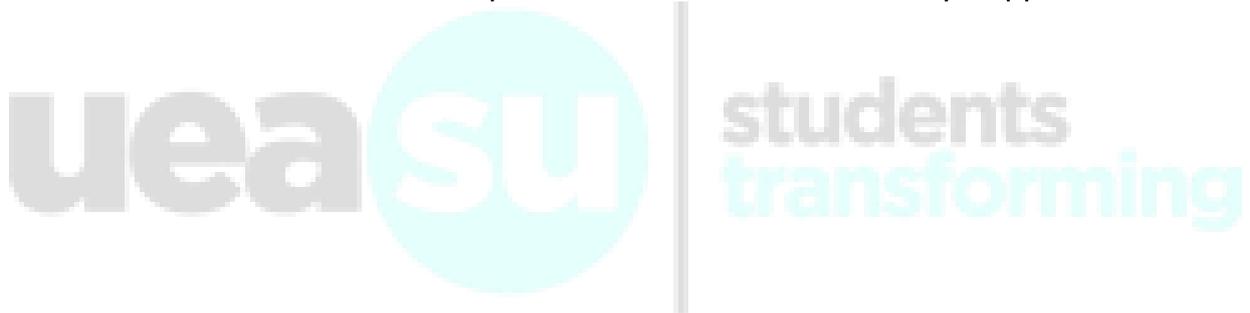
Observation was also discussed in the Graduate Assembly. Participant 6 stated: "In my three years of teaching I have never been observed teaching." According to UEA's guidance, where students teach 25% or more of module content they should be observed by staff. Given that participant 6 also states that, at one point, they taught half of the seminars on a module this indicates that this rule is not being adhered to.

3.3 Other support

According to UEA's guidance document for Associate Tutors, all PhD students who teach should be made aware of their right to join a Union. From the discussions in both the focus group and the Graduate Assembly we can see that this isn't the case: none of the participants in the focus group from CHE, AMA and DEV had been introduced to this right. Anecdotally, uea|su is aware that UCU are really keen for higher levels of AT involvement but many PGR students simply are not made aware.

3.4 Recommendations: Recommendations and Support

1. All Associate Tutor contracts must state the expectation of time to be spent on preparation and marking and include this within the contract's hours.
2. Schools must make clear the process for ATs to follow if they are unable to cover their allocated teaching time and include this within AT's contracts.
3. Schools should have a structured induction period after AT recruitment which should also allow for integration into the staff community within the school or course area.
4. All ATs supervisors must be made formally aware of their teaching role and responsibilities so as to best support them.
5. UEA must conduct an investigation into schools with a particularly heavy reliance on ATs to establish needs, with particular reference to the planned increase in UG student numbers.
6. A formalised system for observation whereby ATs must be observed at least once a semester and provided with an evaluation should be developed. This should also include mandatory meetings with the module organiser.
7. UEA should develop a stronger link with UCU and facilitate the appointment of Associate Tutor UCU reps for each school. This already happens in LDC.



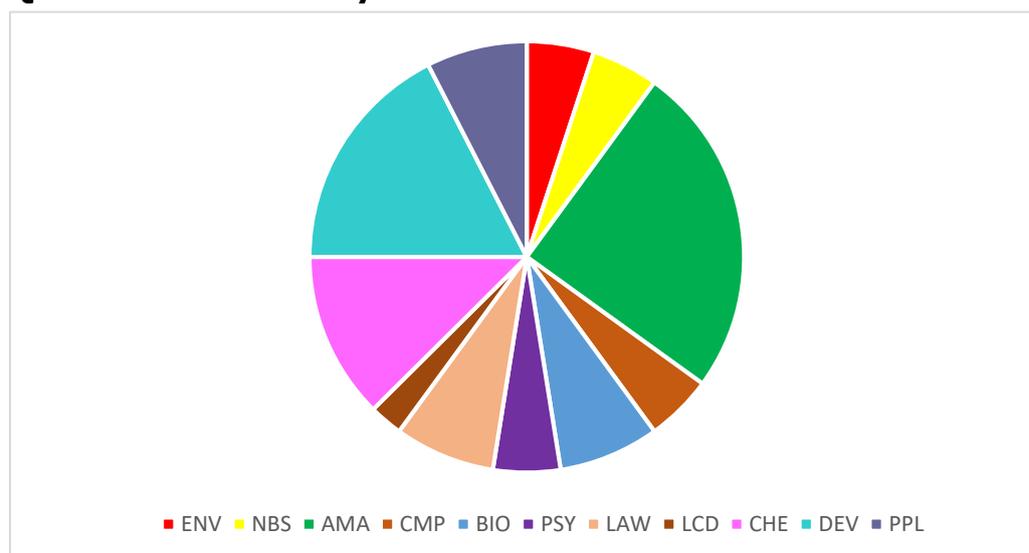
All recommendations

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- 2.** UEA should develop a centralised application process with minimum standards and guidelines for schools or AT recruitment.
- 3.** UEA must develop a template contract to be used by all schools recruiting Associate Tutors.
- 4.** All Associate Tutors must receive a contract with at least 2 week's notice of their start date.
- 5.** There should be new and clear policy on collation of right-to-work and other documents that are legal requirements to ensure legal and consistent practice.
- 6.** UEA must ensure that there is a centralised training provision for all Associate Tutors which is mandatory for any new ATs.
- 7.** Schools should consider providing specialised training based on the needs of their Associate Tutors (eg. Lab-based teaching as opposed to classroom).
- 8.** ATs with 1 or more years' experience should have the opportunity to help train and support those in their school.
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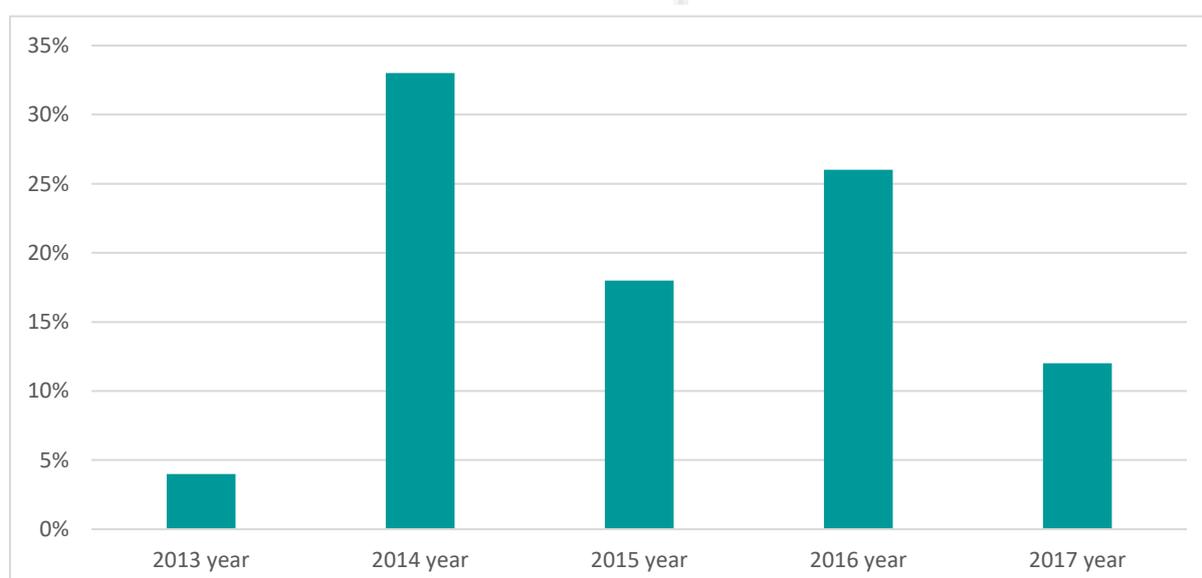
Appendix A: online consultation results

For a period of 7 weeks (from 25th January 2017 – 16th March 2017) an online consultation took place to gather a wider pool of experiences and opinions on PhD students at UEA who have Associate Tutors positions. The questions were devised based on the key issues that had arisen at the initial conversation at the Postgraduate Students' Assembly. This appendix outlines the full results of all questions.

Q1. What school are you based in?



Q2. When did you start working as an AT?

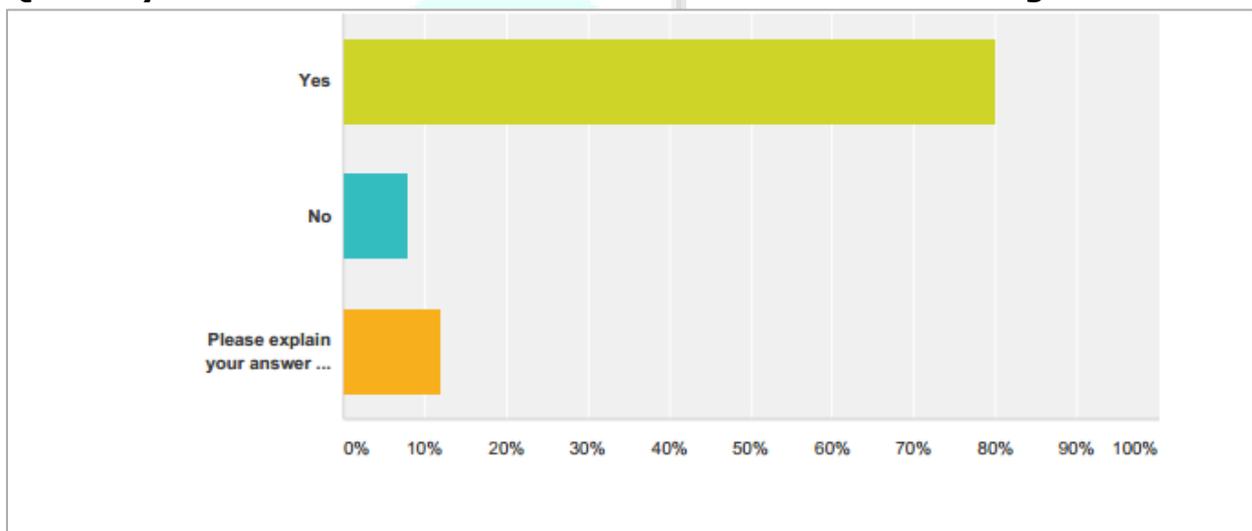


Q3. What type of teaching are you involved in?

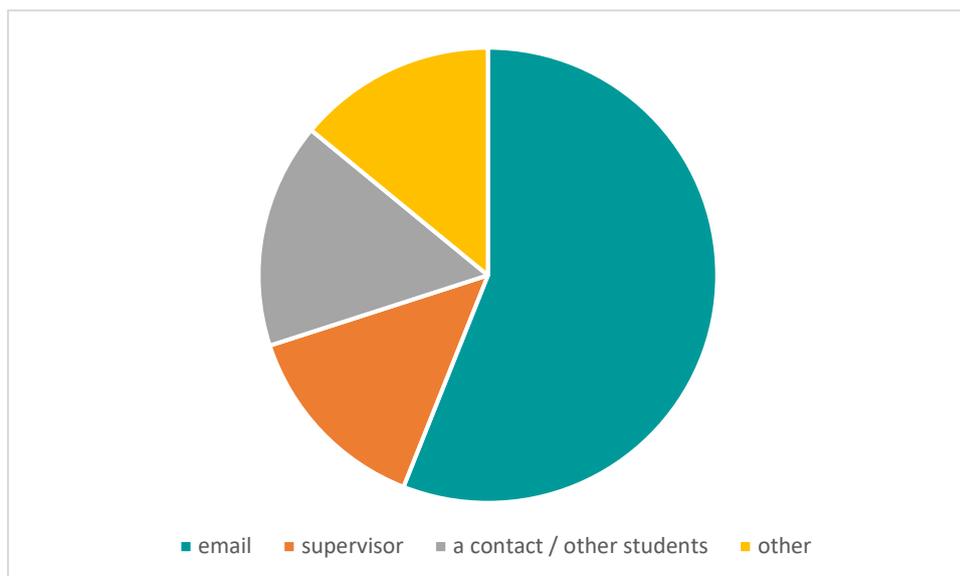
NB: students could choose as many answers as applied



Q4. Did you receive a contract before or at the time of starting as an AT?



Q5. How did you find out about the vacancy?

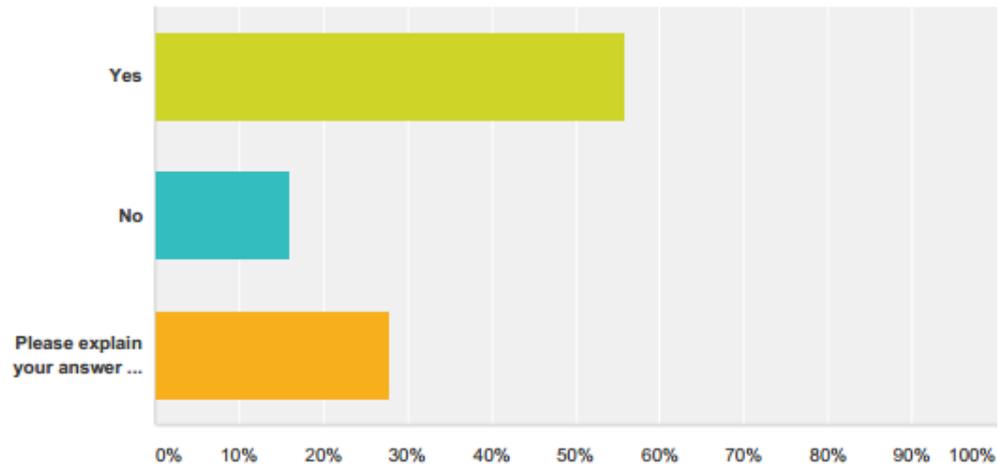


Q6. How did you apply for the position? Was there a formal process?

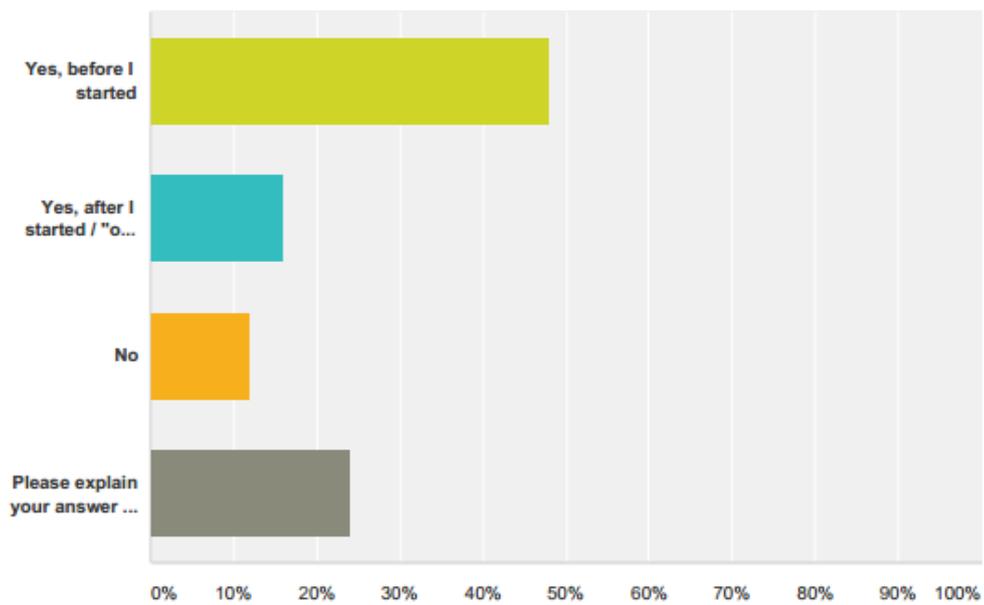
Completed application form, no formal process. Have to repeat each year. But no formal process as opportunities for all env PGRs to demonstrate
They say 'can anyone do this' and they first replies they get are in. Originally no. Lately they've gotten a bit better - you're now (sometimes) asked to submit detail of relevant experience - so presumably they're now comparing this with other people's to see who's the best fit ..
Yes, via in-school PGR system to get AT work
An expression of interest - sometimes for a pool undisclosed courses, sometimes being asked to illustrate interest in specific courses and ones relevant experience.
An email was sent around asking for students' interest in teaching in the next academic year. I replied saying I was interested. That was it. I dislike the informal application process and the lack of contact from the university. I did not even get an acknowledgement of my email. I was not told that I would be teaching by anyone. I only found out after a 'staff' profile was added to my Evision. I was told to come and sign a contract only a couple of weeks before I was supposed to start teaching. This was not enough time to start preparing for teaching. Organisation in the school around teaching seemed awful.
No formal application
I responded to the call for interest email. There was no formal application process that I am aware of.
Sent an email to the PI looking for demonstrators, there was no formal process
I just replied to express my interest in teaching seminars. There was no formal application process.
I emailed a lecturer on the recommendation of a friend
I responded to an email. There was no formal application, just an informal sit down chat initially. However, after the first 8 month contract, there was no further process. I was just asked if I wanted to teach and given the teaching.
no
No
There was a formal application process
I responded with an expression of interest to the original email.
No, I replied to the email, expressing my interest and my fields of expertise, which were not taken into consideration

Formal application and interview
I submitted an expression of interest outlining my teaching experience, alongside an expression of approval from my supervisor
Mentioned interest. No formal application
no
Responded to the email signifying my availability
Yes
By email
Form application - no formal process.
In person/by email. No formal process, but there is a PPD course requirement prior to demonstrating in CHE/PHA
Had an informal meeting with the course coordinator. no formal application
No application process, just setting up contract.
I had to send previous experience.
Yes, there is now a formal application procedure. You email the module convenor and send them a short application form, and he/she is then responsible for the selection process.
both informal and formal application
No formal process - it was word of mouth. I have given this seminar every year since then (the process has since been formalized and made more transparent)
informal application only
In the last two years through a formal application process, earlier than that I was granted the position by the convener without applying.
No formal application process
N/A
I contact my supervisor and he invited me to help him
No - informal discussion then arrangement of contract
Sent CV
Through formal application process
No. But in Dev recruitment is increasingly formalised
No formality other than form filling.
Yes.
We had to send an email outlining our research interests and teaching training and /or experience. No interview or anything formal.
I applied to the teaching director providing the required information re info on my qualifications, skills, and experience and my supervisor sign off to teach.
I emailed my interest in teaching with a bit about my background and previous experience
No - just contacted relevant PI
I had already done the job previously.
None at all. Supposedly there is now but I know people are given lecturing work and TA work without it being advertised
Replied to the email saying I was interested, as I knew the lecturer previously.
I registered my interest and was assigned to a course

Q7. Do you receive additional pay or time recognition for marking?



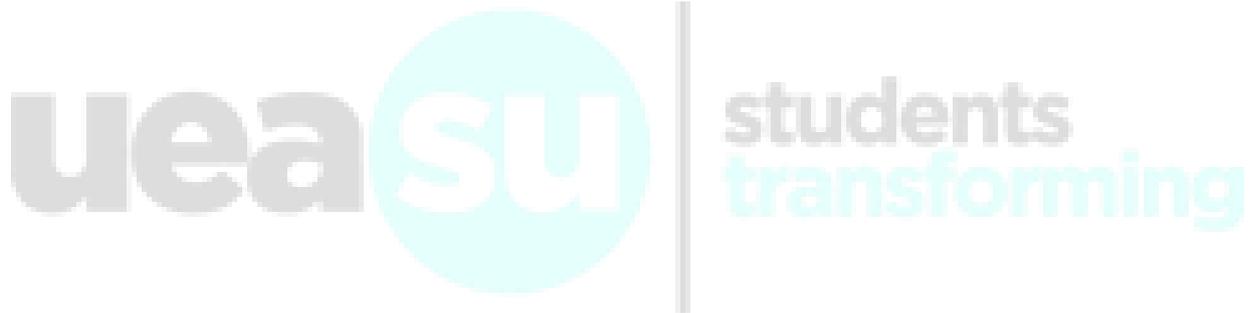
Q8. Have you received training for your teaching position?



9. If 'yes', what type of training did you receive? If 'no', what training do you feel you should have received?

<p>PPD course on how to demonstrate</p> <p>Training was a short PPD course. On one module I have been asked to meet with the module teaching staff beforehand for a chat about what the expectations of the module are and any specific things the module organiser would like us to focus on. This is very helpful and should be common practice.</p> <p>CSED developing teaching skills course during first year of PhD</p> <p>We were required to do a 'learning to teach' course prior to taking teaching, we have lesson observations and feedback regularly, i'm about to start teaching fellowship training.</p> <p>There was a 'Learning to Teach' module. However I felt that I did not learn to teach in these few hours of PPD sessions. No advice was given on how to mark essays.</p> <p>We had a one hour non mandatory PPD which was utterly useless.</p> <p>I undertook some basic teaching training before starting, and then a development course for HEA accreditation after a year.</p> <p>I don't feel training was required</p> <p>I just explained above</p> <p>The standard PhD demonstrating course</p> <p>Crash course in teaching session provided by the UEA for all first time teachers. A PPD session on teaching in the social sciences. Both of these were prior to teaching. Then whilst teaching I completed the CSED teaching course.</p> <p>no formal training, but frequent meetings with module leader</p> <p>Teaching PPD and a CSED course</p> <p>I attended CSED programme during the winter semester.</p> <p>I had a PGCE in Further Education, and had undergone a training weekend.</p> <p>It's mandatory to have taken the "Learning how to teach' PPD session to be considered for teaching</p> <p>preparing to teach / my own personal degree studies previously</p> <p>as above</p> <p>1 seminar based training,</p> <p>1 lab based training</p> <p>no</p> <p>Sessions before the lab classes started detailing what kinds of problems we were likely to encounter etc.</p> <p>Maintaining Safety , what to do before during and after the session</p> <p>PPD demonstrating session and showed us around the lab</p> <p>Briefly explained what to expect and how to help the students.</p> <p>We were expected to know what to do, no real explanation of the procedures etc.</p> <p>PPD course</p> <p>Attended the required demonstrator training PPD course before I started and then learnt on the job</p> <p>More training for marking.</p> <p>Undergraduate lab demonstrator PPD sessions</p> <p>CSED teaching course</p> <p>teaching skills</p> <p>CSED DTS training</p> <p>NA</p> <p>Development Teaching Skills course.</p> <p>Developing Teaching Skills Course</p> <p>I don't feel like a needed training. If I have any questions / concerns, my colleagues are very approachable.</p> <p>DTS CSED training</p> <p>I did the teaching skills course, but that is it.</p> <p>UEA Teaching Certification</p>

Undertook the teaching skills course
CSED Course. Was already a qualified language teacher.
...
DTS
See previous
There was additional training available via CASES which I took. This was actually a module which ran over a semester and involved coursework. This was far more valuable than the PPD sessions.
See above - before starting my seminar work I had completed the CSED modules on teaching - they were super useful and many aspects of the course came into play during my teaching
I don't think it was necessary for me to receive more training due to my experience - see above
We had a demonstrator training course in advance - was quite useful but more about practicalities/safety etc.
No training on actually how to teach
I've done the job before and have a teaching degree
Introduction to what is expected
An explanation of what the purpose of the role was. A look into how marking is conducted. For the most part, common sense things and sharing my own experiences of teaching so far.
5 weeks of preparing to teach plus a marking workshop



10. Please leave any other comments about your experience as an AT.

My concern is that the changes being made to protect people reliant on teaching (ie specific contracts, set hours, specific modules etc) are negatively impacting on PGRs too. I demonstrate as a primary part of my development as an academic in training. Often demonstrators are needed at short notice and it is unrealistic to know exactly what is needed or my availability. It used to be very flexible but now if I'm asked to demonstrate that day (entirely my choice) I have to race to administration, get a change of contract before I can agree. Being a demonstrator is not a job, it's part of my PhD, with the money and appreciated bonus. Please don't make changes that might make it harder for me to do something I love and value as that is what had happened over last couple of years.

I have never once received any constructive feedback (more than 'great thanks guys') on my work as an associate tutor, from the staff of students. It would be very useful, and is somewhat essential for becoming better at the job .. would be good if this was standard practice (a quick 'review' chat after the module is done?).

The unspoken rule is that you don't claim for time spent preparing for demonstrating, only for the time in the classroom. Not only does this mean you effectively don't get the advertised rate of pay, but it also makes it very hard for new demonstrators to judge how much time they need / should spend preparing. When the position is advertised a guideline amount of prep hours should also be stated. If module organisers are not willing to pay for prep time (and thus expect no prep to be done?) this should be explicitly stated.

Other than that, it's heaps of fun and really valuable :)

course lead was very helpful and friendly

I'm unhappy that our contracted hours for tutorials, despite being described as tutorials on the contract, are paid at the rate for screening supervision, not the tutorial rate. Marking criteria are not available for many assignment types.

The experience itself however has been not only really useful, but one of the most enjoyable elements of my phd experience.

If preparation for seminars is an obligatory part of the job then associate tutors should be paid for this. Teaching work is largely exploitative, demanding a lot of hours of labour that are unpaid. Only the time spent in seminars and office hours is paid but the many hours spent preparing for those is not paid.

I did not know who my 'boss' was. The module leader I was taught on was not my employer, so if I had any problems, or questions, then I had, and still have no idea who to contact about my employment.

I was told by the module leader that I had to purchase the text books I was supposed to teach from myself. These cost over £60. Tutors should not have to buy the materials to teach from themselves.

I was also asked to teach from a text book - I thought it was supposed to be about research led teaching at universities but instead it felt more like an A-Level module. I was embarrassed to be teaching like that.

I had zero contact from the university about my teaching. In the 8 months between sending the email expressing my interest I heard nothing about if I was going to be teaching or not. I felt invisible as an employee, not respected as an integral part of the university, and exploited when I was working.

Overall my experience of teaching was wholly negative.

Overworked, underpaid and frustrated by the limited amount of hours I'm allowed to TA. TAs shouldn't be on temporary contracts. If you want decent teaching staff, whom have postgraduate qualifications and potentially industry experience volatile work isn't suitable.

My main issue as a TA is that being paid hourly doesn't at all reflect the actual work schedule or the hours involved. I work far beyond the weekly hours specified on my contract - some of this is preparation, which I appreciate is covered in the hourly rate of the seminar - but in responding to student emails, offering pastoral support (which I have had no training in), marking work, offering feedback, and meeting with colleagues in advance of teaching, all mean I work far beyond the hours I am paid. My students do not understand that I am paid by the hour, so that when I offer extra tutorials beyond my paid office hours, or spend an hour replying to emails in addition to my office hours, I am

working for free. I am happy to do this, but I am frustrated by how little the terms of my contract actually reflect my work experience. I am also frustrated that an AT teaching 10 students in a seminar with 1 summative assessment receives the same pay for marking as an AT with 18 students with 2 summative assessments, when the latter is going to do nearly twice the amount of marking.

Overall it has been a very rewarding and enjoyable experience

Training is definitely needed! Especially for marking. Even observing some of the seminars would be a great way to understand what we need to do.

It was okay once I got in but it was really hard to get in touch with lecturers especially if you don't know who is in charge of practicals/modules etc.

As a self-funded PhD student, it is always a precarious situation to only be on a temporary 8 month contract. Because there is no security that I will be asked to come back the following year to teach. This is difficult because the pay for teaching is very good and it allows me the freedom to work on my PhD whilst also be relevant to my career progression and it is only a commitment of a few hours for quite a good pay.

But at times I feel I would be more secure getting a lower paid job, for more hours, on a fixed term or permanent basis - because at least then there would be security.

There is an element of not wanting to rock the boat. Because whilst I feel that temp and zero hour contracts are a bad thing, if they were taken away and the people who lose them are not provided with a better alternative they would be in an even worse situation. For instance, there are rumours that should a more permanent contract be required for ATs, the school would just not employ them and would instead have their roles subsumed by lecturers who would lead seminars instead. This would reduce temporary contracts, but it wouldn't actually better the situation for ATs.

The head of my school in particular is very research focussed and doesn't have much of an appreciation for the role of ATs or the quality of teaching. It makes ATs feel under appreciated and also it makes me feel that the career progression I am taking is seen as irrelevant by my school. For instance there is many post doc opportunities for PhD students who want to continue research, but no role for quality teachers who want to continue teaching after their PhD (other than a temp AT contract - which I think you'll agree is no where near as good for career progression as a post doc).

Please do not identify me as a self-funded PhD student from the school of psychology anywhere as I am the only self-funded student in the school!

I know myself and other ATs have felt undervalued for some time. Our pay does not accurately reflect the hours that we work and we feel like our job has little security. For example, we did not find out if we had any teaching in the spring semester until the final week of term before Christmas which makes it hard to plan ahead and manage our finances.

Great experience that deserves the pain. However, it may be a bit time consuming sometimes and it may distract your attention from PhD research.

Not a great experience with the admin - and judging from my fellow PGs, I'm not alone in this. There seems to be a very casual attitude to paperwork, communication and the actual process of deciding who will be an AT. Underimpressed to say the least.

Although the school asks you to specify your research interest and areas of expertise, the teaching positions seem randomly allocated. I also explained that, due to other commitments, I could only teach during the Spring term but was offered teaching in the Autumn term anyway. I feel nobody stops to read our emails and just allocate teaching randomly.

I think many others need further experience prior to beginning teaching (observation hours or something similar). However, I myself feel incredibly prepared and confident, and I am loving teaching.

My experience has generally been positive, with course convenors offering support when required. My only criticism would be that the amount of preparation required for leading seminars in courses which you have not convened can be lengthy and is not always adequately considered in payment.

The whole 'amendment to contract' is confusing. It is almost impossible to know how many hours we are going to do at the start of the year as TA opportunities arise throughout the year.

The pay scheme, signing a contract for so many hours work beforehand does not work. I was signed up to work a set number of hours and only worked 1 and only got paid 1 hour. If you sign a contract you should work and be paid that many hours.

Good experience, good rapport with staff and students. Teaching experience.

The recent changes to the contract, where hours are declared prior to starting, was difficult to sort out so soon before the first semester started this academic year. It was (and still is) unclear how strict this was and is confusing in terms of swapping hours with other demonstrators (in case of absence/sickness etc).

Has been very varied depending on who is organising it/which module.

I think it worked far better back when we had zero hour contracts. It is now very confusing, time consuming and PG students are still having their "fixed hours" cut down last minute so it's had no positive impact at all.

Due to administrative bureaucracy, my contract for the spring term is never sorted out in time; therefore I don't have a payment in January.

I had to be proactive about getting student feedback on my seminar teaching. This could be more actively encouraged by course convenors to make sure we are meeting expectations and if not, why not. I often have trouble targeting my classes to the right level because I did not do a masters in the UK, and sometimes it's unclear what expectations are. Also the hours and activities on one of my field trip TA contracts were not broken down and I didn't feel confident enough to ask for this to be rectified at the time as I was told that that was just the way things were done (the contract stated the rates equivalent to a lecturer's). I subsequently ended up working way over the hours I should have worked. This problem has since been addressed and solved in DEV as staff have listened to our request for our hours and rates to be fully broken down.

payment has been very slow

As rep for my School I have gathered the impressions and opinions of my fellow colleagues in the meetings we have discussed these issues.

Here is a list of issues with TAs:

- Lack of clarity about the AT's terms of reference
- Lack of support for AT's
- Lack of consistent, coordinated approach to the hiring and treatment of ATs
- Concerns about AT remuneration

v > ATs doing unpaid admin and other work (e.g. replying to students' emails, meeting students). Apparently some ATs are paid for this, in DEV and other departments, and some aren't, suggesting an inconsistency

v > ATs often unpaid for teaching preparation time (including background reading on new topics/papers to teach)

- Lack of clarity about teaching opportunities and benefits of teaching
- Administration issues...it takes a long time to get contracts sorted
- PGRs sometimes feeling obliged to do teaching when asked by supervisors
- Unclear how ATs get evaluated: No systematic approach to evaluation of ATs and feedback on their teaching
- The criteria and process for awarding for teaching awards (what are they?) is currently oblique

And next I add a list of suggestions to improve the situation:

- Drawing up checklists with the terms of reference for every module, to be discussed with the module convenors at the beginning of the employment

ü > These documents should detail the activities to be carried out by the AT for the module, as well as the estimated hours and remuneration for each of them

- Requesting having some sort of spokesperson from the School to discuss issues related to AT work, who together with the checklists ensures that AT receive the same treatment
- Trying to create a more cooperative, collaborative and supportive environment for ATs, starting with a shared teaching resource bank.
- Improving communication channels with convener, in a wider effort to incorporate PGR into the staff affairs
- Streamlining the processing of AT contracts
- Enforcing the AT hiring system and giving it more visibility

- Mentoring teaching system for those without teaching experience
- Supporting campaign to make the University abide by the Postgraduate Employment Charter

It was fantastic to be able to teach and have a practical experience. I am very grateful to have this opportunity

I like the flexibility of the contacts but found that they never include enough time for what is required of the position. As a PGR desperate for work you often take what ever you can get and then later realise that it involves much more work than what you're paid to do. At the end of 2 years doing contact work I also realise that I have no employee rights.

Prep time not always compensated; not enough teaching opportunities. Affects looking for work after graduating as I don't have enough teaching experience.... especially ongoing teaching like lecturing and course design.

It has been a very positive experience

I generally feel unsupervised. My teaching is seldom monitored or evaluated. I work so many hours that I don't make minimum wage. It is impossible to find time to publish and progress in my career. father was recently diagnosed with cancer. I can't afford to take a day off.

Too much to put in here. I do fail to see where this survey is aiming at though...

I also teach in PPL, and have noticed that the systems are different.

Being a TA has not been easy. Aside from the tough working hours and low pay, it is difficult to even get a hold of a teaching position in my department. As such, there is an underlying sentiment that PhD students should be grateful for what they are given, if they are given anything at all, regardless of the subject matter or workload. I have spoken to students in other schools and there seems to be much more teaching available and it is often allocated with regards to students' areas of interest. To add to this, there seem to be no discernible patterns to teaching allocation. Sometimes we're told that teaching is so very scarce, but then certain students end up getting three seminars while others get none. Other times it seems as if names are randomly pulled out of a hat. Sometimes we are told that research interests might be considered but this depends entirely on which lecturer is dealing with teaching allocations at a given time. As a PhD student I have felt entirely powerless as there is a sense that we are not allowed to express concerns because we should be grateful for the privilege. Teaching positions are characterised as scarce and elusive. I realize there are structural inequalities that contribute to PhD students' roles in HE and that there is a general scarcity of jobs. However, it is difficult to maintain motivation when it is such a struggle to even obtain one teaching job in a whole year. That these jobs are considered integral to the academic career trajectory makes it even more disheartening. TAs are indispensable contributors to the workings of HE but have a lower ranking in the hierarchy of staff hierarchy. While I definitely needed the teaching experiences, they have been taxing in ways which are physical, emotional and financial. This adds to the growing list of burdens faced by PhD students in general. If there were more support and more understanding towards PhD students looking to be TAs, the overall experience could be made more inclusive and positive.

The welcome system of annual applications for AT positions no longer exists in PPL. This has created inequalities in access to teaching opportunities. It undermines student confidence and creates an opaque system based on personal relations with relevant staff. I am very disappointed with this.

I wasn't paid on time for my first pay this academic year as there was some delay in getting the contract to payroll despite the fact that I had signed the contract well in advance of the due date. I had to wait over a week for it.

New contracts very annoying - doesn't seem 'fair' we have to fill out our own timesheets/track down faculty to sign them - I think this should be their responsibility

Sometimes paid at the lower demonstrating rate for seminar work.

I've found it extremely positive.

It's a joke. Our director of learning has changed and he is offering work to his favourites. It was supposed to be more transparent this year but it is even less so. It is very unfair.

Appendix B: focus group outline

10.30-10.40: Introductions and explanation of focus group / context

10.40-11.15: Theme 1 - Recruitment and selection

- 10.40-10.45: how did they end up being an AT?
Quick verbal update: Did they start work BEFORE getting a contract set up/proof of right to work given to the University? Who knows what hours they are doing? Are they monitored? / how did they hear about the position / was it advertised
- 10.45-11.00: selection
Verbal: How were they selected? Was there any 'vetting'; any requirements beforehand? Would a standardised process help?
- 11.00-11.15: how should the recruitment process be?
Written (flip chart): Things to consider – timing; length of application process; type of application; interviews; key staff contact

11.15-11.45: Theme 2 - training and preparation

- 11.15-11.20: establishing what training they already get
going over results from survey, seeing if any correlation
- 11.20-11.35: what would they like?
mind-mapping exercise; what is both the minimum and ideal training and preparation that they feel they should receive. Ask them to do this on 2 separate pieces of paper, one for 'minimum' one for 'ideal'
- 11.35-11.45: what would they do?
ask them to plan what they would do in an AT training session, based on their experience. May be a case of either individual training, or thinking about Faculty-based ATs.

11.45-12.15: Theme 3 - Recognition and support

- 11.45-11.50: how valued do they feel
mapping exercise on a chart; valued by:
 - a. staff
 - b. students
 - c. university generally
- 11.50-12: 'on the job' support
what support do they receive after recruitment and selection is over? Is there a structure? What would be useful. Do a 'what they get' V 'what they would like' exercise.
- 12-12.15: pay
how were they paid? What are they paid? Is there variance

12.15-12.30: Theme 4 – any other issues

Ask if there is anything else we haven't raised that they want to talk about or provide anecdotal information on.

Appendix C: focus group notes

This focus group took place on 24th February 2017. It was led by Madeleine Colledge (uea|su's PG Education Officer) and Naomi Carter (uea|su's Education and Engagement Manager). Notes were taken by Chris Grosset (uea|su's Institutional Representation Assistant).

NB: To preserve anonymity, each participant was given a number by which they will be referred to throughout the notes.

1. General Introductions and positions

Participant 1: An AMA (formally FTM) student - an overall mixed experience so wanted to attend the focus group to hear more about others' experiences and share theirs.

Participant 2: A DEV student. Has noticed lately that there has been a lot around formalising the contracts, which has made the process a lot better since 4 years ago when she started.

Participant 3: A 3rd year CHE PHD student. Preferred the old system before the change, the majority of her work is lab demonstrations.

2. Recruitment and selection

2a. Becoming an AT

Participants were asked how they found out about their AT position and how they were recruited / selected

Participant 2 - Got the opportunity through primary supervisor, informed of opportunities to teach. Started in 2015 when the process was very informal. Very much left to her in terms of seminar- one requirement of formalising is that if you already taught the seminar before you may continue to do so.

Participant 1 - got Job through an email quite late on in semester, advice not that clear on how long it would be best for her to do (1 semester or 2)- said it was shambolic

Participant 3 - was told that first year PHD's don't do teaching. Did her undergrad here which is how she got the opportunity, worried that not everyone would have the same opportunity.

The new system is better as it sets out who is doing it for the whole year, spreading out the opportunities more.

There problem with covering other seminars is that the bureaucracy does not seem worth it. 3 therefore has to refuse work quite often.

2b. Who signed off on your validity of work?

Participant 1: Did have to bring a passport but as far as 1 knows they don't think they contacted the supervisor.

Participant 2: was the same (except the supervisor gave her the role).

Participant 3: Was an ambassador previously so when originally recruited on the knowledge of that experience. In the new system she filled out a suitability form and the hours suitable for work were discussed but only at her request.

Participant 2: The system is now more balanced for assigning hours.

2c. Other Comments

Participant 1 liked the email way of doing it as it took away the fear of applying.

Participants 2 and 3 agree; it still does happen (getting the job through friends) but its not as bad.

Participant 3: had a PPD to complete before being able to demonstrate; then had to fill in your specialities on a form. Concerns that PHD supervisors only offer positions to their students in 2nd and 3rd year students.

2d. Type of Contract

Participant 3: Zero hours doesn't work in this role; AT is so different to a normal job that it should not be zero hours. This is made worse by the recruiting process.

She had 12 hours of marking, some people didn't hand in their papers so she only got paid for 10.

Participant 2: Old system was better with the time sheets; the contract adjustments is a huge hassle (under the new system).

Participant 1 has set hours and that doesn't include enough time for marking. Seminar pay seems fine - two seminars seems average for PHD.

Participant 1 suggests that the preparation time pay is fine but the marking is a not correct. 3 suggests this is better as 4th years get preferential treatment.

2e. Conclusions on recruitment

Participants 2 and 3 want to keep the new system.

Participant 2 said that sometimes there is a bit of a conflict of interest i.e. old students getting positions.

Participant 3 does some work for biology, but has never got a reply from biology; they assumed she was working all of them (this is terrible). Still hasn't got a contract. She knows her rate of pay but concerns that she can't get payed without a contract. Her boss was her secondary supervisor.

3. Training and preparation

3a. Training for being a AT

Participant 1 had a 5 week general PPD and a marking session just with FTM (groups size of about 8 people) (no special needs training)

Participant 2's training was a short session CSED which she found helpful but had some superfluous- now a days it's a compulsory course. It also included information about teaching students with disabilities

Participant 3- didn't know about the existence of CSED. Had to get a PPD credit for CHEM and BIO- very much focused on the practical side.

Participant 3 had absolutely no idea about marking- after talking to her supervisor she was given a 'tick sheet'

Participant 3 don't get told about dealing with teaching students with disabilities but 1 does.

3b. Anything you wish you had been told?

Participant 3 said her first workshop was a nightmare, and sometimes she isn't even given the content prior to the workshop. Concerns that other people may not take the initiative that she did.

Participant 2 recalls a field trip in Scotland- she had no idea what was expected of her. The contract was also shambolic pre formalisation. Would like to see more of a pre-emptive approach to what might happen in the TA role.

Participant 1 not prepared to deal with students with extreme political views (sexism) . Supervisor was quite helpful but it was still a unique situation in new territory.

Participant 2 suggests that reflection would be a good element to add. Participant 2 would also like more guidance on time and also teaching style

Participant 1's PPD course already covered the former and her shadowing of a 1st year seminar was helpful for the latter.

Participant 3 would like guidance from teachers and module organisers to standardise marking and the form of assessment. Participant 2 seconds this. Participant 3 suggests that a team element is much needed.

4. Recognition and Support

4a. How valued do you feel by staff, students, and the Uni?

Participant 3- not valued by staff; they ensure you feel well below them. Students; the older they get the more appreciative they are. She feels that the Uni and the module organisers think that the AT's are over-paid

Participant 2 - felt valued by staff on field trips but seems kind of abstract really. Students: the longer the interaction the more appreciated you feel. University recognition is very hard to tell.

Participant 1 said it feels a bit like a meat market. Staff; good treatment as a colleague. Students: good relationship with a couple but general indifference

4b. What support do you receive? Is it satisfactory?

Participant 3: it is either one extreme or the other.

Participant 1 had a good supervisor, worked well with the convenors

Participant 2 said there was no real support or feedback for her work. She has to go and talk to supervisors to get feedback rather than them coming to her sometimes.

Participant 1 had weekly meetings about the seminars coming up with other AT's

Participant 3 literally only had the lab manual (which she was given) to rely on

Participant 2 would like to be peer observed

Participant 1 already observed by the module convenor but found it helpful.

Participant 3 would like to be peer observed but currently hasn't ben

4c. Office hours: how are they assigned? Is it enough?

Participant 1: Assigned office hours and did have the space to talk to people privately.

Participant 2 and 3 says it depends; there is no consistency.

4d. Other Comments/ improvements

Participant 3 wishes for more respect from staff (the problems all stem from this) and thinks that a general meeting would be very helpful for getting advice.

Participant 2 agrees that there is not enough active support. General agreement that a line manager situation might be useful.

Participant 1 enjoys research meetings to have a talk about being a AT.

At this point Madeleine Colledge pointed out that they could join a union if they wanted to, given that they were working. No one had thought about joining one or had been given information on how to do so.

4e. Pay: how much are they paid, how are they paid, is it regular?

Participant 1: once contract was signed pay comes in monthly; a few problems in the school with first payment but this was sorted out eventually.

Participant 2 never had any problems with pay- on the earlier field trip mentioned earlier she felt uncomfortable but the new system is better now.

Participant 3 is concerned about prep pay- not enough enforcement of people not doing the prep considering the hourly rate sort of covers this - more structure needed.

Participant 3 always gets paid a set amount no matter whether she finishes early or late - a fair arrangement as it averages out but not always consistent.

Participant 1 did receive holiday pay, 3 didn't, 2 didn't.

Generally everyone seems really unsure about the nature of the contract.

4f. Do they know what to do and who to contact if they are ill and can't teach?

Participant 3: Module organiser contacted 3 about sickness

Participant 1: contacts module convenor if sick

Participant 2: no idea - seems frantic when someone can't make it in and quite often emails are sent round last minute asking for cover

No one really sure if it's in the contract.

5. Final comments

Participant 2 would like clarity on how much time to spend on prep/ expectations.

Participant 1 adds that the prep is essential because of the stress of performance.

Participant 1 room booking: 5 people joined seminar and the room wasn't big enough any more

Participant 2 questions about being approached informally: is there favouritism over whether to offer funded / non-funded PhD students AT positions?

Appendix D: written consultation in Graduate Assembly

On 23rd January 2017, the Graduate Assembly explored Associate Tutors and students' experiences. As part of this, PGR students present were asked to make written note of their experiences. Below are the typed-up responses.

Response 1

School:

How long have you been working as an AT?

Type of teaching:

Did you receive a contract for all your work?

Yes, however the contract did not specify the activities to be carried out as part of the module.

How did you find out about the vacancy/how did you apply for the position?

The positions were made available in a general email to all post grads. I then applied to the module conveyer and was granted the teaching.

Do you receive additional Pay/ time recognition for marking?

Yes, but the payment was very low for the number of hours actually spent teaching.

What training have you received from your teaching position?

I have undertaken the development teaching skill course.

Have You ever felt that you have been made to teach un-prepared.

No

Do you know where to take complaints related to your teaching position?

No, there is no line manager to report to.

Is there anything you think the university could do/provide to improve the teaching experience?

What issues have you faced as an AT UEA? What has been positive that you would like to see repeated?

Lack of Clarity

Response 2

School: Law

How long have you been working as an AT? Jan 17

Type of teaching: AT: Seminar Teaching

Did you receive a contract for all your work?

Yes

How did you find out about the vacancy/how did you apply for the position?

PG Direct & School Manager emailed all of PGR Students with graduate teaching in sept,

then sends emails at the start of semester with additional availability. Also sends form for completion.

Do you receive additional Pay/ time recognition for marking?

N/A (I don't mark)

What training have you received from your teaching position?

CSED/EDU Developing training skills course, run through PPD.

Have You ever felt that you have been made to teach un-prepared.

No, my main module conveyor is very well prepared & sends good, detailed preparatory documents.

Do you know where to take complaints related to your teaching position?

Yes, initially to Module Conveyor, if not PGR director at first instance.

Is there anything you think the university could do/provide to improve the teaching experience?

Pay for Prep time (reasonable amount of hours)

What issues have you faced as an AT UEA? What has been positive that you would like to see repeated?

Law are very good at spreading teaching among PGR students.

Response 3

School: AMA

How long have you been working as an AT?

Spring 2015

Type of teaching:

Seminar

Did you receive a contract for all your work?

Yes

How did you find out about the vacancy/how did you apply for the position?

Word of Mouth

Do you receive additional Pay/ time recognition for marking?

no

What training have you received from your teaching position?

PGCE (previous experience) / PPD Teaching weekend

Have You ever felt that you have been made to teach un-prepared?

Not yet...

Do you know where to take complaints related to your teaching position?

Yes- Head of School

Is there anything you think the university could do/provide to improve the teaching experience?

Fair + Transparent process of selection. Better admin! Pay for marking

What issues have you faced as an AT UEA? What has been positive that you would like to see repeated?

Bad admin. Get better! Generally not what I wanted in terms of amount of hours.

Response 4

School: PSI (PPL)

How long have you been working as an AT?

Type of teaching:

Did you receive a contract for all your work?

No

How did you find out about the vacancy/how did you apply for the position?

I did not apply. I was approached for coursework by ATA

Do you receive additional Pay/ time recognition for marking?

I do not Mark

What training have you received from your teaching position?

I have done the prep to teach PPD. I have also spoke about it with the TA

Have You ever felt that you have been made to teach un-prepared?

No

Do you know where to take complaints related to your teaching position?

No, UCU

Is there anything you think the university could do/provide to improve the teaching experience?

-

What issues have you faced as an AT UEA? What has been positive that you would like to see repeated?

Students

Response 5

School: PPL (PSI)

How long have you been working as an AT?

2 years

Type of teaching:

Seminar + Lectures

Did you receive a contract for all your work?

It would depend on all. I received compensation for x hours + cover work

How did you find out about the vacancy/how did you apply for the position?

Mixed. First email application then bi- lateral agreement

Do you receive additional Pay/ time recognition for marking?

Yes, calculated of *1.25 teaching. This includes prep.

What training have you received from your teaching position?

PPD prep to teach

Have You ever felt that you have been made to teach un-prepared?

Not unprepared as I prep myself. But I have taught MA media.

Do you know where to take complaints related to your teaching position?

Convenor then Director

Is there anything you think the university could do/provide to improve the teaching experience?

Yes. Maybe provide space and other support.

What issues have you faced as an AT UEA? What has been positive that you would like to see repeated?

Organize cover differently

Response 6

School: DEV

How long have you been working as an AT?

Since 2010/11 (on and off)

Type of teaching:

Outreach workshops with school groups, lecturing , seminar convening (including marking and assessment of presentations.

Did you receive a contract for all your work?

I haven't always received a contract for the outreach work. I have in recent years but not always on time. I did outreach recently and signed the contract afterwards.

How did you find out about the vacancy/how did you apply for the position?

2014/15 I was offered AT work by seminar convenors by email or in person. This has recently changed in DEV to a more transparent system. I am offered outreach work by email.

Do you receive additional Pay/ time recognition for marking?

I have received additional pay/ time for marking but it was based on marking 3 scripts (2000 essays) per hour which was unfeasible. I had to spend much longer to provide good quality marking.

What training have you received from your teaching position?

I have attended the developing teaching skills module run by CSED in 2015. From 2010-2015 I received no training for my teaching.

Have You ever felt that you have been made to teach un-prepared?

I do not think UEA has provided adequate training of support for teaching. I think the minimal/zero time paid for preparation has left me felt unprepared unless I work for free to prepare my teaching.

Do you know where to take complaints related to your teaching position?

I haven't been told where to do this so no.

Is there anything you think the university could do/provide to improve the teaching experience?

Many things:

1. Provide better training and some ongoing support /CPD.
2. Pay fairly for non-contract work (peep, admin).
3. Make recruitment transparent.
4. Provide student and staff feedback/ evaluations on teaching.
5. Provide details of hours and pay rate when offering work.

What issues have you faced as an AT UEA? What has been positive that you would like to see repeated?

Be consistent. Generally treat AT's with more respect and integrate into staff. Help foster collaborative whole of team teaching/ reflection and support

Appendix E: Transcript from discussion at Graduate Assembly

On 23rd January 2017, the Graduate Assembly discussed Associate Tutors at The University of East Anglia. This is a transcript of the conversation.

Audio version of this can be obtained from Naomi Carter (N.Carter@uea.ac.uk).

All participants were aware and consented to the recording of the discussion.

Each participant has been assigned a participant number for anonymity.

Participants:

Participant 1: Not an AT

Participant 2: Not an AT

Participant 3: 1st year LAW PhD student and AT

Participant 4: DEV and AT

Participant 5: DEV and AT

Participant 6: PPL and AT

Participant 7: PPL and AT

Participant 8: AMA and AT

Leading discussion: Maddie Colledge (PG Education Officer)

Transcript

Maddie Colledge (*from here on referred to as 'Maddie'* - Everyone is from SSF and HUM? [General Agreement])

Participant 1- Not AT.

Participant 2- Not AT.

Participant 3- I'm a first year PHD student and I have just been given a seminar group. So it's a first year law seminar group

Maddie - what's your experience so far in applying?

Participant 3- I think it went quite well. I got contacted by email by the school saying that there was teaching available for this seminar group. You're all free to apply; here an application form. It was all fairly self-explanatory and asked you things like your experience teaching and any other relevant knowledge. You then had to send it back. The school then decided who go the teaching.

Participant 1- don't know who else applied but as a 1st year I am now teaching. I have also done the PTS, the developing teaching course, through EDU and CSED. So I don't know how many of you have done that course.

Maddie- Is this PPD?

Participant 3- Yes.

Maddie- Anyone else.

Participant 4- [NAME] in DEV. I have been there quite a long time and how done quite a bit of teaching over the years. I have just had a range of experiences. It has improved a bit over the years I would say recently. In terms of things to improve I would say there are a lot of things that that aren't even close to being done from the charter.

Starting from the beginning in terms of recruitment to be an AT. We did have a bit of a push to make the recruitment process to be an AT more transparent in DEV, which has been a relative success, in my opinion. In the past it would be really under the table- just emails to people: would you like to do some work then then once you have got it you just hang on to it for years. It worked out well for me but I don't think it was fair that people didn't even know what teaching is available or how to apply for it. We did make some noise about that, so that did change; now all the teaching available gets sent out at the start of the year ect... But then its really inconsistent across the board as to how much support you get, how many hours you do, how much you get payed, weather you get paid on times, weather you get admin pay, for example answering emails from students that sometimes get diverted to teaching lecturers.

I mean that has improved to some extent in terms of working in the department. I also do some 'AT'ing for outreach. Like stuff with schools through Missions recruitment marketing. To be honest that worse, that's really inconsistent. I have been doing that for 8 years. For example, I did a gig last week and it was arranged 6 months ago, I was asked to book it in 6 months ago for last week, which I did fine and it came to the week before and I was like "if there any news on the contract or anything for this. Then they got back to me and they didn't have the contract in place for the work and then they sent me a contract, like a blank contract with no hours, no rate filled in so I just guessed. I did 2 hours delivery time so 2 hours but I asked about prep time and they said no- it's just a shambles to be honest.

It's definitely not appropriate

Maddie- Anything you want to add?

Participant 5- So yeah, we are both in the same department. We both came out of a meeting with the PGRs. So yeah - very much what [Participant 4] said. There is a lack of clarity about what AT's are supposed to do and it's very diverse; the terms of reference- I mean that's usually not clear, or what you ask from AT's depending on the module or the convenor but also the conditions: getting paid for certain things may happen in some cases but not in others. So yeah, in a nutshell it needs to be done more clearly.

The other thing that might improve it is that there isn't really anyone we can discuss these problems with. We usually have the directors but it's not exactly clear what their role is but certainly they have never mediated in any kind of problem. So yeah, that sort of [mumbles off].

Participant 1- Do you have any equivalent of a line manager?

Participant 5- Nothing of that sort. I mean you have the head of the school obviously and the directors. There is no line of communication set up.

Participant 4- I mean in theory it's the module convenor but it's just too inconsistent. Some of them are quite good and will help you out; like give you informal feedback on your teaching and others just won't give you any feedback.

Participant 2- Do you think a clear contract could go a long way towards addressing the issue?

Participant 5- Indeed, so that's one of the big issues we came out with; so having a sort of check list or a detailed contract with what you are supposed to do for that particular module but that would be different depending on the module. That is something that would be agreed between the TA and the Convenor before the module actually starts.

This is also because in any situations for work you are not paid for you will have to negotiate with the convenor, I mean he might be more supportive or not. So yeah, it's that kind.

Participant 7- To be honest, in my department, which is PPL SCS, I am in my 3rd year and I have never been presented with of knew that applications exist. Nobody ever informed me of anything. I just found out in our GSSF meeting and the problem here is that we don't have teaching or not that I'm aware of it. In fact no, there is not even I'm a person that I'm aware of that teaches. I'm sure that there are people marking without having done the teaching. I am here because I they interested in the contracts, I have no idea how they go the job. So to me this meeting is pretty illuminating to see all kinds of perspectives in here. Just so you know, there are departments out there that aren't informed about teaching opportunities and I am in stuff you know, I try to be well informed as well. I'm not sure if this adds to the problem.

Participant 6- 3rd year PHD in PPL. I have taught in PPL and HUM across the last 2 years and where have changed teaching director in that time as well. When I initially came to UEA to do the PHD 1st years initially weren't allowed to teach within PPL because you have to have taken the 'preparing to teach PPD', that was the requirement for any teacher within PPL. So you couldn't teach in your first year although some people were teaching across HUM so I know people in AMA who were teaching and giving lectures within the school before they had done the PPD as it were.

So I started off in my second year, I sent an email to the teaching director, who at the time was [staff member] who was in LCS who was in charge of it all. Then he vacated the role and [staff member] took over and during that time there was an open application sent round to all people in PSI as far as I know. So an email was sent to everyone which said: these are the hours available to AT this semester for PHD students, submit an application detailing what you would want to do and why you are qualified to do it. Half of those hours were taken by a Post Doc after all. So a large block of it was not actually for AT but had already been allocated to a role that a university knew it was employing and knew it was going there. The bulk of it was teaching media, so new media so they assigned the bulk of it to international MA's.- so I submitted my application and they said we can't give you what you want to teach on global politics but we can give you these media hours.

So I said yep, I'm more than happy to do the media hours. Later on I was told, because of the amount of undergraduates that has applied an extra hour had opened up in [MODULE NAME]. They said [NAME], would you like to teach it and I said yes. So that was my first block of teaching, my second form of teaching was not organised by any form of open application. I was told they were looking for someone to teach 2, 3 seminars originally. This was organised by email and then went down to 2 seminars when they found a lecturer at the university who they could get to do it. These were long seminars, 3 hours a time. So they said [NAME] would you like to do it and I said 'yes of course'. So I did that and that was my first year of teaching.

So this year I sent an email to [staff member] asking what the teaching structure would be for the next semester so he said I have got some teaching work for you if you want it, you can teach introduction to contemporary politics and give you a seminar hour here and there is some more teaching if you would like to have it here or there to which I said I can only do x amount. On top of that I got an email, because I'm teaching module that is organised outside of any possible AT contact because my supervisor ran [MODULE NAME], which is a 3rd year module. She went on maternity leave but obviously the module was popular last year and the university wanted it to run so she had a list of people that was compiled by her and I assume other people in the school which had on it people they would like to teach. Eventually it was given to me and a lecturer at the university to kind of co-run. SO I was running 3 of the lectures out of 11 and 5 of the seminars, half of the seminars and it was agreed that I would mark x percentage of the students work. That was done before any talk of allocation to AT's was done, any talk of anything like that so that was that. So then we said to the teaching director 'this is what will be happening, we are going to be keeping this module running, you will need to budget for me to be an AT on that module'. So that was half my teaching, and half again was with the IHH and that came in form of an email. So I'm not talking about cover work right. So I don't know if you are 'AT'ing and cover work occurs. So I have got my contract and you can have a look at that if you want. So I have got addendums for my contract. So when I did my thing for global politics that was added on as an addendum to that. A second one was asked for a lecturer who couldn't make it to two seminars because they were going to a conference. So they said [NAME], we know you are teaching on the masters module, will you teach on the undergraduate one. I said yes. So the work there was allocated in a short term contract for two weeks' worth of teaching. So this isn't usually what happens, within PPL generally if someone can't do a seminar they will contact someone and say 'can you do those hours for me?' and then you pay them cash in hand for their time, so at the rate they are usually paid.

Participant 4- That doesn't sounds dodgy at all does it?

Participant 6: So for example I had to go home at the end of last term for a funeral right so I didnt have anyone to cover my time. So I said to [staff member] that I had brought in someone to do it for me so I'll pay them the money that I would be paid on contract so I bought in someone who I know to do the work for me. They are qualified right.

Participant 1- Did he ask any questions out of interest or was it just fine?

Participant 6- So I brought in my mate to do it, he did the work and I paid him for it. Right and I have done this myself. Other people at the university who I won't name have said, right, I can't make this day; [NAME], you are on an AT contract, will you come in and teach that seminar for me? And I say, oh, that'll be £30 because I have to make it all the way in ... and that's generally how cover work works as a whole within PPL.

Participant 1- I presume it's a type of informal system.

Participant 6- Yes, so if I didn't say that I wasn't going to be there, no one would ever know that the seminar was covered, so I emailed the convenor...

Maddie- When you put it like that.

Participant 6- ... and said I'm not going to be here this week, I am going to have someone cover it and arrange for whatever. Formally you should get an addendum for cover work done yeah. So when a lecturer organises cover work for me to cover as an AT I was paid at the rate from my contract. It said here is your making role here and here is your progression roll. When AT's organise cover work generally we just organise it and pay for someone for it.

Maddie- But if you hadn't, who would have found cover is my next question?

Participant 6- I have no idea.

Maddie- Is that something you are told when you come to the role?

Participant 6- No, so there is no formal system in work. So if someone falls ill or something you just get someone to do it.

Participant 1- I'm sure like the guy you got was brilliant and everything but is there any kind of check to make sure the people you get are qualified.

Participant 6- So generally someone that is 'AT'ing but there is no rule right.

Maddie- So is that someone that also has a contract or can that just be a PHD student that you know.

Participant 6- So there should be but there isn't a hard and fast written rule about. At least, I haven't be told about it. So this is the cover work I have done and been brought in to do. So I got someone I knew to do it, someone that wasn't on a contract.

[Inaudible]

Participant 6- So that work won't go to the taxman but yeah, that's just generally how it works.

Participant 7- So did you say there was a rule they had to be over 18 as the ground rule?

Participant 6- No, they have to be like whatever really, there no set rule so you get.

Maddie So obviously it like a cultural understanding how you know what to do but who originally told you to do it, was it another AT?

Participant 6- I got brought in to do cover work for someone.

Participant 1- So there is no formal mechanism.

Participant 6- No, it's just like a: Someone said to me: I won't be there, can you cover it and I'll pay you.

Participant 1- It just seems to be a chronic lack of clarity here.

Participant 6- But it isn't just like an AT thing, I have done it for post docs as well and been paid at the AT rate. The only time I have been written in for cover work was when I did it for a lecturer who then got the office to write the contract. But, generally cover work seems to be a 'if you don't ask, don't tell'. And I don't know with the cover work I have done has been cleared and I will be there doing that work. Obviously the students know in advance of that and I can say for some of the modules I was teaching where I have done a lot of cover work for another AT who was at the time a PHD student and who now is not a PHD student but is still 'AT'ing; they had cleared with the coordinator that I would be coming in and because it was the same module we were teaching, it was kind of across but I have also done it kind of horizontally, on two modules that I'm not teaching on. For a first year politics module which I wasn't teaching on there was a post doc teaching on it who was away at a conference who couldn't come so I said. She said [NAME], I know you do social theory and that kind of stuff, do you want to cover that for me. I said ok, do you want me to come to the lecture, she said 'you can come if you want'. While at the lecture I spoke to the coordinator and said look, I'm covering the last seminar and she had also told the coordinator I would be doing it. So the general rule is you say 'I'm not going to be there, I'll get someone in but it is just a cultural thing right. There is no thing I have ever seen which tells me how to arrange cover work if I'm not there, I don't even know how it would work seeing as the contract is a set amount of hours right.

Participant 5- So I think in regard to what you were discussing, so the assumption is that when you are called by someone else, that you kind of loose the money which might be ok if you are choosing not to teach but if you are sick, you know, something that you couldn't have prevented. I mean, that is obviously quite unfair and it's not a standard that other staff is held to. I mean, the assumption is the opposite, you can take sick leave and still get paid. I mean that's the problem, with part time AT contracts it's not clear. That's one of the things that should be protected.

Maddie- So you are allowed sick pay, it depends.

Participant 1- That's actually a question, so you brought in for cover work for a period of time, would you be expected to arrange cover work for it or.... So let's say you were struck down by a sudden illness or were ill, what's the system there, would someone else arrange it?

Participant 6- So you would cancel the seminar right. You would just say, I'm ill, it's cancelled and I would still get paid for that seminar.

Maddie- So if you moved it I guess it would move to a different date.

Participant 2- So wait, you get paid for that if you cancelled a seminar.

Participant 6- Yeah.

Participant 3- [Laughs].

Participant 6- So I got paid at the start of last year.

Participant 2- So it's in your interest to cancel seminars.

Participant 1- So its effectively sick pay isn't it.

Participant 3- So yeah, if you missed a day of work you would still get paid.

Participant 2- So you are saying that if you get cover and you paying the person you are losing money for trying to cover a class.

Participant 4- Unless you have got a different contract you are likely to be able to re pay that.

[Inaudible]

Participant 6- But there isn't the oversight provision to force me to do that. So if I were to be like: 'I'm sick and cancelling the seminar. In my three years of teaching I have never been observed teaching.

Maddie- Oh, let's not deal with that.

Participant 6- The only observation I have ever had is one I arranged myself for some teaching I was doing unpaid.

Maddie- I know this is a bit off topic, how many would like to be observed... So I think the general consensus is that that is not a negative thing.

Participant 4- I would have thought that would have been fairly standard.

Participant 6- So you should be, you should be.

Maddie- So there is this weird rule that if you are responsible for 25% or more of the modules content then you should be observed.

Participant 3- I just want to ask, wo bares the liability for making sure you find a suitable replacement because if obviously you haven't been observed but say that you suddenly were and let's say you had given it to let's say an equivalent.

Participant 3- So like a random undergraduate first year who fancied a go. So is it on you for the person pulled up because you signed the contract.

Participant 6- So I assume that would be a breach, but any cover would be a breach.

Participant 1- So technically even if you found a good person it would be a breach.

Participant 6- So any cover work is a breach of contract.

Participant 1- So anyone is a breach of contract.

Participant 2- But everyone does it anyway.

Participant 6- But I have also been paid in advance. So this was something really weird that happened. So last semester or even the whole of last year I would receive a full months payment for the last week of September for work in the week of the 26th and I was paid 4 months whereas this year I have been paid in arrears starting as you would expect. So I haven't taught for 4 months so I don't get that but last time I was paid I was paid £400 and something for a week's work straight across the board for teaching I hadn't done right.

Maddie- So here it comes to, if you have missed it, you have to reimburse them.

Participant 6- Well I wouldn't know.

Participant 7- Well, can I add something relating to this as well? I needed 3 hours minimum of teaching in order to please the DTS and apply for the Higher education academy award. I had to ask one of my adviser if he would kindly somehow offer 1 or 2 of his hours or something whatever. He was kind enough to do the two relevant sections to my teaching research. And he was there, he took notes, and then he filled me in. So I taught 2 and 2, 4 hours in total. I have been observed for all 4 of them and I didn't even get any mention about being paid for them. I didn't expect it to be honest. I don't know if this is why and I don't expect it, but he was there and he gave me very good feedback afterwards. I don't know if that's helpful on the observation matter.

Maddie- Yeah, yeah, that's really useful.

Participant 4- I think on that point as well, when I put my hand up to be observed I think it's about the mechanisms around that. I think that if it was just a one off observation of someone doing the teaching I would be a bit wary of that to be honest and the motivations behind that. You know what I mean, it should be about helping people improve procedures and not punishing them.

Maddie- Its meant to be peer observed, I guess the TA is an interesting one because it would have to be a full time member of staff and not just another TA because that would be .

Participant 4- Yeah, I think there is something to be said for that as well [Fades off].

Maddie- I guess in terms of observation I'm really interested because I constantly get complains off of undergrads about the quality of certain PHD's and I'm very protective because that my student group who is somewhere between staff and student and I just completely batter it down. But I mean it's interesting because they are currently debating this. Does anyone else have any key things they want to bring up? If not I'm going to encourage you to fill in the board things in front of you.

Participant 6- One thing is also the duration of contracts right. So at the moment I have already been paid for and I was talking to another PHD student who I won't name because they are not here but she has done loads of marking on contracts because the hours aren't allocated. SO the way it works is, you get paid a fixed rate depending on where you are for the hours you spend in class, then you have a marking and preparation rate, in HUM at least at 1.25 total hours in the classroom. So if I teach a seminar I get paid 1hour 25 minutes for time in that seminar and preparation and marking across that module as a whole. I also get paid an hour of lecture attendance and office hours for general preparatory stuff and there is different rates for this so it's, in PPL, depending on the year like £35 basically, like sometimes its £35.80 or £34.70 then you get paid marking at about £17 and £12 at lecture attendance or whatever it is.

Maddie- Yes it is.

Participant 6- The way it works is, if I were to allocate my preparation time that I'm paid for I would have to subtract all the time that I spend marking the things.

So generally what happens is, you do all your marking and your prep if you were to work out the time. Say I spend 20 minutes to prepare a seminar. So then that 20 minutes, I then have an hour of marking per each seminar... it doesn't take that long. If I go to the lecture and attend it like I'm supposed to, I can't hold an office hour.

Maddie- and there is no office to do it in.

Participant 6- Yeah, there is no space in PSI at least.

... my friend worked out the amount of time she could spend per essay marking after preparation and it was 30 seconds an essay she could do. Across all the essays she could do she would get paid 30 seconds a mark.

Maddie- I know in fact that if a contract ends in December then you are expected to carry on marking until January.

Participant 6- So I got my marking on the 9th of January, my contract ended before Christmas and the deadline was set for the 10th of January and I was expected to mark all those pieces of work. I can confirm 100% that I am expected to mark them partly because I have internalized the structures of another PHD student to mark his essays but on top of that we got an email going round from the coordinator saying that 'some of you haven't started marking, we are aiming to get them back in 15 working days rather than 20 so there is your deadline for the production gone' and that is outside of contract.

I know for a fact, when queried on, from people who queried the teaching directors, on things like this. They say 'it's allocated for in the hours' so there is undervaluing of how long it takes to mark these things. Basically the whole AT system works on good will and been willing to put in the work.

If you remove all the AT's it wouldn't work, the university wouldn't work as a whole and if you remove the good will it won't work. It's just PHD's that are teaching right.

Participant 5- Yeah, so something to add. There is such a variety of the methods of payment, things that you get across departments. For instance, when we ask to be paid for preparation times, they say that doesn't exist. They say it is included in the teaching rate. That's the thing. Now I hear in some departments you are paid a proportion, that's the thing, how can they be so different; we are working for the same university but each department its own playbook.

Maddie- So there is meant to be a standard principle which will function across each faculty which will function. It's really interesting, so I'm not a PHD student so I can educate myself as much as I can on this but I will always be partially ignorant to pull what each procedure is from each school. I put in an FOI to find out how reliant the university is on PHD teaching. So that will be interesting but that's proved I think that will exceed the time allocation that they are allowed to do an FOI because they don't know the information especially when it gets down to school level, they are just absolutely lost and it all goes very silent on the other end of the emails but yeah, I think there is no uniformity and it should not vary that much between...

Participant 5- There are things that I feel we should be paid for that other people are paid for in other departments.

Participant 4- It is quite strange that this exists in the university given the increase in bureaucratic systems in finance and there isn't a standard HR approach to all faculties and that HR are not allowing contracts to be concise and consistent. So if it went in a different direction it would be interesting to hear the traffic between HR and the university then perhaps we have to look at in a different way. Most of this should have been decided in senate or at least debated in senate. I would be interesting to see what was pushed there to keep everyone quiet. [Inaudible] I don't think HR would be happy with this as it's not the way the university is going as a whole; that they would allow things with so many loopholes.

Participant 1- Quite a broad question but how legal is all this?

Participant 6- These aren't legal contracts right.

Participant 2- So what would happen if you got a student's paper and were like 'I'm not being paid for this, I'm not doing it'.

Participant 6- So I know people that have done that.

Participant 2- So just say, 'hope you had fun on your essay'.

Participant 6- So I know a woman who had just finished her PHD. This was before most of you lot were in PPL so I feel ok saying it. She got a job at another university, a post doc at another University, so she said 'I'm done, I'm off. By' but they said 'no, you have to mark these essays'. So she said 'I have recorded my hours so I'm not going to mark them at all, I'm not paid for it, I'm not going to do it, I have fulfilled the obligations of my contract' and then she went to the university of flocks. So what happens is, either the coordinator does it or they put it on an existing AT. So I know another AT on the module who just marked the essays, who took on the extra essays.

Participant 2- Are AT's allowed to go on strike?

Maddie- So this is the interesting thing, so UCU were pushing for more AT's to join, so this is why I invited them here. So they were not able get any more information out of the university than I have although despite requesting several times. [Name] from UCU said he could come but he now can't so he couldn't fine a replacement which is why they are not here. You can join UCU and they would love it if you did.

Participant 4- I mean it's free. So I mean, if you earn less than £5000 from academic work its free. [Inaudible].

Maddie- in relation to the issue about striking. I think part of the reason why this is so, well not controversial but ... is because it's tied into wider issues to do with academia to do with casualization of contracts. If we set a standard with our PHD AT's it opens up very uncomfortable questions with academic staff as well, with 6 month contracts who then can't get anywhere because they have no guarantee of employment in the long run. I am but one small blond woman who cannot deal with that because 63% of our staff are on temporary contracts.

Participant 1- I was just thinking but if we found any practices here that aren't strictly speaking legal. Would it give us a little bit of leverage with the university?

If we said, 'we have got an illegal performance practice going on, this is not acceptable' what are they going to say?

Maddie- It would be interesting. It would be interesting.

Participant 1- And if you could pin it down and say, if we have a list of the precise things, you have got illegal activities going on within the university, that's not something you want leaked out by the way, what are you going to do about it?

Maddie- Oh God.

Participant 3- As you say, the issue technically is that we are on zero hours contracts and they are legal; they are not popular and I don't know if we all remember sports direct but when it got out how heavily reliant they were on zero hours contracts. The issue is here you have to separate the issue with the employment law, where we are technically obeying the letter of the law if not the spirit and a lot of people who teach and it's part of their PHD and they don't want to kick up a fuss because they don't want to get to the end of their PHD with no teaching because then how are you going to get an academic job.

Participant 1- I think that's the thing, it wouldn't just be individual PHD students doing it on their own, it would be...

Maddie- It's only going to get worse because the pressure on that is only going to get greater as the pressure on PHD students gets worse. It kind of needs to be dealt with now as much as we can. In regards to like sick pay and stuff like these are basically on zero hour contracts which means no human rights.

Participant 7- Is it on the curriculum that within our course of ... No we don't...

Participant 6- No we don't have to. But I think if you are funded by CHASE in HUM and asked to teach you might be obliged to teach.

Maddie- Yeah, there are certain ties to DTP's.

Participant 6- I know people in LCS who are self-funded relying on teaching to do their things and people and people, although I don't know 100% what happened, CHASE PHD's said we are allowed to teach, we are allowed it under here so she got kicked off and she they said 'you can't teach'. Because she was a 4th year PHD student, registration only, there as a blanket rule, not meant to be teaching through stock.

Participant 7- Where did this happen?

Participant 6- Not in PPL, in LCS.

Participant 7- What does LCS stand for?

Maddie- Learning and Communication.

Participant 6- No, no. I mean LDC.

Participant 7- Yes, that's why I asked.

Participant 6 -Yeah LDC

Participant 2- Fantastic!

[Inaudible]

Maddie- Yeah, I have never heard about that.

[Inaudible]

Participant 3- It depends on the school and what they say and to an extent. I have been allowed to teach because I have done the vast majority of the DTS. But I got the space this semester because somebody dropped out. I know someone else who is first year and also teaching, because they are about to start it but the rule is unless you have the DTS the rule is , unless you have some other experience teaching, you shouldn't be because you don't have the experience. But I suppose it's going to be a matter of finding people to take the seminar groups to an extent because we are increasing the amount of students we are taking in.

Participant 7- Then again DTS is only... I did it, a colleague of mine did it.

Participant 6- Well when I did my preparing to teach PPD back in the day my friend, who I think was on an MHPHD and he was taking lectures there, so he was going seminars and lectures in his first year and he was technically on the MA. So I know someone who finished their MA and came back as an AT contract because they needed some gaps filled for the dean of school. I know people who finish their PHDs and come and do loads of teaching. So like people who are not PHD students but are still under Assistant Tutor contracts teaching at the university to fill in the gaps that are emerging.

Participant 7- We have that as well, people who do what we do but...

Participant 6- What I know about LTS, they have done most AT's out of PPL.

Participant 7- And none of them are students?

Participant 6- None of them are students, no.

Participant 7- There are people with no MA's, just undergraduate studies or MA's, no PGR students. I know, its oh my god [inaudible].

Participant 6- When they merged the offices. So we used to have a PSI office for T's when I first started and then because of what was going on with the AT's all the PPL AT's were directed to this room and it was immediately full of LCS; AT's who were teaching evening classes and all sorts of stuff about modules at the university.

Participant 8- I have to say I have almost had the opposite experience. So I am AMA Film and I was told that I had to do my Grade Panel and then, only then was I allowed to teach. So the fact that you are in first year; absolutely not.

[General talk]

Participant 3- I would like to make the point that I and my friends are only taking one seminar group a week so its only 2 hours every other week. So we are not taking lectures and I know you do have to focus on what is now, what we told is called probational...

Participant 6- Probational, yeah.

Participant 3- So it's down to your supervisor to agree as well and the responsibility lies with my supervisor... [Incoherent].

Maddie- What I'm worried about is cases where the need to cover something is greater than the push to not let it be a first year and make sure they have their qualifications and make sure it's not going to be a conflict of interest and obviously there are cases where the university becomes a bit compromised and that aspect of it, particularly around whether or not you have had adequate training and feel comfortable teaching will probably go up the agenda in a positive way purely because of TEF and making sure everyone has got qualifications. Yeah, that's interesting.

Participant 6- Well there does seem to be two circles of teaching that go on right. The teaching that is applied for with applications or whatever or is knowingly given out to the body and people who organise it with their supervisors.

Participant 7- And then you have cases like my department. Not even one of these.

Participant 6- There is one LCS AT PHD who is upstairs, can't remember her name.

Participant 7- Is it [NAME].

Participant 6- Yeah I think so.

Participant 7- No I think she is done. She finished her 4th year.

Participant 6- Yeah, I don't know.

[Inaudible]

Participant 4- That's a point I wanted to make about people that have finished their PHD's kind of floating around because a lot of members in Dev and UCU have kind of finished their PHD's and when you finish you are in kind of a precarious position and a lot of them are doing quite a lot of 'AT'ing but also they are doing work kind of for external agencies who are getting funding from external bodies that then has to come through UEA and we have heard various cases where they have ended up losing out a lot of money like from the amount they originally secured from the agency with UEA taking a massive chunk but also but also insists on dividing their contract up like where they are working 9 months and insisting on dividing it up into 3 month chunks and then forcing a 2 week break between the 3 months to stop them accruing benefits you get over a longer contract.

Maddie- Oh my god that's so evil.

Participant 4- And then during that time, during that little gap there, they send us emails about losing access to the library and stuff like that.

Participant 5- But that's how they avoid... that's what leads to this cultural thing, I mean by doing this kind of thing.

Participant 4- I am not entirely sure who is who. From the post grad and the rest of these people who is meant to be representing them. They are not post grads generally, they are not faculty, they are just there [inaudible].

Participant 8- Could I make a suggestion in terms of focus and what we are going to try and do about it because I think there are some things we could definitely do

about it thinking about the assembly and the union and the committee. That's things like transparency, transparency of getting contracts, availability of information. But from a legal angle and a contract angle I don't think we are big enough to crack and that should be a case of people joining UCU and that specific focus to go to someone a bit more powerful who can give us advice in a more concrete fashion during a wider argument. I'm literally just thinking of what we can deal with in a certain time scale, things like that. I think that that transparency that we can do through the groups within the university and with the union here but massively encouraging people to join the union on an ongoing basis and just try and really fund then the amount of information we have about the position a lot of students are in.

Participant 7- I don't suppose we have an employment lawyer hired in the union at all do we?

Maddie- We don't but we can send stuff off to our external friend that we pay to run through things with a fine tooth comb which we do for stuff the university presents and make sure it's legal, which is quite fun. And yeah, that is genuinely a possibility that I'll have a think about and carry on my little train of thought so is there...

Participant 5- [inaudible] I think we need a bit more information, we need a bit more research and I think that the union should be big enough to kind of request that information and kind of have it granted [inaudible] but now I hear that you did ask for it and you say there has not been any reply. What was the specific information you asked for.

Maddie- So at the moment there is the FOI, there is the FOI then there is my contact with the PGR office. So the FOI is asking of all the teaching, of all the timed teaching sessions that have gone on at UEA what percentage are done by PHD AT's or TA's and can they break it down by schools and faculties to see what it comes up with and there was a lot of clarification needed about what technically qualifies as teaching so they queried whether or not it would involve lab sessions or people who are just there for safety reasons and I clarified it as anyone who needed to be there for it to go ahead, whether or not it was for safety or they had to be included, so that's what we went for and then I can talk to [name] in the PGR office and get the schools to disclose what their procedures are and I can also just go to the PGR executive of each faculty as well and talk to them. Some of them will be a lot more positive and want to help, for example FMH will but we can see how it goes. I am conscious about asking too much of the PGR office because they are at breaking point in their work, they are all lovely but they are massively overworked. I am currently collecting a lot of information and it is moving. Then my next question to you all before we move on is: is there anything [inaudible] in terms of the role that cause difficulties, anything we can include in this?

Participant 6- One thing would be the funding situations as well right. So I used to be a self-funded student and this year I have got funding from the university for the last year of my PHD. So my contract states that I can only work x amount of hours outside of academically approved labour. So I used to work flower shows over the summer right and I would do that before but I can't do that now because I am on funding yeah. I have been offered far more teaching than I could ever

take on. If I were to break down every single seminar it would probably be about 8 or 9 hours' worth that I could have taken on across the year. So I couldn't take it on because it would violate the conditions of my funding right.

Maddie- But would they know that?

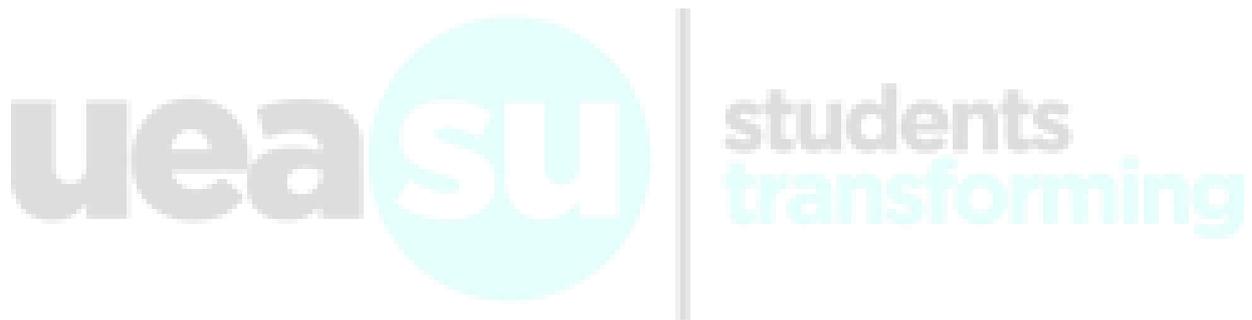
Participant 6- So there is the thing, they wouldn't know that, so I said to them: 'I can't do this, I can only teach x amount of things otherwise I'm going to violate my contract for the funding that I have got'. So there is no coordination between what PHD students are allowed to teach legally in relation to their funding, what they are able to teach. There is no communication at all so clearly if I didn't go through every letter of this funding contract with a fine tooth comb I could have taken on this teaching and invalidated all of that money and then someone would be knocking on my door saying 'can we have that back'.

Participant 5- [Inaudible] I don't really understand it either.

Maddie- Right, so I'm going to ask you all to fill out a form.

Participant 7- Does anyone need one?

[At this point the meeting turned into general chatter]



Appendix F: information on PGR AT contracts / policies by Faculty and School

The following information is based on discussions with university staff members. Initial contact was made at School level; however, our request to receive information regarding PGR ATs was answered primarily at Faculty level. In some instances, School-level information was provided and as such, there is some overlap whereby some Schools responded to our query even though their Faculty are in the process of providing information. In the case of HUM, contact was made only at School- level. Important to note, is that because Schools are responsible for managing ATs, Faculties might not know the individual practices of each school, and therefore the information provided could simply be based on what is expected of each School rather than what is currently practised.

It is encouraging that upon making initial contact with Schools, the majority of them responded by either signposting me to relevant individuals, or notifying us that their Faculty will provide information. The last three Schools in the table and the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, (which we contacted separately) have not responded to our emails. It is important to note that there is scant information provided online, meaning that PGRs interested in AT positions, or ATs interested in finding out more information relating to their role will find it difficult not only to find who best to speak to within their School, but also to find any useful written information.

Faculty/School	Who to contact*	Useful Information	Status
Faculty of Science	Sarah Lucas – Faculty Manager	<p>The recruitment method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGRs are notified of available positions via email and bulletin. • Students are invited to an informal interview or chat with module convenor, however recruitment methods vary across Schools. <p>Contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATs receive standard AT contract. <p>Sick leave/any additional documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATs will find cover if unable to attend teaching, however no procedures are in place for reporting absence or providing documentation of proof of absence. • Since ATs are paid for the hours they work, there are no procedures in place that explain what length of absence is allowed without additional proof, or 	Spoke to in person

		<p>what options are available to re-negotiate their job role in the case of extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATs are meant to receive module-appropriate training (CSED or PPD), however no formal mechanism monitors whether students in fact do receive training. • Sarah Lucas is currently working on a training framework flowchart so that it is clear to both students and staff what training is required for each AT position available. • The training framework will also include a compulsory standard AT training course whereby all ATs will receive training in the fundamentals of teaching. This course will also include how to teach students with learning and/or other disabilities. • ATs currently do not receive any documentation explaining how to properly report an issue. For e.g. speaking to HR rather than Student Support Services. Also, there is no procedure in place to report about any issues students may have with their module convenor. Sarah Lucas is currently working on making these procedures clear to students. <p>Additional Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some cases, ATs do work which is outside their job remit. This is because job descriptions are not given to ATs. • Sarah Lucas is working on making sure job descriptions exist for each available position. 	
Faculty of Social Sciences	Joanne Ashman – Faculty Manager		In process – providing faculty response within the next few weeks
Faculty of Medicine and Health	Gill Price – Faculty PGR Training Coordinator		In process – will receive information within the next few weeks

<p>School of Literature Drama and Creative Writing</p>	<p>Sophie Scott – Clerical Assistant Jo Poppleton – Director of Teaching</p>	<p>The recruitment method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All LDC PGRs are notified by email (LDC recruits only within their School). • Students must fill out an application form and include a CV. • The Teaching Director and Head of School hold interviews. • Interview questions are the same for all applicants, and the interview style is informal. • There are no job descriptions but the contract stipulates their duties and this is dealt by the School office. • The School does not guarantee teaching positions to successful candidates partly because they prioritise teaching to PGRs who have not had any teaching before, but also because it also depends on whether there is a teaching 'gap' and where that gap is. For e.g. the School cannot offer a second year module to an AT if they have not taught before. • All successful candidates will have their name added to their list of potential ATs. <p>Contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided with standard AT contract. <p>Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATs are not eligible to teach unless they have passed their probationary review, obtained PhD supervisor's approval, and have undertaken some teaching training. • During teaching, it is required that ATs attend all events related to the module on which they teach (lectures, team teaching meetings). • Team teaching meetings discuss ideas and/or any problems with seminar teaching. • There are opportunities for ATs to be mentored by a more experienced member of staff in both their teaching and their marking. 	<p>Received information via email</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer assessment of teaching is also available but this varies across course. Marking and moderation meetings are also required. Any queries should be directed to the School Office. Queries about seminar slots are dealt with LTS and Jo Poppleton. Any queries about actual teaching is dealt by the module convenor but they can also contact the School Associate Tutor rep. Also, an Associate Tutor 'link' can provide support. They are usually but not always a PGR who has or is employed on an AT contract. 	
School of International Development	Laura Camfield – Research Student PGR Director Rob Gray – School Manager	<p>The recruitment method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGRs are notified of positions through the circulation of a 'job opportunities spreadsheet' which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> module title and module convenor job description, which includes teaching format, number of hours/days per week as well as any specific times required to teach and pay rate preferred skills which can include CSED/PPD training who to contact to apply for position Whether a previous AT has been reoffered the position. In some instances PGRs are notified through personal emails PGR makes a written application using a standardised CV template at module convenor makes decision based on written application Student provided with equal opportunities form to be signed along with contract, but HR guidance is used to guide Equal Opportunities but this isn't provided to students <p>Contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard AT contract provided <p>Sick leave/any documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No documentation given 	Received information via email

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rob Gray is currently clarifying policy around sick pay and whether students receive additional pay for student contact hours as well as any additional admin or preparation time <p>Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is handled informally through the convenor although students are advised in the event of any problem that they contact Rob Gray, the school manager and he will take it up with the head of school. <p>Additional Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the student has any questions about their job I aside from their convenor the key person they speak to is Rob Gray. 	
Math	Mirna Dzamonja – Director of Research	Does not have any PGR ATs	Received information via email
Art, Media and American Studies/Interdisciplinary Institute for the Humanities	Nick Garforth – School Manager		In process – not responded
History	Ollie Carlisle – School Manager		In process – not responded
PPL	Jennifer Wilkinson – School Manager		In process – not responded

*These names mainly refer to the UEA staff members that provided us with AT information. In all cases, unless we have identified another person who would be best to contact regarding a specific query, these individuals are a good point of contact if requiring more information about ATs.