LTC17D106

Title:	***Proposed Revisions to Research Degree Policy Document 14***
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Issue

Postgraduate Research (PGR) students play an important role in the delivery of teaching at UEA, to the benefit of taught programme students, the research students themselves, and the University.

The employment of PGR Students as Associate Tutors (ATs) is governed by two documents:

(1) Research Degree Policy Document 14 (RDPD14) "*Policy on Postgraduate Research Student employment in teaching at UEA*", which can be found on the University's Postgraduate Research webpages https://portal.uea.ac.uk/postgraduate-research/pgr-regulations-and-forms

(2) *Terms and Conditions of Appointment for Associate Tutors*, which can be found on the University's Human Resources Division webpages https://www.uea.ac.uk/hr/employee-information/forms/associate-tutors.You will also find the associate tutor contract of employment template here.

Recommendation

LTC is asked to approve the changes proposed by HRD to bring RDPD14 into line with UEA employment policies. These changes were agreed by PGR Executive following some amendments to address queries raised there.

Resource Implications

There are no resource implications associated with the revisions.

Risk Implications

Leaving the policy in its current form would be potentially confusing to PGRs wishing to work as ATs and to the Schools employing them.

Equality and Diversity

No changes are proposed that impact on E&D.

Timing of decisions

The policy was originally agreed by Learning and Teaching Committee by Chair's action and needs to return to LTC for final approval.

Further Information

Contact Nick Watmough (n.watmough@uea.ac.uk), ADRDP, for enquiries about the content of the paper.

Background

As a result of the report on PGRs working as ATs presented by uea(su) to Student Experience Committee in May 2017, the ADRDP conducted a thorough review of all the policies and practices relating to employment of PGRs as ATs at UEA. The ADRDP's response to the concerns raised by uea(su) and a series of further actions were agreed by SEC in November 2017. This included a meeting between PVC(RI), ADRDP and the Director of HRD, which took place in December 2017, where it was recognised that RDPD 14 had been developed in 2015 without input from HRD. RDPD 14 has now been reviewed by HRD to bring it into line with other HR policies, and PGR Executive was asked to consider the proposed changes, which it did on 31 January 2018.

Attachments
A revised version of RDPD 14 with the proposed changes tracked.

Policy on Postgraduate Research Student employment in teaching at UEA

Preamble

Postgraduate research students play an important role in the delivery of teaching at UEA, to the benefit of taught programme students, the research students themselves, and the University.

For taught undergraduate and postgraduate students, postgraduate research students broaden the range of expertise available to provide high quality education and can add a diversity of approaches to teaching. Research students can provide capacity that allows more small group and practical teaching and they can bring new research material and insights into the course.

For the research students themselves, the experience of teaching develops their skills, strengthens their CVs and provides an opportunity for taught programme students to provide input into their research.

For UEA, postgraduate research students provide teaching capacity, a greater range of skills and additional flexibility to our academic programmes.

The importance of postgraduate research teaching is highlighted in the NUS/UCU Charter on Postgraduate Employment. This UEA policy draws upon the Charter.

The University recognises the importance of postgraduate research employment. UEA is committed to ensuring that the organisation of postgraduate research teaching should ensure that:
1. Postgraduate research students themselves are competent in the subject area and appropriately trained;
2. The allocation of teaching is undertaken in a manner that is fair and transparent;
3. The allocation of time, and thus payment, for postgraduate research teaching reflects in a fair manner the time demands of the role.

To this end, the UEA policy on postgraduate research teaching consists of the following key elements. Note that in this policy the term *teaching* is used to include all educational activities including preparation, demonstrating, lecturing, seminar delivery, assessment and administration.

Part A: Recruitment, Appointment and Employment Rights

1. **Fair and equal appointment procedures**
   Opportunities to teach on undergraduate and postgraduate courses should be openly advertised, with a role description, to allow all suitably qualified research students to apply for the role. This may be done in bulk (e.g. for all opportunities within a School) rather than on an individual basis. The role description should include any preconditions for the role. 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~~. Where teaching forms part of a bursary or scholarship, there must be transparency in terms of expectation and reward.

2. **A fair rate of pay**
Payment for postgraduate research students undertaking teaching roles will be in accordance with Associate Tutor pay rates. Where pay rates ~~should~~ include recognition of time spent in preparation or marking this should be indicated. Contracted hours for each activity undertaken should reflect a ~~or marking at a~~ reasonable average for that ~~that~~ discipline. Any variance from ~~(to be clearly articulated if this differs from~~ standard Associate Tutor rates~~),~~ ~~and for office hours~~ will be clearly articulated. ~~This should be provided in addition to payment for teaching contact hours.~~ Guidance is available from the Payroll Office ~~There must be clarity~~ on ~~the ways in which payment and~~ tax and other deductions~~ation processes~~ ~~are managed~~ and, for international students, how National Insurance numbers are obtained.

3. **Representation within UEA and by a trade union**
Postgraduate research students who teach should have representation on appropriate teaching and learning committees and/or student-staff liaison groups at department/school and faculty level. Postgraduate research students have the right to be an active member of a recognised trade union and to be represented by that union to their institution. At UEA the recognised union for Associate Tutors is UCU.

Part B: Management, Training and Support

4. **Induction and initial training**
All postgraduate research students who teach should have completed appropriate basic training. Postgraduate research students who teach should also be provided by their School with an induction that introduces:

- Teaching structures at UEA
- The teaching approach being used in the module and course
- The subject to be taught
- The course materials
- Modes of assessment
- The use of Blackboard in the course
- Procedures for feedback and student complaints.

5. **Mentoring and supervision**
Postgraduate research students should be provided with appropriate levels of mentoring and supervision by an appropriately qualified staff member who is not on their supervisory team, normally the module organiser or course director. All postgraduate research students who teach should have access to a suitably qualified single academic point of contact with whom they should be able to raise issues and seek advice. This individual could provide an academic reference in the future.

6. **Feedback on performance and progress**
Postgraduate research students should be provided with feedback on their performance, areas that need improvement and their progress both formally and informally. Where appropriate this should include both student feedback and that from a more senior academic manager or mentor who has had the opportunity to observe the postgraduate teaching.

7. **Resources to support teaching**

Access to the necessary facilities and resources required to undertake the role. These could include printing and photocopying, use of teaching rooms, stationery and equipment, office space, a storage facility and access to online learning environments.

8. **The availability of appropriate continuing professional development**
Students should have access to appropriate continuing professional development, delivered by CSED or within their researcher development programme. Development opportunities should include the development of specific teaching skills such as lecturing or teaching students with specific support needs; introduction to pedagogic theories; or opportunities to undertake an accredited course in teaching in higher education.

Part C: Career Development

9. **Academic culture**
Postgraduate research students who teach should be included in appropriate activities on an equal basis with academic colleagues, and should receive opportunities to engage as professionals with the teaching culture of their School, including for example being eligible for teaching awards.

10. **The balance between employment and research.**
Care must be taken to ensure that employment in teaching does not take precedence over the research in which the postgraduate is engaged, leading to a delay in submission for the degree award. Full-time registered research degree candidates are not normally expected to undertake more than an average of 6 hours paid employment per week, up to a maximum of 180 hours per academic year. Candidates should seek the approval of their supervisory team for any paid work undertaken, and must take responsibility for fully complying with any visa restrictions placed on employment.

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