DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LEICESTER

Human Resources

People and Organisational Development

Teaching opportunities for postgraduate research students

DATE 2019

Contents

1. Introduction 3
2. Teaching opportunities for postgraduate research students 3
3. Recruitment and selection 4
4. Supervision and support 4
5. Induction, training and feedback 5
6. Terms and conditions 6
   Pay 6
   Hours 6
   Holidays 7
7. Monitoring 7
Appendix A: Job description and person specification 8

1. Introduction

1.1 De Montfort University recognises that postgraduate research (PGR) students are a valuable asset and encourages their involvement in teaching and demonstrating duties. Teaching opportunities can provide PGR students with valuable experience and career development in addition to financial benefits. This document sets out a framework for the employment of PGR students in teaching and demonstrating duties.

1.2 The framework has been developed to help safeguard and enhance the student experience and to further the student employability agenda, to align with the university's commitment to fair pay and working conditions, and to reflect the guiding principles of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code), by providing PGR students with an opportunity to support learning and teaching, develop a range of skills and reinforce their own knowledge of the subject.

1.3 This policy primarily covers teaching opportunities for PGR students where they are not undertaking the same role expected of an hourly-paid part-time lecturer i.e. it primarily covers the employment of Postgraduate Student Teachers (PGSTs). However, employment as a PGST is not the only option available and in some cases, employment as an hourly-paid part-time lecturer may be more appropriate.

2. Teaching opportunities for postgraduate research students

2.1 In line with the Quality Code, the university offers non-compulsory teaching opportunities for PGR students. Any teaching support that a PGR student undertakes is not a required part of a research studentship, and will be recompensed appropriately in accordance with this framework.

2.2 Teaching opportunities for PGR students might include elements of any or all of the following:

- Demonstrating in laboratories
- Marking laboratory reports (see also 4.4)
- Presenting support seminars for a module
- Supervising studio work as part of a team
- Presenting problem classes
- Presenting tutorials
- Marking coursework, including essays and possibly exams
- Presenting research seminars
- Undertaking teaching related duties linked to their research area with appropriate oversight/supervision from their PhD supervisor such as:
    - Preparing materials
    - Contributing limited elements to lecture courses
    - Contributing either synchronously or asynchronously to online content and course delivery e.g. through a VLE or other online tools.

2.3 Teaching opportunities for PGSTs are to be distinguished from hourly-paid part-time lecturers (PTLs) on the basis that they have limited teaching experience and will require greater levels of support and supervision in carrying out their duties.

2.4 The appendix to this document includes a template job description (JD) and person specification (PS) for the role of Postgraduate Student Teacher (PGST). It is expected that PGST opportunities will use the template JD and PS save where necessary variations are required to allow for subject-specific expertise.

3. Recruitment and selection

3.1 The university is committed to ensuing equality of access to teaching opportunities; however, the scope for such teaching opportunities varies between different schools/faculties and such teaching opportunities will not always be available.

3.2 Where opportunities are available, expressions of interest should be invited from existing PGR students via an internal but accessible advert and there should be a transparent method of selection where there is more than one expression of interest i.e. via ring-fenced competitive interview and/or other internal assessment process.

3.3 All advertisements must include a clear, simple role description including details of the duties and responsibilities required, the academic level of the module, the name of the module leader, and explicit criteria for the selection of suitable candidates. Advertisements should also highlight any particular expertise required so that PGR students from outside the department can assess if they have the relevant expertise.

3.4 PGR students should be invited to submit a statement (either by letter or email) on how they meet the requirements of the teaching opportunity, together with confirmation that they have discussed this and have approval from their supervisor – see 6.6. Module leaders may choose to ask for supplementary information such as a CV and references.

3.5 Decisions on the allocation of available teaching opportunities will be made by the module leader based on the qualifications, experience, aptitude and skills of each applicant and decisions will not be influenced by the applicant's age, sex, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief or disability (subject to any reasonable adjustments that are required). The overriding factor is to ensure the quality of the teaching made available to the taught students.

3.6 The right to work in the UK of the preferred candidate **must** be checked before they carry out any paid work for the university. In particular, PGR students on a Tier 4 Visa must not be allowed to work (either as a PGST or a PTL) in breach of any relevant restrictions placed on them in terms of the type of work and the hours of work they are permitted to do. It is the responsibility of the Doctoral College (or equivalent) to ensure that relevant checks are conducted in accordance with the university's immigration policies and processes.

4. Supervision and support

4.1 In line with the Quality Code and to safeguard the experience of the taught students, PGR students should receive appropriate training, support and mentoring from more experienced academic colleagues if they are teaching. (It is not anticipated that the level of support/mentoring required will be over and above the current expectations of the role of a more experienced academic staff member; however, in situations where the requirements are considered sufficiently onerous, appropriate workload recognition may be considered). It should also be noted that mentoring can be provided by membership of larger teaching teams.

4.2 PGSTs are not expected to take on full responsibility for front line teaching; this remains the module leader/lecturer's responsibility, who should be present for sufficient of the time to ensure that module delivery is suitably managed and controlled to meet required teaching quality standards (this does not mean they will necessarily be present for the whole of the delivery time). See 2.2 and Appendix A: Job description and person specification.

4.3 With the possible exception of guest lectures on their research topic (which should be reviewed by their supervisor before delivery), PGSTs are not responsible for originating either the content of a module or any session they support or its assessment regime. However, PGSTs may be involved in programme and module review by being invited to report back on their teaching experience.

4.4 PGSTs will not be independently responsible for any elements of coursework or exam assessment. Where they are used as part of a marking team, this should be under strict supervision, with a detailed marking schedule/criteria, and their marking will be subject to moderation to ensure that its standard is consistent with others, before the provisional mark is communicated to the student being assessed or in accordance with the university's policy on marking and assessment.

4.5 It is expected that there is a properly structured and progressive supervisory regime in place delivered by the module leader or other academic team member in advance of all activities. For example:

- PGSTs would be expected to have completed a laboratory and discussed it with the laboratory supervisor before demonstrating in the laboratory.
- They would be expected to have been provided with marking criteria for any coursework marking and discussed how to apply them with a supervisor.
- In the case of problem classes and tutorials, they would be expected to have completed all the problems themselves and discussed the solutions with a supervisor.
- Any lectures contributed to a module would be likely to be in the form of 'guest lectures', perhaps related to the student's research topic, and would be supervised and observed by the lecturer.
- All seminars and lectures given should be witnessed by the academic lead before the PGST addresses students.
- Studio supervision (like laboratory demonstrating) should not be undertaken without PGSTs also having recourse to a fully trained academic supervisor, who would continue to have formal academic responsibility for the studio/laboratory.

5. Induction, training and feedback

5.1 PGSTs should undertake the Effective Learning and Teaching at DMU (ELT@DMU) course (or equivalent) before providing any teaching support; however, this course does not provide any of the subject-specific training and support required, which are outlined above (see Supervision and support).

5.2 In addition, PGSTs must receive an appropriate induction (which will be monitored and overseen by the Doctoral College or equivalent) to include the following as appropriate:

- An induction into teaching in their faculty/school.
- Training in health and safety procedures and provided with information of all risks and controls required as an outcome of any risk assessments.

- Training in the use of any specialist equipment required for demonstrating or other techniques specific to the faculty/school.
- Provided with information for the module(s) on which they are teaching e.g. module materials, handouts, etc.
- Assigned a mentor with whom they should meet regularly to discuss their specific teaching duties and responsibilities, the modules within which their teaching takes place, their progress and any problems and marking conventions within the faculty/school.
- Informed about relevant administrative procedures e.g. plagiarism and cheating, late or non-submission of work, monitoring attendance at classes.
- Advised of any reasonable adjustments identified as part of an assessment of need for a disabled student that they will be engaged in teaching.
- Appropriate assessment training where PGSTs are involved in assessment.

5.3 The faculty, or an appropriate person within the faculty (e.g. faculty head of research students), should ensure that clear procedures are in place for reviewing the professional development and performance of PGSTs. These procedures should include student feedback forms and constructive / qualitative feedback on their performance from the module leader/lecturer in a timely manner.

5.4 Recognising the need to ensure a high quality undergraduate student learning experience, faculties/schools should take appropriate action if the feedback from review procedures is negative, in accordance with normal university performance management principles and processes.

6. Terms and conditions

Pay

6.1 The grade for a PGST is E, spinal point 23 and PGSTs are paid per hour for all hours worked in accordance with their Schedule of Hours. The hourly rate will also apply to any hours of approved training attended by the PGST in furtherance of their role as a PGST.

6.2 The hourly rate of pay specified above applies whether or not the student is in receipt of a bursary or any other funding or subsistence from DMU or from any other source. Where PGR students are in receipt of scholarships and bursaries this does not imply any expectation or requirement to provide teaching support services in exchange for accepting the scholarship/bursary. (See 2.1 above).

6.3 If a PGR student is expected to take responsibility for the preparation, delivery and assessment of a learning programme to a class of students at DMU, they should be employed and remunerated in accordance with the Procedure for Part-Time (Hourly Paid) Lecturers (subject to the appropriate working hours limit or any other restrictions).

Hours

6.4 The Quality Code guidance recommends that teaching duties for PGR students are not so intensive or time consuming as to affect completion of their research degree.

6.5 Subject to any conditions imposed by any grant/scholarship/bursary they are in receipt of or any restrictions on working hours imposed by the terms of their visa, registered full-time PGR students may undertake teaching opportunities which will normally be no more than 6 hours

per week on average across the teaching year including any required or mandatory training, preparation, delivery and assessment duties. It should also be noted that the Student Regulations (as amended from time to time) impose a working hours limit of 15 hours per week for full time students.

6.6 Full-time PGR students who wish to undertake paid teaching-related activities should seek approval from their supervisor (approval not to be unreasonably withheld) before undertaking any such paid employment to ensure that this will not adversely affect the time available for the conduct of the research. If the supervisor reasonably believes that the hours proposed to be undertaken will have an adverse impact on the conduct of the research (or will contravene any other restriction on working hours e.g. visa restrictions), they might decide to approve the work but subject to certain conditions e.g. fewer hours. The relevant PVC/Dean (or their nominee) will review decisions and adjudicate on cases where a PGR student believes that approval has been unreasonably withheld.

Holidays

6.7 PGSTs will accrue an entitlement to paid statutory holidays at a rate of 12.07% for each hour worked as recorded in accordance with 6.1.

6.8 As PGSTs may be required to undertake teaching at specific times on specific courses or modules they are not expected to take their holiday at the times they have been scheduled to teach.

7. Monitoring

7.1 The use of PGR students engaged in teaching / demonstrating duties will be monitored annually by the Doctoral College or equivalent and reported to the academic JNC. Such monitoring will include:

- Hours worked including any hours worked in excess of the working hours limits specified above.
- Analysis of equalities data to monitor the diversity of research students engaged in teaching opportunities.

<u>Agreement</u>

This agreement is signed on behalf of the University and College Union (UCU):

Signed:

Name: Martin Morgan-Taylor, Branch Chair

This is agreement is signed on behalf of De Montfort University:

Signed:
Name: Professor Rusi Jaspal, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)

On Date:

Appendix A: Job description and person specification

Job Description

Postgraduate Student Teacher (PGST)

[Faculty/Directorate]
Grade: E

	Duties of the role
Overall purpose of the role	Undertake supervised laboratory demonstrating duties and other teaching-related activities supporting the work of the department.
Main duties and responsibilities	1. Undertake laboratory demonstrating or studio supervision. (Laboratory demonstrating should be witnessed by the academic lead before demonstrations to students take place.) 2. Following appropriate oversight from academic leads, give tutorials and problem classes, as appropriate, in support of the required teaching commitments and contribute limited elements to lecture courses. 3. Mark laboratory reports and course work (including essays and in some cases examination papers) under appropriate supervision and in line with marking criteria provided by the academic lead. (All marking will be subject to moderation). 4. Contribute under supervision either synchronously or asynchronously to online content and course delivery e.g. through Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or other online tools. 5. Ensure that student feedback on teaching is sought through questionnaires and other means, and to respond constructively to such feedback and to advice from peers. 6. Attend training relevant to the role including any mandatory training elements. 7. Treat all DMU staff, students, contractors and visitors with dignity and respect. Provide a service that complies with the Equality Act 2010, eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations with particular attention to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (or none), sex and sexual orientation.

	Duties of the role
	8. Take care of own health and safety and that of others, observe applicable safety rules and follow instructions for the safe use of equipment.

Person Specification

Postgraduate Student Teacher (PGST)

Faculty/Directorate

Area of responsibility	Requirements	Essential or desirable	*Method of assessment			
			A	I	T	D
Teaching and learning support	Ability to articulate and present complex ideas and share knowledge / understanding with students.	Essential		✓	✓	
	A demonstrable commitment to updating own knowledge, skills and pedagogic practice.	Essential	✓	✓		
	Ability to give feedback in a constructive and balanced way that builds trust and confidence and supports learning outcomes.	Essential		✓	✓	
	High standard of written and oral communication skills.	Essential		✓	✓	
Research and scholarship	Degree in related discipline.	Essential	✓			✓
	Research interests in related discipline.	Essential	✓	✓		
	Studying towards a PhD.	Essential	✓			✓
Information technology	Proficient with Microsoft office applications or similar and familiarity with using online tools.	Essential	✓		✓	
Liaison and networking	Ability to work independently as well as part of a team on research and teaching related activities.	Essential		✓	✓	
Equality and diversity	Sensitivity to a diverse range of staff or student needs and ability to respond to their different needs.	Essential	✓	✓		

Area of responsibility	Requirements	Essential or desirable	*Method of assessment			
			A	I	T	D
	Able to demonstrate a desire to support students at all levels and from all backgrounds.	Essential	✓	✓		

***A = Application Form; I = Interview; T = Test; D = Documentary Evidence**