

Postgraduate Researchers Engaged in Teaching Policy

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar and Chief Operating Officer
Relevant to:	LJMU Staff and Postgraduate Research Students
Approved by:	Academic Board, 10 June 2020
Responsibility for Document Review:	Dean, Doctoral Academy
Date introduced:	November 2010
Date(s) modified:	November 2012, November 2014, September 2016, June 2020, April 2021
Next Review Date:	April 2023

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Universities UK Concordat to Support Research Integrity, 2012
QAA Research Degree Characteristics, 2011
UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Research Degrees, 2018
UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B11: Research degrees

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

Research Degrees Framework
Code of Conduct for Staff
LJMU Code of Practice for Research

Policy for Postgraduate Researchers Engaged in Teaching

1. Scope of Policy

- 1.1. This Policy applies to Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) registered at Liverpool John Moores University who are engaged in teaching at the University.
- 1.2. The Policy applies only to individuals whose primary relationship with the University is as a PGR student, including those PGR students who contribute to teaching through a PGTA scheme. It does **not** apply to those PGRs who are primarily academics of the University and who are permitted to register for a research degree.
- 1.3. The term *teaching* is an umbrella term used throughout the Policy to denote all educational activities including, but not limited to: preparation, demonstrating, lecturing, giving tutorials and seminar delivery.
- 1.4. The Director of School (or their nominee) has oversight of PGRs who are engaged in teaching within their School, and is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. Employment in a teaching or related capacity provides an excellent opportunity for PGRs to develop valuable personal and transferable skills. It also contributes to ensuring that research informs teaching and enables our undergraduate students to engage with those who are working at the cutting edge of their disciplines.
- 2.2. The University recognises that the employment of PGRs carries a responsibility both towards (i) the research student, to ensure that their ability to complete their research degree programme successfully within the expected maximum period is not put at risk, and (ii) the students being taught, to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is safeguarded.
- 2.3. The University is therefore committed to providing PGRs with appropriate teaching and professional development opportunities, consistent with its responsibilities to support research students and to maintain teaching quality and academic standards. It should be noted that the University is under no obligation to engage PGRs in teaching. Equally, teaching is to be undertaken by postgraduates on a voluntary basis only, and they should not be pressurised into taking on unwelcome teaching commitments. Additionally, the scope for teaching opportunities varies between different Schools and PGR students should not assume such opportunities will always be available.

3. Recruitment and Selection

- 3.1 The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity in respect to employment. In selecting research students for teaching, Directors of School should ensure that the University's equal opportunities standards are applied. This will normally involve advertising opportunities to all eligible students in the School and giving them the opportunity to put themselves forward for consideration, and for the School to apply a fair selection policy.

- 3.2 Where the requirement for teaching forms part of a Scholarship, there must be transparency in terms of expectation and reward. The requirement to teach should form part of the interview for the Scholarship, and be set out in the Terms and Conditions of the Stipend Agreement.
- 3.3 Information about the University's equal opportunities policy is available on the Human Resources portal page: <https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/edi/about-edi-at-ljmu>.

4. Appointment

- 4.1 Directors of School, in consultation with the Lead Supervisor, should ensure that any employment will not compromise the PGR student's ability to complete a research degree programme within the time set by both the University and the student's funding body (where applicable).
- 4.2 The employment by the University of PGRs is subject to the normal provisions of employment law.
- 4.3 Prior to commencing their employment, PGRs must be issued with a letter of appointment, which confirms the terms and conditions of employment, sets out the method of payment, and specifies their duties.
- 4.4 Employment will be conditional on the PGR's continued status as a registered student of the University: where a student so employed ceases to be a student of the University, their employment will automatically cease. (This does not preclude the individual from being appointed to any other post with the University, subject to the University's normal policies and procedures for appointment.) Lead Supervisors should approve any teaching employment within the Thesis Pending period to ensure that timely completion is not compromised.

5. Maximum Hours of Work

- 5.1 Care must be taken to ensure that employment in teaching does not impede the progress of the PGR's research degree studies. Employment of a full-time student should not normally exceed *6 hours per week* and in all cases must not exceed *180 hours per year* averaged over the course of the academic year.
- 5.2 The limit of 180 hours per academic year for full-time students incorporates related activities such as seminar or demonstrating preparation. It is recognised that some full-time PGRs may need to work in order to survive financially and those who wish to undertake paid activities beyond 180 hours should discuss the potential impact on their studies with their Lead Supervisor. The Director of School is responsible for considering and granting approval for such cases. He or she must ensure that the discussion to exceed 180 hours is documented and that the decision is recorded. Additionally, the Director of School must ensure that the situation is monitored in order to verify that there is no adverse academic impact on the progress of the individual's research.

Additionally the Lead Supervisor should remind any full time student that exceeding the 180 hour level, if they are in receipt of bursaries, could impact their tax exemption and make the bursary taxable. It must be remembered that bursaries are for living expenses to allow the student to study.

- 5.3 All students funded by sponsoring bodies (including Research Councils, Charities and other Sponsors, including Faculties/Schools) are required to observe the limits they impose.

- 5.4 Part-time students are not subject to restrictions imposed by the University on the number of hours of paid work undertaken, but their Lead Supervisor has responsibility for ensuring guidance is given on the amount of time that should be devoted to their research programme.
- 5.5 International students do not require permission to undertake certain categories of work: part-time work (defined as a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time); a work placement that forms a necessary part of the course of study; or vacation work (which may be full-time). In all cases, any such employment must be of a temporary nature. The student must also register with the Department of Work and Pensions and HM Revenue & Customs for National Insurance and Income Tax purposes. However, the expectation would be that such students would adhere to the University maximum levels of teaching activity (6 hours/week or 180 hours/academic year) to prevent any adverse impact on their studies.

6. Salary and Payment

- 6.1 PGRs must be employed on approved University rates of pay. Guidelines on employing sessional staff and rates of pay can be found at:

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/hr/az-of-employment-policies-and-guidelines-and-forms#S>

7. Training and Induction

- 7.1 The University requires that all postgraduates with teaching responsibilities receive appropriate training and guidance. The Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA) will deliver the training and maintain a register of those students who have attended. The training delivered is taken from the University's teaching practice programme – '3is – Information, Ideas & Insights' (which sits outside the Academic Framework) – and is available for all postgraduates with teaching responsibilities and LJMU staff. The training must be completed prior to the commencement of any teaching activity.

On request, students will receive an LJMU Certificate on completion.

- 7.2 Postgraduate research students who teach will be required, as a minimum, to complete the following workshops:

3is Induction

This session will introduce participants to the programme and the UK Professional Standards Framework and Code of Practice for Fellowship. The requirements for the Microteaching workshop are covered in detail, along with the professional values that embody the programme.

Planning for Learning

This workshop will consider key planning issues before teaching begins e.g. ideas for getting to know students and using the environment to promote learning. Lesson planning for effective learning will be covered and the importance of the developing learning communities emphasised. Consideration of how research or professional practice can inform planning for learning will be discussed.

Small Group Teaching

This workshop will enable students to explore a range of ideas for promoting student learning in small groups. Learning styles will be discussed, and students will have an opportunity to explore their own approaches to learning. This session also introduces some of the research associated with how students learn in groups and will cover the variety of teaching methods that can be utilised in this type of teaching.

Working with Large Groups

This session will provide an opportunity to discuss lecturing techniques and explore a range of ideas to enable learning in large groups. This session will also explain how to make lectures and support materials inclusive to ensure that students have an equal learning opportunity. The session will also consider how to structure subject matter to promote effective learning in large group teaching sessions.

Microteaching

Students will be required to deliver a 10 minute teaching session in front of a small group of peers also completing the training (6-8 students). They will engage in a tutor-led feedback discussion with the group at the end and receive peer and tutor feedback on their teaching session to inform their practice.

- 7.3 The 3is programme is delivered across two days, and runs three times per academic year: September, October/November and January/February.
- 7.4 The TLA will contact the Directors of School (or designate) at the end of each training block to confirm which students have completed/are enrolled on training.

8. Teaching Duties and Responsibilities

- 8.1 PGRs employed in teaching related activities are responsible to the Director of School (or nominee).
- 8.2 Where a School/Faculty employs a PGR for teaching duties, it is their responsibility to provide clear and comprehensive information to enable the PGR to carry out their tasks and duties effectively. Subject to completion of appropriate and necessary training, a PGR may be employed to:
- Deliver tutorials, workshops, and lead/facilitate seminars; and
 - Assist in laboratory/practical demonstration classes.
- 8.3 Postgraduate Research Students **must not** be responsible for curriculum or module design, but may be involved in the design of teaching activities. PGRs should not:
- Be responsible for setting tutorial topics;
 - Develop essay questions;
 - Be routinely expected to put in more time preparing for a session than they are paid for;
 - Be substantially responsible for the delivery and/or support of any module or module component, or designated as module leader;
 - Give lectures, except when the topic being taught is closely related to the doctoral student's own research studies. In such exceptional cases, the PGR should not be responsible for a substantial series of lectures, and must be adequately guided by the responsible academic;
 - Be involved in the assessment of work at any level.

Any teaching undertaken by postgraduates should be included in module/programme review.

9. Supporting and Monitoring PGRs in the Teaching Community

- 9.1 As part of the overall monitoring and teaching quality assurance, Schools and Faculties will need to ensure that mechanisms are in place to monitor and provide feedback on the teaching contribution of postgraduate teachers. PGRs 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 an academic mentor who has had the opportunity to observe the postgraduate teaching using the Institution's Teaching Observation Scheme in operation at the time.
- 9.2 Postgraduates must:
- Receive an induction into teaching in their School;
 - Receive training in relevant Health and Safety procedures;
 - Be fully informed of all risks and controls required as an outcome of any risk assessments;
 - Receive training in the use of any special equipment required for demonstrating or other techniques specific to the School or Faculty;
 - Receive all information for the module(s) on which they are teaching – module materials, Canvas offerings and so on;
 - Be assigned an appropriate 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;
 - Be kept informed about relevant changes to academic policy, for example attendance policy;
 - Be advised of any reasonable adjustments identified as part of an 'assessment of need' for a disabled student that they will be engaged in teaching.
- 9.3 Schools and Faculties should also have appropriate mechanisms in place to enable PGRs to provide feedback on issues related to employment, training, and support. Issues arising should be considered by the appropriate School or Faculty Committee, or equivalent. For example, by the School's Senior Management Team (SMT) or Faculty Education Committee or Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.
- 9.4 Performance issues should be managed in accordance with Section 11 below.
- 9.5 The University's Research Degrees Committee (RDC) will monitor the opportunities to undertake teaching, and the experiences of PGR students who teach through its PGR forum and through the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES).

10. Termination of Teaching

- 10.1 The engagement will automatically terminate when the individual is no longer registered as a PGR at the University or whenever the teaching activities have been completed.
- 10.2 The University may withdraw its offer to engage PGRs in teaching or discontinue the engagement without prior notice in the following circumstances:
- Where it is identified that teaching is compromising the studies of a Postgraduate Research Student;
 - If the Postgraduate Research Student regularly fails to carry out teaching that they have accepted without providing prior notice;
 - If the standard of performance/conduct is deemed to be unsatisfactory by the Director of School (or formal nominee).

11. Grievances and Disciplinary Procedures

11.1 Any concerns that the PGR may have relating to their employment by the University – including the termination of employment – will be managed in accordance with the Grievance Procedure:

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/hr/az-of-employment-policies-and-guidelines-and-forms#G>

11.2 Where the Faculty has concerns that a PGR student is not fulfilling their duties effectively, the School will make arrangements to discuss its concerns with the PGR and their Lead Supervisor, and agree appropriate remedies. Where, following such meetings, the PGR's performance does not improve to the required standard, the Faculty should take advice from HR. The University's Disciplinary Procedure applies to all staff employed by the University:

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/hr/az-of-employment-policies-and-guidelines-and-forms#G>