

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUPPORT HANDBOOK

Chapter 21 - Part-time teachers: code of good practice

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This code of good practice applies to all staff delivering programmes awarded by the University of Exeter, including at Validation Partner Institutions.
- 1.2. Part-time staff make an invaluable contribution to the University's learning and teaching processes. They can bring a breadth of informed experience to the curriculum and an enthusiasm that can enliven the learning process.
- 1.3. The quality of the student experience should not differentiate between the status of those teaching them, whether permanent or temporary, full-time or part-time. It follows, therefore, that part-time teachers should be subject to the same quality controls that apply to those on permanent contracts. They should also have access to appropriate staff development opportunities to enhance their performance. This code seeks to outline the quality assurance arrangements that should guide Faculties (or delegated Schools/ other academic units) in their engagement of such teachers.
- 1.4. Further information can be found on the [Postgraduate Teaching Associate \(PTA\) webpages](#) which should be read in conjunction with the guidance set out in this Code of Good Practice.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This code applies to the following categories of non-permanent, part-time teachers:
 - a. Tutors engaged for CPD and other programmes.
 - b. Demonstrators.
 - c. Graduate Teaching Assistants.
 - d. Postdoctoral Fellows and other postgraduates employed to teach elements of undergraduate modules.
- 2.2. Research student supervision does not fall within the scope of the code.
- 2.3. The code also does not apply to 'guest' lecturers who deliver less than six hours of lectures and/or student contact time per semester/term and have no role in assessment.
- 2.4. A separate code of good practice offers additional advice on the particular role of research students as teachers.

3. Recruitment

- 3.1. Before engaging part-time teachers, Faculties (or delegated Schools) must be satisfied of their competence appropriate to the intended teaching responsibilities through interview ahead of appointment.
- 3.2. Part-time teachers, including demonstrators and PTAs / Graduate TAs (GTAs), should be fully briefed by one or more relevant members of the permanent academic staff of the Faculty (or delegated School), including one of the leaders of the modules to which the individual will contribute. The holding of such interviews should be formally noted by a Faculty (or delegated School) within its staff records.

In all cases, candidates should be requested to provide independent evaluative comment on a relevant sample of any teaching assignments carried out elsewhere. This procedure for interview and reference need not be applied to the re-engagement as part-time teachers of experienced staff (including former full-time staff of the Faculty (or delegated School)).
- 3.3. A full and current list of part-time teachers should be maintained by a Faculty (or delegated School) including details of the modules to which they contribute. A full curriculum vitae should be held by the College for each part-time teacher it employs.
- 3.4. The duties of a teacher should be expressly specified prior to the commencement of employment, as a written agreement between the Pro-Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty and the individual.
- 3.5. A Faculty (or delegated School) should consult Human Resources where the procedure for engaging a particular teacher is in doubt and on their eligibility for appointment on a part-time academic contract.

4. Staff Development

- 4.1. Certain categories of part-time teachers, such as PTAs/GTAs, are required under their contracts to undertake training programmes organised by Academic Development. Other teachers should be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses, most notably the Learning and Teaching in HE programme (LTHE), details of which can be found on the [Staff Learning and Development website](#). This is particularly important where they have had only limited classroom experience.

- 4.2. Faculties (or delegated Schools) should provide their part-time teachers with an induction session introducing them to the academic management and support mechanisms of the Faculty (or delegated School).
- 4.3. Faculties (or delegated Schools) should make their part-time teachers aware of relevant regulations and legal issues, including but not limited to copyright, plagiarism, data protection, health and safety, equality and diversity and any ethical issues that might arise during the course of their teaching responsibilities.
- 4.4. Part-time teachers should have an identified access route through a full-time member of academic staff to support and advice within the Faculty (or delegated School).
- 4.5. Faculty (or delegated School) budgets in support of staff development should include allowance for the needs of part-time teachers.
- 4.6. Faculties (or delegated Schools) should maintain records of the training courses undertaken by part-time teachers.

5. Assessment Duties

- 5.1. Part-time teachers, who have no previous experience of assessment at the relevant level, should receive training in assessment methods appropriate to the learning outcomes of any modules in which they are involved in the assessment process. They should be encouraged to attend the sessions on assessment which form part of the Learning and Teaching in a HE programme, details of which are on the [Staff Learning and Development website](#).
- 5.2. Assignments marked by part-time teachers contributing to student progression or a final award should be subject to no less than the same mechanisms for the oversight and moderation of marking as applicable to other academic staff in a Faculty (or delegated School). Any less intensive approach must be justified, approved and recorded in the minutes of the appropriate Faculty (or delegated School) teaching committee.

6. Evaluation

- 6.1. Modules taught by part-time teachers should be subject to the same student evaluation processes used for other modules by the home Faculty (or delegated School) or academic unit.
- 6.2. Where the input of such staff is limited to a small component, student opinion should still be invited.
- 6.3. The results of student evaluation should be notified to teachers and a summary made available to students (which may, for instance, be through the Faculty (or delegated School) teaching or student/staff liaison committees).
- 6.4. Classes taken by part-time teachers should be subject to their Faculty's (or delegated School's) peer observation scheme. Early observation and interim student evaluation could be beneficial where the teacher is inexperienced.
- 6.5. Where opportunities for enhancing the skills of a teacher are identified under the quality assurance processes outlined above, the teacher should be advised by the Pro-Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty on action that might be taken to effect that enhancement and so improve the learning experience of students.

7. Faculty (or delegated School) Activities

- 7.1. Part-time teachers should be invited to attend Faculty (or delegated School) meetings appropriate to their contribution to the Faculty's (or delegated School's) teaching activities. These could include teaching development away days and seminars.
- 7.2. Attendance of part-time teachers at Faculty (or delegated School) meetings and other formal Faculty (or delegated School) committees will depend on their status. Consideration of their inclusion on a Board of Studies is likely to relate to the scale of their teaching input to a particular programme. The Pro-Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean of the Faculty should clarify with the teacher which committees he or she would be invited to attend.

8. Monitoring

- 8.1. A Faculty's (or delegated School's) procedures towards the employment of part-time teachers will be monitored through the University's central Quality Review processes.
- 8.2. Faculties (or delegated Schools) should also ensure that their procedures are sufficiently well documented and embedded to allow other forms of audit, including those that are external, to be assured of their effectiveness.

Further Guidance on the employment of self-employed teachers can be found here [Engaging Self Employed People.](#)