



Fair Conditions for Postgraduate Students with Teaching Responsibilities

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The Union Notes:

- That a number of postgraduate students at Lincoln provide academic labour for the university in the form of teaching, marking, demonstrating and a number of other jobs.
- That this labour is vital to the functioning of campus life here at the University of Lincoln.
- That both nationally and locally there are issues of; poor or non-existent pay; insufficient training, induction and support; delays in receiving proper contracts and issues around what material provisions there are such as office/desk space amongst other things for postgraduate students who perform academic labour for the university.

The Union Believes:

- All staff, including postgraduate students, deserve to be properly trained, remunerated and supported.
- That good teaching conditions mean good learning conditions, and that therefore the quality of education received by all students is dependent on good working conditions for all staff.
- That teaching and other academic work opportunities are invaluable for the career progression of early career academics, and that the university should seek to provide these wherever possible, but that this should not come at the cost of poor working conditions.

- A postgraduate student should never be forced to teach without pay as part of their doctoral programme.
- Postgraduate students who teach should be treated on an equal basis with academic colleagues and given opportunities to engage as professionals with the teaching culture in their subject, in line with the Student as Producer ethos.

The Union Resolves:

- To support the following principles regarding postgraduate working conditions, and actively work to uphold/campaign on them where possible:
 - Fair, transparent and equitable appointment procedures:
 - All postgraduate research students should be afforded equal opportunities to apply and be selected for teaching opportunities through a formalised, consistent and transparent process. All positions should be adequately advertised such that qualified students are able to apply for the role, understand the remit that is expected of them, and receive a contract stating working hours, amount and regularity of pay, provision for sickness and holiday leave and the recognised trade union.
 - A fair rate of pay for all hours worked
 - All postgraduate students currently enrolled at the university, who have teaching responsibilities should be remunerated, and this should include recognition of time spent on preparation, marking, administration, attending lectures and supporting students.
 - Support mechanisms for postgraduate students who teach
 - Supervision or mentoring and review of progress provided by a suitably qualified staff member who is not the research supervisor. Postgraduate students who teach should be able to raise issues, and seek advice from, a single academic point of contact who is qualified to supervise postgraduate teaching and who is in a position potentially to provide an academic reference in the future. Formal and informal feedback on performance and support for improvement should be provided by a more senior academic manager or mentor who has had the opportunity to observe the postgraduate teaching.
 - Postgraduate students with teaching responsibilities should have an induction into discipline-specific teaching practice and an introduction to course materials, teaching methods, modes of assessment and feedback and student complaint procedures. There should be opportunities to develop specific teaching skills such as teaching students with specific support needs, introduction to pedagogic theories and additional language support for international students.

- All postgraduate students with teaching responsibilities should be afforded the opportunity to undertake a nationally accredited course in Higher Education teaching, where applicable.
- Where appropriate for the Students' Union to engage with the University and College Union or other applicable bodies to best represent the needs of postgraduate students (in their capacity as students) who teach, in line with the Students' Union's charitable objects as identified here:
 - *The objectives of the University of Lincoln Students' Union (SU) are the advancement of education at the University of Lincoln for the public benefit by:*
 - being the recognised representative channel between our members and the University of Lincoln and any other external bodies;¹

¹ <http://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details?regid=1138187&subid=0>