

## Education Zone December 2019 – Clear Policy on Supervision Duties of Research Students

### What is the current situation at UCL related to this proposal?

With regards to these tasks being allocated to PhD students by their supervisor, the motion is correct in suggesting that there is no guidance or best practice for supervisors on allocating their PhD student supervision tasks for UG and PGT students. The closest thing on offer is the UCL Good Supervision Guide, put together in 2018 by a PhD candidate based on interviews with Faculty Graduate Tutors and covers a wide range of best practice for supervisors, but does not set expectations about the allocation of work in this area.<sup>1</sup>

However, UCL does have a code of practice that is produced for Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PGTAs), regulating their pay and conditions. This code of practice states the following rights for PGTAs:

- » They should be paid on Grade 5 or Grade 6 of the UCL non-clinical salary scale.<sup>2</sup>
- » Pay should be for contact hours, preparation of teaching material and assessment of work, in accordance with the ratio agreed by the Teaching Committee.
- » Departments are encouraged to confirm to PGTA staff the minimum number of hours they will be requested to work.

There are also expectations set as to the amount of hours that PGTAs are expected to work, with the code of practice stating that those undertaking this role “must be given adequate time to pursue their research and not be overburdened with teaching responsibilities which would be likely to limit the student’s capacity to complete a thesis in the due time”. For every hour of teaching PGTAs should normally be paid between 1.5 to 3 hours to reflect the preparation and follow-up. In addition, maximum teaching loads are set out as follows:

- » Full time students undertaking a PGTA role should normally have a maximum load of 180 hours per year (to include teaching preparation and training).
- » No more than an average of 6 hours per week over the year.

Departments are also required to keep records of hours worked to ensure that this requirement is met.

### Are there any legal implications to this policy proposal?

No

### Does this relate to any existing SU policy?

No

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/sites/teaching-learning/files/ucl\\_good\\_supervision\\_guide\\_2018-19\\_screen.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/sites/teaching-learning/files/ucl_good_supervision_guide_2018-19_screen.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-benefits/salary-scales>

Are there any financial, resource or stakeholder/ public relations issues with this policy proposal?

No

What would the next steps be if the motion passed?

Meeting between the motion proposer and the Postgraduate Students' Officer to identify relevant stakeholders to lobby on this issue and develop some broad principles that could be captured within a policy on this issue.