





## Postgraduate students:

being an employee means you have certain specific rights in law: While the Postgraduate Employment Charter outlines good practice,

- full statement of your terms and The Employment Rights Act 1996 states conditions when you start your job. that you should have a contract with a
- Part-time workers have the right to be staff doing work of equal value be paid equal pay to other members of employees. This means that you should favourably than comparable permanent treated no less favourably than have the right to be treated no less contracts. Similarly, fixed-term employees comparable workers on full-time
- paid) then you may be able to challenge you are part-time or fixed-term (or hourly If you don't and the reason is because staff including computing facilities, You should also have the same access photocopying and secretarial support. work facilities as other members of
- and you should be provided with You should be paid for all hours worked

- You should have access to a grievance complaint. procedure if you need to make a formal
- an agreed disciplinary, capability or should be handled in accordance with Any complaints about you or your work
- You have the legal right to join a union.
- work space Your employer has a legal responsibility and you should have a safe and healthy for the health, welfare and safety of staff
- orientation, race, disability, age, religion or belief or your membership of or You should not be discriminated against non-membership of a trade union. on the grounds of your sex, sexual
- If you are made redundant and have As an employee you have the right not entitled to redundancy pay worked for at least two years you are to be unfairly dismissed after two years.



www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/postgrad

For more information on postgraduate emploment, visit our website:

application form from your local UCU branch

You can join UCU by visiting www.ucu.org.uk/join or by picking up an

Many postgraduates are actively involved in their local UCU branches. Many branches

have a specific officer to represent postgraduate students.

UCU offer professional development courses and downloadable resources covering a

range of topics for postgraduates and early career researchers.

UCU fights for greater job security for staff on fixed-term and hourly-paid contracts.

Joining UCU gives you collective strength: UCU exerts an important influence on institutional and national higher education policy and conditions of employment

Postgraduates who aren't employed by their institution can join UCU as student

members for FREE.

related to their employment.

# know your employment rights!

Contact your local UCU branch to see if you can work together to lobby your institution

to implement the Postgraduate Employment Charter

How students' unions can use the charter

Students' unions should encourage postgraduates employed by their institution to join

UCU so that they can be represented in employment issues that a students' union has

less authority or expertise on.

Postgraduates in employment have the right to join a trade union and UCU has the capacity to represent employed postgraduates if they have grievances and issues

Why postgraduates should join UCU

Together with your institution, UCU, and postgraduate students, explore whether there

are effective and appropriate policies on support for postgraduates who are employed

by the institution and for postgraduates that teach, and suggest improvements.

Approach postgraduates on what kinds of support and representation they are lacking

and how they would like the principles of the Charter to be put into practice

#### Key stats

received formal training (only 40% in clinical medicine)	62%
of postgraduate students had taught or demonstrated at their institution during their research programme	51%
Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2013	Postgraduate Re

#### 2012 Postgraduates who teach survey

agreed they received appropriate support and guidance, 29% disagreed

43% believed	50% did	49% of p
believed that they were receiving an unfair level of pay for their work	did not receive a full contract of employment	of postgraduates that teach at UK HEIs did not receive a job description

22%	) )	30%	
of postgraduates were expected to teach without any formal training from their	in real terms	of postBladuate teachers earliess than the hadronal millimin wage	

university or department

of postgraduate teachers receive no feedback on their teaching from the module lecturer	of postgraduate teachers receive no feedl	of postgraduate teachers have no departmental representation and a furthe
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Many postgraduates are "forced" to teach, regardless of their interest or ability, as part of their course, or as a prerequisite for a scholarship or bursary.

of postgraduate teachers were either members of a trade

union or were interested in joining one

humanities subjects are the least happy with their pay: on average, they are only paid for one in every three hours worked. Postgraduates teaching in arts and

# Postgraduate employment charter

#### 1 Fair, transparent and equitable appointment procedures

Postgraduates should be offered employment opportunities at their institution though a formal and transparent process. Positions should be advertised with a job description such that qualified students are equally able to apply for the role and understand the work that is expected of them. Successful applicants should receive a contract stating working hours, amount and regularity of pay, provision for sickness and holiday leave and the recognised trade union.

#### 2 A fair rate of pay for all hours worked

All postgraduates who teach should be paid, and this should include recognition of time spent on preparation, marking, administration, attending lectures and supporting students. UCU recommends 2.5 times the hourly rate for every teaching hour, based on a salary spine point in the university pay scale. It should be clear how payment and taxation processes are managed and, for international students, how National Insurance numbers are obtained.

#### 3 Compulsory teaching and teaching bursaries

A postgraduate student should never be forced to teach without pay as part of their doctoral programme, or as a criteria for receiving a fee waiver or other non-cash bursary. Bursaries or scholarships which require a student to teach should provide at least the cash equivalent a student would receive if they were regularly employed to teach, as well as the same employment rights and support as those on regular employment contracts.

# 2 Supervision or mentoring, line management, and review of progress provided by a suitably qualified staff member who is not the research supervisor

Postgraduates 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.

# 5 Formal and informal feedback on performance and support for improvement

In the case of postgraduates that teach this should include the feedback of students and that of a more senior academic manager or mentor who has had the opportunity to observe the postgraduate teaching.

## 6 Induction and initial training, and support for continuing professional development

In addition to standard training provided by their institution, postgraduate teachers 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 teaching staff should be able to undertake a nationally accredited course in higher education teaching.

#### Representation within the institution and by a trade union

Postgraduates that teach should have representation on teaching and learning committees and/or student-staff liaison groups at department and faculty or school level. Postgraduates have the right to be an active member of a recognised trade union and to be represented by that union to their institution.

#### 8 Integration into the professiona academic culture

Postgraduates in employment should be treated on an equal basis with academic colleagues and given opportunities to engage as professionals with the teaching culture in their subject. For example, postgraduates who teach should be eligible for teaching awards.

## 9 Access to the necessary facilities and resources required to undertake the role

These could include printing and photocopying, use of teaching rooms, stationery and equipment, office space, a storage facility and access to online learning environments.

#### A reasonable balance between employment and research

Postgraduates benefit from professional development opportunities offered by working for their institution, but care should be taken to ensure that employment does not take precedence over research and successful completion of the doctoral thesis.



