Policy on Postgraduate Research Students who Teach

1. Introduction
1.1 The University of Bristol values the contribution of postgraduates in the teaching and assessment of undergraduate students. This provides valuable experience for our Postgraduate Research (PGR) students, many of whom are considering an academic career. Given this, the University encourages its PGR students to apply to undertake suitable teaching activities, whenever the opportunity arises.

1.2 The involvement of PGR students in the teaching process has mutual benefits for students and staff:
- undergraduates benefit from interacting with individuals who are often closer to their experience of being a student than academic staff;
- the PGR student gains valuable transferable skills to benefit their career development by participating in teaching and the wider activities of their school;
- staff are supported in providing research-led teaching.

2. Opportunities to Teach
2.1 All PGR students should be made aware of any teaching opportunities available to them and the process for application, although such opportunities to teach will vary across schools, dependent upon the subject and its preferred models of delivery.

2.2 The process and arrangements for selecting PGR students to be involved in the teaching process should be fair and transparent. Selection will be based on teaching requirements and the PGR students' communication skills and knowledge of the subject.

2.3 Unless there is a contractual agreement, PGR students cannot be compelled to take on teaching duties. However, the University strongly encourages students to teach where opportunities exist in light of the benefits outlined in section 1.2.

2.4 Teaching must not impede the successful completion of the student's own research degree and must not contravene any relevant funding conditions. PGR students may only undertake teaching activities with the permission of their supervisor.

3. Activities and Responsibilities
3.1 A PGR student may contribute to the following teaching activities:

- Seminars, tutorials and workshops
- Laboratory and other practical classes, including projects
- Field trips
- Occasional lecturing (see 3.3)
- Assessment and marking, subject to clear marking criteria and suitable moderation.

3.2 In line with recommendations from the UK Research Councils, unless the PGR student holds a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) post their teaching activities should not normally exceed an average of

6 hours per week across the calendar year (including all preparation, assessment and marking), taking into account local circumstances (unit structure, intensive teaching etc) and any particular funder requirements.

3.3 PGR students should not normally deliver lectures, although they may be invited to provide a guest lecture if their research specialism is directly related to the unit.

3.4 A PGR student should not normally be involved in teaching at Masters level, unless they have relevant specialist knowledge and the Faculty PGR Director has approved their involvement.

3.5 PGR students should not be expected to provide pastoral care for other students. They should, however, be made aware of the University's system of pastoral support, and know how to direct students to appropriate members of staff if the need arises.

3.6 PGR students must be contracted for teaching duties and paid the rate agreed within that contract. The contract must be agreed with the Head of School before the PGR student takes up their teaching duties.

4. Training and Support

4.1 All PGR students who undertake teaching must receive appropriate training. This must include:

> • An initial discipline-specific induction, which must be provided by the school before the PGR student undertakes any teaching activity;

> • At least one of the training courses for postgraduate teachers provided by the University (see http://www.bristol.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/academic/)**.** The appropriate course will depend on the PGR student's previous teaching experience, and must be taken within six months of starting to teach.

It is deemed good practice for PGR students to begin their teaching experience by taking part in a co-taught or team-taught unit.

4.2 Each PGR student's teaching (including any assessment) should be mentored and monitored by a member of academic staff (typically the supervisor, the programme or unit director, or the co-teacher on the unit, depending upon local circumstances). The mentor is responsible for providing the PGR student with feedback on their teaching through continuous monitoring/observation and providing guidance on assessment. The mentor must also approve any teaching materials devised by the PGR student.

4.3 A PGR student's experience of teaching, and any related skills development, should be discussed as part of the formal review of their development and progress, in line with the requirements for Annual Progress Review as set out in the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

5. Quality Assurance

5.1 A PGR student should not be named as Unit Director when contributing to a unit, nor should they be members of the Board of Examiners, nor be given any responsibility for the management of programmes.

5.2 Schools must ensure that the extent of the involvement of PGR students in the delivery of a taught programme is managed and reviewed with the overall learning experience of undergraduate (or, if permitted, taught postgraduate) students in mind. The quality of this experience will be central to decision making about the type, content and amount of teaching undertaken by any PGR student.

5.3 As part of standard University quality assurance processes, the school (through the programme or unit directors) must evaluate the performance of PGR students who teach (during and at the end of the teaching activity, and including any assessment) in order to ensure that students receive teaching of the appropriate quality. Such evaluations must take account of the taught student feedback as well as any reports resulting from staff observation of the teaching.