Teaching Support and What It Involves

Volker Seeker

For queries contact Cristina Alexandru
Cristina.Alexandru@ed.ac.uk
Summary

- What is teaching support and why take part?
- Recruitment process
- Contracts and payment
- Available and required training
- How to sign up
What is teaching support?

- A vital part of our teaching, adding to the student experience:
  - Detailed teaching of some course content
  - One-to-one help and in-person feedback
  - Written assessment and feedback
  - Design of practical exercises and activities
  - Planning of lectures, tutorials, labs
  - Etc.

- “Support” for course lecturers
Why take part?

- Pleasurable, rewarding!
- Developing subject area knowledge, discovering new research
- Developing transferrable skills: communication, leadership, presentation, organisation, time management
- Good practice if interested in academic career!
- Boosting your CV

... and payment for your work
Beginning of year: ITO advertises set of roles/course + number of hours/role.

- For UG2->UG5, PGT, PGR students
- Roles help with delivery of the course
- Available roles: tutor, demonstrator, marker, exam marker, teaching assistant (TA)

**You are not alone!** Course organisers:

- Provide guidance and support
- Handle grievances or complaints
- Have ultimate academic responsibility for the course
Available roles

- **Tutor:**
  - Preparation + delivery of tutorial from material
  - Reporting tuttee attendance
  - Answering tuttee questions
  - Providing oral feedback/feedforward to students and the course team on the tutorial material

- **Demonstrator:**
  - Hosting lab session
  - Answering to student queries
  - Providing oral feedback/ feed forward to students and the course team on the lab material
Available roles

- **Teaching assistant** - one or more of:
  - Designing assessed/unassessed coursework
  - Designing tutorial materials
  - Preparing slides and lecture notes
  - Creating and updating course information materials
  - Answering course-related student queries
  - Occasional delivery/support in delivery of lectures
  - Other similar support duties if mutually agreed with course organiser
Available roles

- **Marker:**
  - Marking assessed or formative coursework
  - Providing feedback to students
  - Answering student queries on marks and feedback
  - Submitting initial marks for approval by lecturer

- **Exam marker:**
  - Same as marker but marking exams.
Conditions for taking up roles - Undergraduate students -

- UG1 students and non-honours UG3-4 students cannot take on teaching
- UG2 students can be demonstrators for UG1 courses which they have passed
- Honours UG3, UG4, UG5 students:
  - Can be tutors, demonstrators on non-hours and honours courses
  - Condition 1: not being enrolled in the course
  - If tutoring for an honours course, condition 2: having taken that course (or equivalent) in UG degree
- Max 132 h/year, recommended max 6 h/week across academic year.
Conditions for taking up roles - Taught Postgraduate students -

- **PGT students can be:**
  - Tutors and demonstrators on honours and non-honours courses
  - Markers, exam markers on non-honours courses
  - Condition 1: not being enrolled in the course
  - If tutoring for an honours course, condition 2: having taken that course (or equivalent) in UG degree

- **Max 132 h/year, recommended max 6 h/week across academic year.**
PGR students can take any of the roles, and are encouraged to do so and report in yearly PGR progress report.

Conditions:

- Checking with research supervisor, especially if > 100 hours/year
- **Full-time PGRs**: max avg 9 h/week across academic year and max 414 h/year (unless PCD similar)
- **Tier 4 PGRs**: max 20 h/week in any week including employment outside university
- If getting funding for PhD: check with funder
Guaranteed hours contract with specific number of hours per each appointment role

You must submit **weekly online timesheets** reporting **ALL** hours worked since last timesheet

Submit the last timesheet of the month no later than the last Sunday of the last full week

Payments on the 28ᵗʰ of the month, or the Friday before if 28ᵗʰ is during the weekend

Payment starts at UE06 scale (£15.25/h), and increases with each year of experience.
Contracted hours

- Normal maximum allowances:
  - Tutors: declared tutorial h * 2 + Inf training
  - Demonstrators, markers, TAs: declared h + Inf training
- If working more than 20% above profile in any week -> contact your academic supervisor
- When you reach 90% of total number of hours email teaching-support@inf.ed.ac.uk
- You MUST NOT work additional hours without permission from Informatics Student Services
6 main training sessions each semester:

First session: Wednesday 2-5 pm in week 1

- If you are new to teaching, you **must** take the ‘Essential’ session(s) corresponding to your role(s); **failure to do so may result in not being re-hired**
- ‘Advanced’ sessions on more in-depth discussion following the ‘Essentials’
- Attendance paid at hourly rate for all sessions for everyone with a teaching contract
- Sessions announced on training website (see references) and by email to tutors mailing list
Provisional Training Schedule

Semester 1

- **Week 1:**
  - Essentials of being a Demonstrator in Informatics
  - Essentials of being a Tutor in Informatics
  - Essentials of being a Marker in Informatics

- **Week 2:**
  - Essentials of being a TA in Informatics
  - Advanced TA Special: Developing course material

- **Week 3:** What makes a good tutor and demonstrator in Informatics?

- **Week 6:** What makes a good marker and provider of feedback in Informatics?

- **Week 7:** Supporting students

- **Week 8:** Gathering feedback workshop

- **Week 9:** The basics of a teaching accreditation
Week 1:
- **Essentials** of being a Demonstrator in Informatics
- **Essentials** of being a Tutor in Informatics

Week 2:
- **Essentials** of being a Marker in Informatics
- **Essentials** of being a TA in Informatics

Week 3: Troubleshooting tutorials and labs

Week 5: Troubleshooting marking

Week 7: Supporting students beyond the course

Week 9: New ways of teaching

Week 11: Final reflection, next steps and teaching accreditation workshop
Numerous IAD (Institute for Academic Development) university-wide courses

Some future orientation courses:
- Effective Tutoring Introduction (12 Sep)
- Tutoring in the Sciences (26 Sept)
- Assessment & Providing Feedback (10 Oct), in the Sciences (24 Oct)

Enhanced development courses on supporting students, accreditation, lectures.
How to apply

Before applying:

- Access the Theon vacancy webpage: https://portal.theon.inf.ed.ac.uk/reports/teachsupp/vacancies/index.html
- Read role requirements and course web page or drps webpage (search ‘drps namecourse’)
- Check with supervisor/ funder if necessary
- If you are on a Tier 4 visa, check the vignette and Biometric Residence Permit for work restrictions
- If necessary, obtain a National Insurance Number (NIN) from HMRC and a UK bank account
How to apply

Stage 1:

A) Once a year, fill in the CV-style Teaching Support Applicant Information form

B) Come in person to the HR team (IF Room 5.39) to bring in (emailing scans not accepted):
   • Current and valid Passport
   • UK nationals: recently expired passport
   • EU nationals: EU ID card
   • Non-UK citizens: visa/other supporting documentation
   • If no NIN on form, NIN appointment letter

Stage 2: Fill in the Teaching Support Application for Work form for all posts

Stage 3: Discuss role & contributions with lecturer
After you have applied

- Course organisers decide on who to appoint
- If you are accepted, you will receive an email confirming the post and number of hours
- One email for each post where accepted
- **Wait for such an email for 2 weeks before contacting the ITO**
- Once appointed, you will be contacted regarding the contract
- Pick up the contract from AT room 6.01
- Fill in contract documentation asap to be able to receive payments! The deadline is 14 days after contract notification email.
Some resources

- Teaching support Informatics webpages: [http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/teaching-support](http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/teaching-support)
Some resources

- Information on getting paid and timesheets: http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/teaching-support/getting-paid
- Informatics tutor training: http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/teaching-support/training
- IAD workshops for tutors and demonstrators: https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/staff/tutors-demonstrators/courses