

## Preparing to teach for the University:

### *Checklist for doctoral students before starting teaching*

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Before starting any teaching you should expect an induction to teaching as a postgraduate, delivered within the department you will be teaching in. This should include:

- information about the department and key contacts (for example the Department Coordinator, Director of Studies (UG), and Director of Teaching)
- relevant departmental policies around teaching and assessment
- key information and guidelines (including how to claim payment for teaching activities, deadlines and departmental policies on printing teaching materials)
- information around sickness and other related absence
- administrative and logistical information such as allocation of teaching
- complaints procedure
- relevant health & safety information

It is important that you meet with the Unit Convenor of the Unit(s) you are teaching on, to fully understand your role and responsibilities. This checklist provides a useful framework for this meeting.

- **Unit Description** - ask to see a copy of the Unit Description to understand the Aims and Learning Outcomes; find out where you contribute to these.
- **Unit Outline** – ask to see a copy of the Unit Outline and find out what you are required to teach students on the unit.
- **Unit structure** – it is important you find out how the unit is structured and what modes of study students will engage in (lectures, seminars, tutorials, PAL sessions). You should ask for a copy of the timetable for the programme so you can see what students are doing and the rooms of the teaching session. In addition, you should find out which programme(s) of study are included in the unit.
- **Contextual information** – you should find out whether the unit is being reviewed or whether there are any significant changes to the unit.
- **Level of prior knowledge expected** – this is useful to know as you may need to do some wider reading.
- **Summative and formative assessment** – you need to know how students are going to be assessed within the unit and when. Find out how much you can support students with assessment. You should also ask about your role in relation to assessment.
- **Inclusive practice** – you should ask whether anyone in your classes will need any adjustments to support their learning. Ask for advice about how you can make your teaching and/or support more inclusive.
- **Group size** – find out what group size you are expected to teach so you can take this into account with any planning and preparation.
- **Planning and preparation** - clarify expectations around planning time for the sessions you will be teaching or supporting. You should also check about any payment.
- **Moodle** – find out whether you will be expected to use Moodle in your teaching and ask to be enrolled on the relevant courses.
- **Resources to teach** – find out whether your unit convenor can signpost any useful resources to support you in your teaching or whether you can borrow equipment to enhance your teaching. If you think of anything that may enhance your teaching, raise this with the Unit Convenor. You should also check about printing requirements.
- **Levels of pastoral responsibilities** – find out whether you have an element of student support in your role. If you do then then you may wish to refer to [the guide for PGWT developed by Student Services](#).
- **Disability Action Plan** – if you have one, you should raise it so you can discuss what support you may need in order to effectively teach and support learning on the unit.
- **Feedback from the Unit Convenor** – find out what feedback you can expect whilst you are teaching and at the end of the semester.
- **Unit Evaluations** – find out whether you will be able to have access to the feedback from students about the unit.
- **Alternate contacts** – clarify with the Unit Convenor any other key contacts in the Department they should be aware of.