

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

2024 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT ON DOCTORAL TUTORS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Sussex recognises the significant and valuable contribution that postgraduate research students (PGRs) make to teaching and learning at the University. We are committed to treating those undertaking teaching fairly in relation to opportunities, workload and support. This teaching is mutually beneficial as it provides an opportunity for paid teaching experience and development of employability skills for PGRs, along with high quality teaching delivery for the University.
- 1.2 This Collective Agreement (the Agreement) has been negotiated following the Joint Agreement made between the University of Sussex and the local branch of the University's and College Union (UCU) in June 2022. It replaces the previous 2016 Agreement on Doctoral Tutors.
- 1.3 This Agreement will be introduced for the 2024/25 academic year (with the exception of all Doctoral Tutors being employed at Grade 6, which was implemented in the 2023/24 academic year).

2. Recruitment, induction, and teaching opportunities

- 2.1 The University will operate a centralised recruitment process for Doctoral Tutors which will be transparent and formalised with standard processes and timelines.
- 2.2 Allocation of Doctoral Tutor teaching roles will maximise opportunities across PGRs, including those with limited experience. Opportunities for Doctoral Tutor work will be extended across Schools where relevant.
- 2.3 Teaching opportunities will be posted on a website accessible to PGRs in order to express their interest. If applicants cannot be accommodated, a selection process will be applied, which will be consistent across the University.
- 2.4 The line manager of a Doctoral Tutor will be the Head of Department for the area in which they are working (or in the case of those with appointments to more than one Department, the head of one of the departments in which they are working, as agreed when work is assigned) although day-to-day work allocation tasks may be delegated to the Module Convenor. Line management tasks will include ensuring that Doctoral Tutors receive an appropriate induction, ensuring that they are able to attend relevant training, making referrals to Occupational Health where necessary, and taking responsibility for ensuring that any agreed reasonable adjustments are put in place. Module convenors will be responsible for managing the day to day work and training requirements of DTs, including specifying any module-specific training including lecture attendance. Module convenors will arrange necessary meetings to brief DTs ahead of teaching sessions and to share student feedback.

3. Contract of Employment

- 3.1 The University will employ Doctoral Tutors at Grade 6 to undertake teaching and teaching related duties as set out in the Job Description for Doctoral Tutors.
- 3.2 The employment of a Doctoral Tutor will be conditional upon the individual being registered as a current PhD student at the University and will end at the end of the academic year in which the student is awarded their PhD, unless the contract is ended early for any other reason. At the start of their employment, the Doctoral Tutor will be issued with a fixed-term contract of employment for the same duration as their maximum student registration, which will set out their main terms and conditions of employment with the exception of work allocation and working hours, which will be notified as set out in 3.3 below. If their student registration period is extended, the University may extend their contract of employment for the same period. If the student has their viva early, the Doctoral Tutor End of Contract Process will be applied. If the PhD student intermits, requests to continue teaching would be considered on a case by case basis, via a conversation between the PhD supervisor, the relevant Director of Doctoral Studies and the intermitting PhD student.
- 3.3 During the course of the contract of employment, written Offers of Work will be made to a Doctoral Tutor for each defined Teaching Period (usually a semester). There is no obligation for the University to make an Offer of Work or for a Doctoral Tutor to accept it. Doctoral Tutors will retain continuity of service between and during Teaching Periods where Offers of Work have not been made and/or accepted, provided that the contract of employment has not ended for any other reason.
- 3.4 The hours worked by Doctoral Tutors within one year should normally not exceed 180 teaching hours, however this may be varied if agreed under 3.5 below. The number of hours worked must always conform with, and not exceed, any visa or funder requirements.
- 3.5 The number of hours worked as a Doctoral Tutor must initially be discussed and agreed between the PGR, their line managers and PhD supervisors. In the case of disagreement, the School Director of Doctoral Studies should adjudicate. Offers of work in subsequent years will be subject to satisfactory progression of the individual's Doctoral Studies, and also be subject to supervisor agreement.
- 3.6 The Offer of Work will include a breakdown of the work to be undertaken and the tariffs to be applied (including, as far as possible, marking), as well as the appropriate grade and salary point.
- 3.7 Normally, a DT is expected to complete marking for the students on the modules they teach; an indicative amount of time associated with this will be specified in advance as part of the provisional offer of work. The allocated number of hours of marking will be included in the formal offer of work or contract extension. DTs will not routinely be expected to mark a volume of assignments that exceeds the number of students allocated to their teaching group. Additional marking may be offered and may be undertaken on a voluntary (and paid) basis.
- 3.8 A Doctoral Tutor may not hold any other category of teaching contract with the University (including a School Tutor contract).
- 3.9 As the employment of a Doctoral Tutor is conditional on the individual being registered as a current PhD student at the University, and is intended to provide an opportunity for paid

teaching experience and development of employability skills for PGRs during their period of study, Doctoral Tutor contracts will not be eligible for conversion to open-ended contracts under the University's Fixed Term Contracts Guidance.

4 Pay and Benefits

- 4.1 Offers of Work and pay will reflect the [agreed tariffs for Doctoral Tutor activities](#), including (but not limited to) marking, preparation, delivery, training, and administration.
- 4.2 A Doctoral Tutor will receive payment for ten hours of training per year, provided they undertake teaching within that year. This payment will include mandatory training and other elements agreed between Doctoral Tutors and their line managers. This payment will be made regardless of the number of teaching hours allocated to the Doctoral Tutor for that year. Additional paid training may be provided as appropriate.
- 4.3 The holiday entitlement for a Doctoral Tutor will be the pro-rata equivalent of: 20 days per annum; rising to 21 days at three years' service; rising to 22 days at four years' service; rising to 23 days at five years' service. Additionally, the pro-rata equivalent of the normally eight public/bank holidays and the University's six minimum service days will apply. Accrued holiday will be will be paid during the relevant Teaching Period.
- 4.4 A Doctoral Tutor will be eligible for Occupational Sick Pay of up to two weeks in a rolling 12-month period, subject to the University's [sickness notification procedures](#) being followed. A week's pay for Occupational Sick Pay purposes will be calculated as actual salary averaged over the duration of the current Teaching Period.
- 4.5 A Doctoral Tutor will receive an annual salary increment on 1 October provided they have undertaken work in the previous academic year, except for those appointed between 1 April and 30 September inclusive who will receive their first increment on 1 October of the following calendar year. Incremental progression will be up to the non-discretionary threshold for their grade. Doctoral Tutors will be eligible for inclusion in the Discretionary Pay Review (DPR) process, subject to the rules of the DPR scheme.
- 4.6 A Doctoral Tutor will be offered the option by the University of registering on a 15-credit teaching and learning programme delivered by the University which, on successful completion, will entitle them to apply for Associate Fellowship of Advance HE. The Doctoral Tutor will not be charged for this 15-credit programme and will be expected to undertake it in his/her own time. However, on 1 October following successful completion, the Doctoral Tutor will be awarded an additional increment.
- 4.7 A Doctoral Tutor will be able to access the University's [Carer Support Policies](#), and [staff rewards and benefits](#), subject to the rules of those schemes.
- 4.8 A Doctoral Tutor will be eligible to join the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) subject to the rules of the scheme, which may be amended from time to time.

5 Ending of the contract

- 5.1 The appointment may be terminated at any time by either party giving notice in writing in accordance with the contract of employment, or on the part of the University by the payment of salary in lieu of notice.
- 5.2 Where the appointment is due to come to an end due to the completion of their PhD studies, the Doctoral Tutor End of Contract Process will apply.

6 Governance

- 6.1 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost will have senior management responsibility for the oversight of this Agreement.
- 6.2 Any issues in the implementation of this Agreement can be raised with the line manager, Human Resources, the Head of School, or the UCU Joint Negotiating Committee as appropriate.
- 6.3 Operation of the Doctoral Tutor Collective Agreement will be a standing item on the UCU Joint Negotiating Committee Agenda.
- 6.3 This Agreement will be reviewed on a triennial basis.

May 2024