Summary

- National context
- Teaching induction
- Further support
- Durham’s review of PGRs who teach
- Some issues
National context

Browne Review (2010)

• … all new academics with teaching responsibilities to undertake a teaching training qualification accredited by the HE Academy, and that the option to gain such a qualification is made available to all staff – including researchers and postgraduate students – with teaching responsibilities.

QAA Quality Code – Research Degrees

• Currently out for consultation
• Uses Researcher Development Framework as reference for skills development requirements for PGRs
• RDF
• Teaching - Contributes to teaching at undergraduate level.
  – Assists in the supervision of undergraduate projects.
  – Participates in research meetings (seminars, workshops, conferences, etc).
  – Has a developing awareness of the ways research influences/interacts with teaching.
Teaching Induction

At Durham, all PGRs who teach must undertake a compulsory teaching induction programme before they are registered as post-graduate teachers. Only registered postgraduate teachers can be paid for teaching – payroll department will only process payroll requests for registered PGR teachers.

Two components to induction programme
- Institutional level
- Departmental level

Central induction programme

GTAs must attend
- At least one 3-hour workshop chosen from
  - Small Group Teaching in Science
  - Demonstrating
- A 3-hour workshop on Assessment in Science
- The International Teaching Assistant (optional)
- Complete and pass on-line modules on
  - Health & Safety
  - Diversity & Equality
  - Student Support Services
Departmental support

- Example – Physics level 1 laboratory
- Held 3 times/year before each new phase of lab
- General issues such as
  - Health and Safety,
  - risk assessments,
  - academic assessment,
  - absence management (for staff, i.e. swapping sessions) timetabling,
  - disability notifications for students,
  - duties,
  - role of technical staff.

Departmental support (contd)

- Training on experiments by staff who have demonstrated these experiments before
- Compulsory for all lab staff – including ex Heads of Department!
- Much sharing of good practice
Support for assessment

Separate session – covers
• the role and importance of feedback
• use of the departmental data base for marks entry,
• department’s guidelines for lab report writing

Marking exercise using real scripts
• Calibrate marking
• Sharing of best practice

Further support - central

Continuing workshop support e.g.
• Large group teaching
• Personal tutoring
• Reviewing your teaching
Access to academic staff development programme
On-line modules

Epigeum Learning and Teaching Modules
• Lecturing 1
• Lecturing 2
• Resources to enhance student learning
• Making the most of discussion
• Supervising projects and dissertations
• Marking and giving feedback
• Understanding the principles of course design
• Developing your teaching
• Teaching with patients

Durham University Learning & Teaching Award

• Open to all part-time teachers with a minimum of 30 hours teaching in Durham
• 20 credit masters level module
• Leads to Durham certificate and Associate Fellowship of the HEA
• Assessment by portfolio
• 60 GTAs/year undertaking award
Routes to Fellowship of HEA

Having competed DULTA, students can

- Enrol on the Durham PG CAP, with exemption from Module 1. Completing Module 2 will lead to FHEA and one further module to PG CAP
- Supported individual application to HEA for upgrade from AHEA to FHEA.

Continuing departmental support

- Peer observations – all PGRs who teach must be peer observed at least annually
- Assessment – all assessment undertaking by PGRs must be monitored.
Thematic review of PGRs who teach and assess

Key findings

• Current policies and provision provide important opportunities for PGRs to develop and enhance their skills development, opportunities that are valued by PGRs.

• Develop a set of key principles to underpin provision in this area and for the current policy to be updated and restructured around these principles in order to support a common threshold of practice in different teaching and assessment contexts.

• The support for and practice of PGRs involved in teaching and assessment needs to be underpinned by clear professional expectations for both PG teachers and those training, supporting and overseeing them.

• All PGRs involved in teaching and assessment are undertaking the required central training before being allowed teach or assess.

• All departments put in place development opportunities in this area for PGRs, but while there is much good and effective practice taking place there was also evidence of some inconsistency and a need for more effective links between central and subject-specific training.
Some specific recommendations

- Clear written guidance on recruitment and selection processes and are available to PGRs
- Not appropriate for PGRs to be compelled to participate in undergraduate teaching and assessment
- Letter of appointment setting out key terms and conditions
- Role description for module leaders to include responsibility for managing and supporting GTAs
- Each department to have member of academic staff with responsibility for all teaching by PGRs
- Review payment for GTAs

Some issues

Lack of physics-based development resources

Particularly
- Modern video of demonstrating in physics
- Mathematically-based tutorials
Some issues

- What will undergraduates paying £9K/year think of our extensive use of GTAs?
- How can we communicate the value of using GTAs to undergraduates?