Training graduate teaching assistants: approaches and resources

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Overview

A personal selection of resources

National Frameworks

- UKPSF
- RDF

HEA and the Discipline Approach
Resources

Books

Videos

Online material

Books

Teaching at University
A Guide for Postgraduates & Lecturers

Kate Morr
Rowena Murray

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IOP Higher Education Group, with HEA Support, Training and Supporting Graduate Teaching Assistants in Physics, 2012

Videos

Tape 1: Incident #8: "TA's Adrift"
Two graduate teaching assistants share their frustration at the lack of clear grading protocols for the course they are assigned to. They feel that the professor should be giving more direction in order to assure uniformity in standards. This situation triggers discussion of fairness and appropriate supervision.

Tape 2: Incident #5: "Diversity and Expectations"
A Chinese teaching assistant approaches a TA colleague for advice on how to handle many of his North American students who don't seem to do the required preparation for his Chemistry labs. This promotes exploration of laboratory assistant supervision and cultural differences in teaching and learning.

DVDs
Tape 3: Incident #9: "Undue Collaboration?"
Two graduate teaching assistants discuss whether student collaboration on assignments is useful and acceptable, or dishonest and reprehensible. This conversation raises questions about grading protocols and practices and the place and value of collaborative learning.
Module titles

1. An Introduction to Learning and Teaching
2. Supporting Students with Special Needs
3. Developing Presentation Skills
4. Evaluating and Developing Your Practice as a Teaching Assistant
5. The Teaching Assistant in the Laboratory
6. Supporting Learning in Small Groups
7. The Role of the Teaching Assistant in the Field
8. Assessing Students’ Learning
9. The International Teaching Assistant
10. Evaluation

The Researcher Development Framework
The UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) provides a general description of the main dimensions of the roles of teaching and supporting learning within the HE environment. It is written from the perspective of the practitioner and outlines a national Framework for comprehensively recognising and benchmarking teaching and learning support roles within Higher Education.
Individuals able to provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their professional role(s), which, typically, will include at least some teaching and/or learning support responsibilities. This teaching and learning role may sometimes be undertaken with the assistance of more experienced teachers or mentors. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 1 (D1) include: early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD students, GTAs, contract researchers/post doctoral students etc.).
II. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity
III. Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2:
   K1 The subject material
   K2 Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
IV. A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others’ learning

V. Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities
VI. Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities
How does the Academy support the Framework?

The Academy provides a recognition and accreditation service which enables staff providing teaching and/or learning support to be recognised, depending on their role and experience as:

Descriptor 1: An Associate Fellow of the Academy

Individuals can apply for recognition via the following:

- On completion of Academy-accredited professional development provision (for example PG Cert in teaching and learning in HE, or accredited Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme).
- By applying through the Academy’s Individual Recognition Route, on the basis of their experience in teaching and learning.

HEA Workshops

Concerns

Purpose of practical classes

Learning objectives

The Facilitator’s role

Learning theory

Learning styles

Delivery

Questions

Nerves
HEA and the Physical Sciences

Academic Associates
Workshops
Departmental visits

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