

School of GeoSciences

Tutoring and Demonstrating



Code of Conduct 2014-15

This document outlines a Code of Conduct which should be followed by students working as Tutors and Demonstrators (T&D) in the School of GeoSciences. T&Ds who are not adhering to the guidelines laid out in this document risk being removed from any T&D work in which they are employed.

The Code of Conduct also applies to academic and administrative staff who are involved in tutoring and demonstrating. The guidance for staff section sets out guidelines for those locally responsible for overseeing Tutoring and Demonstrating work, in order that they have a clear understanding both of what tutors and demonstrators have a right to expect from the University and from the School and of what is expected of them in meeting their contractual obligations.

Tutors and Demonstrators

Main Principles

1. The document should be used as a guideline for good practice whilst carrying out any T&D work in the School.
2. This Code applies equally to tutors and demonstrators who have teaching responsibilities as part of a contractual obligation defined elsewhere (e.g. postgraduate students on school-funded scholarships, and people taking tutorials or demonstrating while on Research Contracts).
3. All T&Ds must adhere to guidelines set out by the University and any contract law followed by the University.

The University T&D Code of Practice can be found on the Academic Services page:

<http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Codes/CoPTutoringDemonstrating.PDF>

Your Responsibilities

4. Turn up promptly and on time.
5. If you are unable to attend a class, let the Course Organiser/Course Assistant know well in advance in order that alternative arrangements can be made.

6. Marked work MUST be returned by the agreed deadlines (as advised by Teaching Organisation staff).
7. Marking guidelines must be adhered to at all times.
8. You must attend ALL meetings relating to the T&D work on the course (usually arranged by the Course Organiser/Course Assistant).
9. All T&D's must have completed the induction and marking training events run by the School of GeoSciences prior to carrying out any work in the School.
10. All T&D's working in the School, who do not have a School-funded scholarship agreement, require a contract to be issued before they can receive pay for the work they have carried out.
11. Health and Safety is a priority in laboratory classes. If in doubt, please contact the Course Organiser/Course Assistant/School Health and Safety Officer.

Field demonstrating

12. T&D's must have completed the School Field work Health and Safety course, which is delivered as part of the T&D Induction at the start of the academic year, before working on Field Courses.
13. Health and Safety is a priority on ALL field trips. If in doubt, please contact the Course Organiser/Course Assistant/School Health and Safety Officer.
14. T&D's on field trips must behave responsibly both in the field and during social hours.
15. T&D's driving in the field MUST have completed or, where it is not possible to complete the course prior to a field trip, have booked a place on the Defensive Driving course prior to driving in the field. Contact the School Health and Safety Officer for further details.
16. T&D's must have held a driving licence for over a year to be able to drive in the field.
17. T&D's must be aware of local laws and speed limits (especially applicable when driving minibuses) when driving in the field.

Best Practice

18. T&D's should not spend their tutoring or demonstrating time doing your own work.
19. T&D's should not exceed 66 hours doing T&D work in an Undergraduate semester. If in doubt, please check with your supervisor on your availability.

20. When marking work, it is essential to give relevant and informative feedback (please refer to guidance and any instructions given by the Course Organiser).
21. T&D's should be proactive in lab classes, seeking to help rather than waiting to be asked about any issues, and should attempt to include all students in any tutorial discussions.
22. Avoid giving students the answer without helping them to understand the process of how to get to the solution.
23. T&D's who have a personal relationship with any undergraduate student should declare this to the Course Organiser and should not partake in any marking of the student's work.
24. To receive payment, T&D's should register hours on the T&D database when prompted to do so by the Deputy Manager of the Teaching Organisation (Alasdair Howie).

Pastoral Role

25. T&D's approached for guidance over personal matters, should respond sensitively and treat the matter with discretion. Do not promise absolute confidentiality and advise the student that you may need to consult another staff member (e.g. their Personal Tutor or Student Support Coordinator, who has formal responsibilities over students' well-being).
26. In any case, where there may be implications for the student's performance in their course work, encourage the student to inform the Course Organiser and his/her Personal Tutor or Student Support Coordinator at the earliest opportunity.
27. The Course Organiser is expected to inform T&D's of any students with disabilities for whom additional support has been agreed, as specified in their learning profile. These should be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
28. Be aware of boundaries: it is not appropriate to get involved with your students on matters not directly related to their course work. You are advised to familiarise yourself with your School's arrangements around the Personal Tutor system, and the wider University agencies that provide support to students on a range of issues.

Complaints

29. If you experience any difficulties, you should in the first instance speak to the Course Organiser. If this does not resolve the problem you should make an appointment with the Head of the School Teaching Organisation or, where there is not one which covers the course, the Head of School.

University and School Responsibilities

Main principles

1. The University recognises that tutors and demonstrators play a valuable and significant part in the delivery of Undergraduate courses and accordingly maintains that they should be regarded as integral members of the course team in which they play a part.
2. Where a tutor or demonstrator is employed by the University of Edinburgh (rather than undertaking a scholarship) the terms and conditions of employment must comply with the University's recruitment and employment policies and practices.
3. Tutors and demonstrators should be briefed and supported as part of the course team, through regular and reliable communication channels; and should enjoy access to the resources necessary for carrying out their roles satisfactorily.
4. Where tutors and demonstrators are employed by the University they should be rewarded for all the work that is expected of them in carrying out their roles. (There may be exceptional cases in which this does not apply, such as where the teaching activity is required under another contract or for accreditation.) This includes payment for contact time with students and for significant time spent outside those contact hours where these activities are explicitly or effectively required by the course team, in:
 - preparing for classes;
 - marking students' work and providing feedback;
 - course-related administrative activities; and
 - providing other guidance to students.

One-off training and briefing activities, though essential, are not normally paid for. Payment for time-consuming scheduled meetings that occur regularly, and where attendance and participation is not optional (e.g. preparatory meetings for laboratory classes and frequent feedback meetings), however, is strongly recommended.

5. Full and ultimate responsibility for the quality of course delivery, and for meeting the resources necessary for quality course delivery, lies with academic staff other than tutors and demonstrators.
6. The deployment of tutors and demonstrators must be subject to being formally and regularly reviewed and monitored at School, College and University levels with appropriate reporting procedures.

Recruitment

7. The University, through its Schools, has a responsibility to appoint tutors and demonstrators with the appropriate skills and qualifications (including the ability to communicate effectively) required for the position. Furthermore, all recruitment must be fair and satisfy The University's recruitment and equal opportunities guidelines. In particular, the process of recruitment should be clearly and publicly laid down within Schools; and opportunities for tutoring and demonstrating work should be widely and openly publicised within the subject area.
8. Where tutors or demonstrators are required to undertake teaching duties as part of a contract determined elsewhere (such 'teaching studentships', 'teaching scholarships', and certain Contract Research Staff agreements), it is the responsibility of the School to ensure that they are both qualified and prepared to engage fully with their teaching duties.
9. Other than those who have agreed to do so as part of the requirements of another contract, no-one should be compelled to undertake tutoring or demonstrating. Those students who have expressed an interest in tutoring and/or demonstrating work are able to choose the amount and type of work that they wish to carry out.
10. When tutors or demonstrators are full-time postgraduate students, some responsibility for their workload lies with the University, and it is therefore important that they obtain permission from their supervisor for all the work they agree to undertake before they sign a contract. Similarly, when they are supported by a funding council that expects them to be full-time engaged in research, they should check with their supervisor that the teaching enhances their research activity. In any case, the number of hours full-time postgraduate students will be engaged in teaching and related duties (including preparation) should not normally exceed 66 hours during the eleven semester weeks. Different criteria will apply when a student comes from out with the EU.
11. Schools must check that non-European Union students appointed to carry out tutoring or demonstrating duties are legally entitled to undertake paid work in the UK and do not exceed the immigration limits on hours worked.
12. Relevant employment documentation must be issued to all employed tutors and demonstrators, including fieldwork demonstrators and those without contact hours; and a briefing arranged before they start work or as soon as possible after this date.
13. Schools are given some flexibility in setting the payment for fieldwork demonstrators but are expected to be able to justify the level of payment in terms of the responsibilities taken on by the demonstrator and the benefits they gain from it. This payment scheme should be consistently applied across the School. In some cases, payment may be in kind (e.g. where field experience is necessary for professional development). Fieldwork demonstrators should not be expected to pay for travel and accommodation.

Guidance, Support and Monitoring

14. It is the responsibility of the Head of School (or the appointed delegate), to ensure that all tutors and demonstrators are adequately prepared for and supported in their teaching positions; and that their work is monitored satisfactorily. In particular, the Head of School (or the appointed delegate) must ensure that the Course Organiser or another local mentor in association with other agencies within the University prepares tutors and demonstrators for their roles. The timing and form of the briefing should be mutually convenient; and where appropriate, will include:
 - a) an overview of the course content and its relation to the course learning outcomes;
 - b) an explanation of the role of the classes in the wider context of the course's delivery; how the students are expected to be taught in these classes; and what the tutors' and demonstrators' role is in this context;
 - c) an explanation of how the course is administered, and how tutors and demonstrators can interact with the other members of the course team.
 - d) a discussion of how much marking of students' work is to be undertaken by them; what exactly these tasks involve; roughly how long this is expected to take them; when marking must be completed; from whom guidance can be obtained; and what measures are in place for monitoring marking (see more detailed guidelines specifically under 'Monitoring and Delegation of Assessment' below);
 - e) a discussion of the extent of the pastoral role and responsibilities (and the boundaries to these) of tutors and demonstrators, including how they are expected to operate alongside Personal Tutors, and where relevant, how they are expected to make themselves accessible; how they keep and pass on records; and how and where to refer students when required (see more under 'Pastoral Work' below);
 - f) an explanation of how they are expected to be involved in the collection of feedback from students about the course, and how to pass this on.

17. Tutors and demonstrators should be given feedback about their own performance and the Course Organiser should ensure they are alerted to feedback collected by the School as part of the normal process of course monitoring.

Course Materials, Facilities and Other Resources

18. The Course Organiser is responsible for ensuring that tutors and demonstrators are provided (free of charge and automatically) with essential course materials (such as a course booklet, laboratory manuals, handouts and reading lists) and access to libraries. T&D's, unless a specific agreement has been made by the Course Organiser and the TO, are not expected to contribute to writing materials for practical classes.

19. Schools should do their best to provide tutors with a list of students who are expected to attend their tutorial, as well as information about the location and timing of the classes in good time.

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Monitoring and Delegation of Assessment

22. Where tutors and demonstrators are given assessment-related duties, the type of work and the manner in which this is delegated should be in accordance with the University's Assessment Regulations.
23. The Head of School (or the appointed delegate) should satisfy him/herself that none of the tutors and demonstrators with marking responsibilities can be reasonably regarded as having a strong personal interest in the students whose work they are asked to mark.
24. The Course Organiser is responsible for checking that the marking that is done by tutors and demonstrators is to the required standard and in line with other markers on the course team (e.g. by double marking a sample of the work, plotting the distribution of the marks, paired marking). Tutors and demonstrators should be informed of these measures and how they are expected to participate.
25. Where marking an assignment forms part of the formal responsibilities of tutors and demonstrators, the Course Organiser is responsible for ensuring that they are fully prepared for this task. This will include informing them well in advance of:
 - a) the criteria to be applied in assigning a mark to the work, and how to handle work to which special circumstances apply (such as work from dyslexic students, and work that is handed in late or incomplete);
 - b) the amount and type of feedback they are expected to give students on their assignments;
 - c) the detailed arrangements for the collection and return of students' work; the turnaround time; and how they are expected to record and pass on the marks.

Safety

26. The Head of School (or the appointed delegate) is responsible for safety in teaching laboratories and on fieldwork; and such responsibility should not be delegated to demonstrators. Training and support of demonstrators in dealing with emergencies, and other arrangements around ensuring safe fieldwork and laboratory practice must be in accordance with The University's Health and Safety Policy and any additional local regulations.

Useful Links and Documents

School of GeoSciences Tutors and Demonstrators

The main page for all tutoring and demonstrating administration in the School of GeoSciences, including vacancies, payment database, T&D handbook and general information

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/geosciences/teaching-organisation/staff/tutoring-demonstrating/overview>

Institute of Academic Development Tutors and Demonstrators

Courses and events, resources, guidance and support offered to T&D's by the IAD

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/tutors-demonstrators>

University of Edinburgh Code of Practice on Tutoring and Demonstrating

The University Code of Practice for T&D's. This relates to academic, administrative and T&D Code of Practice relating to Tutoring and Demonstrating support.

<http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Codes/CoPTutoringDemonstrating.PDF>

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