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**Introduction**

The aim of this guidance is to support Schools to implement and manage Student Experience Contracts. These contracts are only available for students registered on a PhD, MRes, MPhil or DBA.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Research Degrees Framework.

The University is at times able to offer paid work to research students, most commonly teaching; demonstrating; and working on research projects outwith the student’s own degree.

The Student Experience Contract has been implemented with the purpose of enhancing the student experience by upskilling and giving relevant experience to our students who are studying for a research degree.

The amount of paid work that a student can undertake is contingent on each student’s circumstances and in line with weekly maximums and any visa restrictions. Study will always be the central focus and progress is measured on an ongoing basis and formally at biannual progress reviews.

**Responsibilities**

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| **Director of Studies’ Responsibilities** | * Explore opportunities for paid work within the School and wider University for research students. * Seek agreement from the School Research Degrees Leader, in advance of discussing paid work with students. * Discuss paid work with the student and explore any potential impact on studies. * Agree the maximum number of hours that the student can undertake, taking into account restrictions; other paid work outwith the University; visa restrictions; and the student’s own circumstances. * Ensure that HR Services undertake a ‘Right to Work’ check in advance of any paid work being undertaken. * Ensure that HR Services are notified if the student will be undertaking research work and complete ATAS assessment to determine if an ATAS certificate is required in advance of any paid research work being undertaken. * Complete Appointment Form Paperwork for signature by the School Research Degrees Leader and Dean of School. * Ensure that paid work is at the appropriate rate of pay for the type of activity. * Authorise student’s pay claim forms through HR Connect, in advance of cut-off dates. Set up redirections for claims if on leave from the University. * Monitor hours worked by student in line with restrictions; how their studies are progressing through regular discussions including at the student’s biannual progress review meetings. * Document any issues in relation to work undertaken or new restrictions on working hours on the RD6 form. * Work with the School Research Degrees Leader to ensure that any paid work is allocated fairly, as appropriate, across the School. * Seek approval from the School Research Degrees Leader for any changes to contract type or increase in hours. |

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| **Student’s Responsibilities** | * Speak with their Director of Studies, in advance of undertaking any paid work within the University. * Check and obtain permission (if required) from their funding body before committing to paid work. * Ensure that HR Services have undertaken a ‘Right to Work’ check before completing any paid work. * Ensure that any paid work, within or outwith the University does not breach any visa restrictions, where applicable. * Complete all acceptance paperwork, in a timely manner to allow their contract to be processed. * Complete pay claim forms accurately through HR Connect Self Service in advance of cut-off dates with enough time to allow the Director of Studies to approve. * Let their Director of Studies know at the earliest opportunity of any change in circumstances. * Manage their time commitment to studies and paid work and maintain a healthy balance. Ensure that they have a minimum of 40 days holiday throughout the year. * Be honest about any impact paid work is having on their studies. |

**Hours of Work**

In the interests of equality of opportunity and focus on study the University applies a cap to the amount of paid work students are permitted to undertake:

* Full-time students are permitted to work for no more than 6 hours per week.
* Part-time students are normally permitted to work for no more than 10 hours per week.

It should be noted that these hours are a maximum per week and are not based on an average across the year to ensure that the necessary time is devoted to the student’s studies. However, the University is mindful that certain circumstances might mean a student exceeds the cap on occasion. Such circumstances should be approached sensibly, and with the agreement of the student, the Director of Studies and the School Research Degrees Leader. Exceeding the relevant cap on an ongoing basis will not be accepted.

There are no guaranteed numbers of paid work within the contract type.

All students should consider their commitments within and outwith the University and whether they have any visa restrictions, i.e. if you have another role, your visa may not allow you to undertake paid work at the University. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are not breaching any of their visa restrictions.

Students who are beyond their standard end date are subject to the same guidance as all other students in relation to the restriction on hours. We do, however, appreciate that students might be close to completion and in exceptional circumstances the restriction on hours worked may be increased. This will be dependent upon a number of factors including a clear business need within the School for additional work activity; clear evidence provided of progress on studies; a detailed timeline to completion; and a statement of support from their Director of Studies.

This will then be considered by the School Research Degrees Leader on a case by case basis. Where exceptions to hours have been authorised, the School Research Degrees Leader will inform HR, in writing.

**Working Activity**

In terms of allocating work, it is expected that this will be scheduled in advance of the beginning of each trimester although timetables are subject to change to meet the requirements of the School.

In order to provide additional opportunities to meet the needs of the Schools, the following types of activity that students can undertake and associated evaluated payments are as follows:

* Teaching, paid at Point 29, Grade 5
* Teaching preparation time and assessment, paid at Point 29, Grade 5 (see note below)
* Research Projects not part of the student’s PhD, paid at Point 22 , Grade 4
* Demonstrating, paid at Point 8 , Grade 2

If no paid work is available in the School, the Director of Studies should explore, depending on subject area, whether there are any opportunities in another School.

It should be noted that students who will be undertaking teaching at the University must enrol on the University’s Teaching at University for PGR Students course and the first six hours of teaching as part of this programme are unpaid.

In accordance with the University’s Workload Allocation Model, the teaching of tutorials and lectures carries a specific allocation of preparation time. In the case where a PGR student teaches a repeated instances of a tutorial (i.e. the same materials and learning outcomes taught to different student groups), then the allocation of preparation time staggers, as below:

* 1 tutorial – 1 hour preparation for the tutorial
* 2 tutorials – 1.5 hours preparation time in total
* 3 tutorials – 1.75 hours preparation time in total
* 4 tutorials – 2 hours preparation time in total

**Research activity - ATAS**

The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) is one of the UK government’s measures to prevent the spread of knowledge and skills used to develop weapons of mass destruction and associated technology.

ATAS applies to all international students and researchers (apart from exempt nationalities) who are subject to UK immigration control and are intending to study or research at postgraduate level in certain sensitive subjects. Further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme> .

On receipt of a Student Experience appointment form, HR will contact the Director of Studies to request clarification of the work activities which are to be offered to the student. Where research activity is to be offered, HR will liaise with the manager to complete an ATAS assessment. This assessment is still required if the student has an ATAS certificate for their studies as the research area may differ.

If the research area is in scope for ATAS, the student must obtain an ATAS certificate to cover the paid research activity before the contract is issued and work can begin.

**Contract Duration**

Contracts will be issued for the duration of the student’s studies.

**Initiating a Contract**

Once approved by the School Research Degrees Leader, the Director of Studies needs to complete Staffing Authorisation Form and have final approval before completing a Student Experience Appointment Form ensuring the necessary information is provided to allow for a contract to be initiated. In advance of any work being carried out, a ‘Right to Work’ check needs to be completed. This can be arranged by contacting [humanresources@napier.ac.uk](mailto:humanresources@napier.ac.uk). There are no exceptions to this, as this is to ensure that we comply with UK Visa & Immigration.

**Payments for Holidays**

Students will receive a payment for accrued holiday entitlement based on their hours worked. This is shown separately on the payslip and is based on 17.7% for every hour worked.

**Claiming for Hours Worked and Authorisation Process**

In order to start a claim, students will need to log onto HR Connect Self Service via Quicklinks on the staff Intranet. The claim deadline is always the 10th of the month (except in December). Students need to submit their claim for hours worked prior to this date, ensuring that their Director of Studies has adequate time to check and approve the hours worked.

User guides are available for submitting and authorising online payment claims through HR Connect at

<https://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/hr/HRDocuments/Pages/Forms.aspx> under Payroll forms named ‘online payment claim self-service guide’ and ‘online payment claim managers guide’.

**Monitoring and Management Information**

The Director of Studies and School Research Degrees Leader should actively monitor hours worked in line with RDF guidelines.

The Director of Studies will be able to view all historical and current claims for their students through HR Connect People Manager.

The Dean of School will be provided with an audit report on a monthly basis which they are required to approve in order for payments to be made to the students.

RIO and the School Research Degrees Leader will be provided with management information on a quarterly basis which outlines all the activity undertaken by students across the Schools/University.