

Statement regarding teaching assistants

14 Nov 2018

The University is aware of a recent University and College Union petition regarding teaching assistants (TAs) at Manchester

We are proud of the work done by our teaching assistants who make a vital and valuable contribution to the positive experiences our students have when studying here at Manchester.

In recognition of this, the University finalised an agreement in 2013 to ensure that TAs were paid in accordance with the sector's National Framework Agreement and to regularise their employment. We believe that Manchester was the first university to do this.

The University remains committed to giving TAs the best possible [working conditions as contracted members of University staff](#), which include attractive pay rates (currently a minimum of £14.85 per hour) and progressive employment policies.

We refute the suggestion that any of our TAs are working unpaid, though we are examining practices for allocating paid time for training and preparation and marking for those TA roles where the staff member undertakes a role in addition to direct contact and teaching of students.

We realise that there is more that we can do around certain administrative and process issues and we recently met with UCU representatives to discuss these, as well as our practices for providing, and making payment for, appropriate training. At that meeting UCU confirmed that it was not seeking to renegotiate the 2013 agreement with the University relating to pay, terms and conditions of TAs and that its concerns related to the application of some of its terms.

Despite many hundreds of new TAs taking up roles at the start of each year we have brought down the time it takes for payments and contracts to be issued and we are currently looking at the feasibility of doing this further for 2019/20.

Every single member of the University's staff is vitally important and we are committed to their welfare – whether it is through pay,

conditions or measures such as refunding Home Office fees for EU colleagues to apply to live permanently in the UK.

A further meeting with UCU will be scheduled when the University has completed the follow-up work from the initial meeting.