

## GEOGRAPHY PGTA JOB DESCRIPTION 2019-20

**Post Title:** Postgraduate Teaching Assistant (Geography) PGTA

**Department/Division:** Geography

**Grade:** UCL Grade 6 - equivalent to £15.01 an hour inclusive of London Allowance)

**Appointment is normally on an 'As and When' basis as the full offering of duties becomes available during the year once class sizes and lecturer needs are confirmed, or may be on a fixed basis where only one duty is undertaken in the year.**

**Reports to:** The convenor of the course being supported, or the Undergraduate/Postgraduate Tutor for cross-module work

**Location:** Any teaching space as allocated by UCL.

### Overall purpose of the job

The Geography Department supplements academic lectures with a range of small group teaching in most modules. Some of these small groups are taught by Postgraduate Teaching Assistants and the work may include seminars to support undergraduate or Masters module classes, classes for ancillary (non-geography) students on Geography modules, demonstrating in various forms of laboratory, computer or field practical classes at either undergraduate or Masters level.

Main duties of the posts may include:

- teaching assistance through the facilitation of seminars and/or workshops (in groups normally of 15; but exceptionally up to 20)
- demonstration duties in practical computing or a laboratory setting
- demonstration duties on day fieldwork elements of modules
- taking second year undergraduate core methods seminars in groups of 15 students at ten sessions per year
- meetings with the course lecturer for induction and mentoring purposes
- office hours to assist students with technical queries
- attendance reporting, including the need to uphold confidentiality in regards to students' records and circumstances
- formative essay or assignment marking with guidance from the lecturer

Preparation time is included associated with tutorial or seminar teaching and is advised at the time of the offer of the duty. Demonstrating duties do not usually include preparation time.

Normally Teaching Assistants are in the second or subsequent years of their degree. New students may undertake demonstrating duties, and in exceptional circumstances, where they have prior teaching experience, they may be offered seminar work.

## **Person specification**

### *Essential skills and requirements*

Applicants will currently be pursuing a postgraduate research degree, preferably in Geography, normally having a first degree in Geography or a closely related discipline.

A high level of literacy and, for some duties, numeracy.

Specialist skills appropriate to the course taught: disciplinary knowledge and understanding, software applications, laboratory or field techniques, quantitative or qualitative analysis skills as required.

Organisational and time management skills

Skills in communicating with students and supporting learning.

### **Additional information**

Postgraduate Teaching Assistantships offer students a valuable introduction to university teaching. For postgraduate research students, teaching is considered as part of the skills audit within the UCL Research Student Log. More than three sessions per term contribute five skills points and should be recorded for each duty undertaken.

It is essential that all PGTAs undertake the relevant training programme which includes an introduction to the department's tutorial system (for those assigned tutorials); a UCL introduction to teaching in higher education through UCL [Arena One](#), a development pathway for postgraduates who teach at UCL; and an induction/familiarisation by the course convenor.

The department considers teaching opportunities of value to research students in the development of their future careers and will seek to distribute duties widely.

### **Application**

The opportunity to apply for PGTA work is advertised on the department's website on an on-going rolling basis <http://www.geog.ucl.ac.uk/resouces/jobs>. This is accompanied by listing of modules for which PGTA support is anticipated to be required in the following term. For courses which have failed to recruit a PGTA further more specific emails may be sent.

The course convenor is notified of all interested PGTAs and makes a selection based on necessary knowledge and skills and the department's aim to offer training in teaching to students. Students may accept or decline the offer of a duty. A 'demonstrating form' will be given to each selected student for each module to confirm the hours involved. This must be returned signed off for payment to be made which is one month in arrears of submission of the form.

Subject to satisfactory performance in the first year of appointment, student registration numbers on individual modules, and the continuing availability of funds, PGTAs may be re-appointed in future years without reapplying.