

# **Doctoral Students' Teaching Experiences at QMU: An Exploration of Levels of Support**

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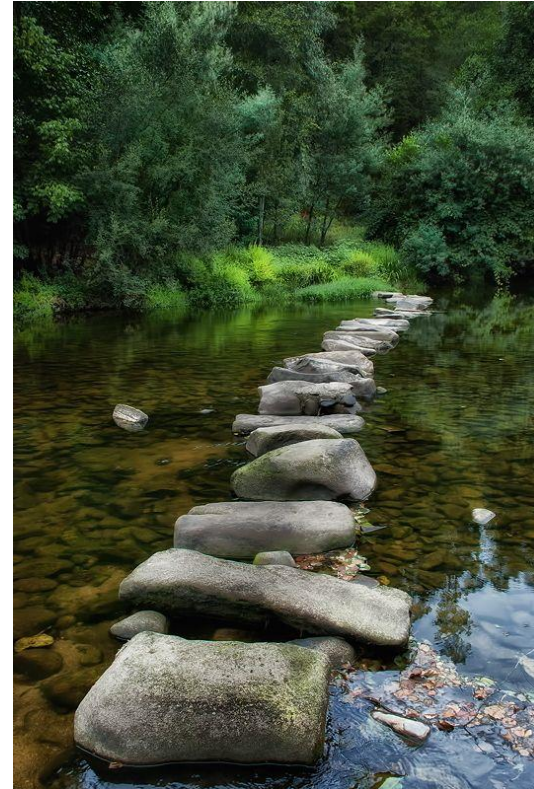


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# The Question

What do doctoral students need in order to make the transition to teaching?



# What's the problem?

## PRES 2015

- 27% drop in “appropriate support and guidance for teaching”
- Dissatisfaction with support & guidance received



# Year 1 PETL Project Aims

- Support transition of doc students: student to adjunct staff
- Increase knowledge of training and support received by doc students during first teaching experiences
- Empower doc students to feel confident when taking on teaching roles, and to become an effective part of the academic community.



# Methodology Year 1

- Ethics approval
- Desk research
- BOS survey of all doctoral students who aren't also staff
  - 20 responses (15% of local doc students)
- Four 1:1 interviews



# Questions asked in Project 1

- Level of confidence prior to teaching
- Type of teaching undertaken
- How comfortable negotiating teaching arrangements
- Support, guidance, resources used
- What was useful
- Main barriers to using other support







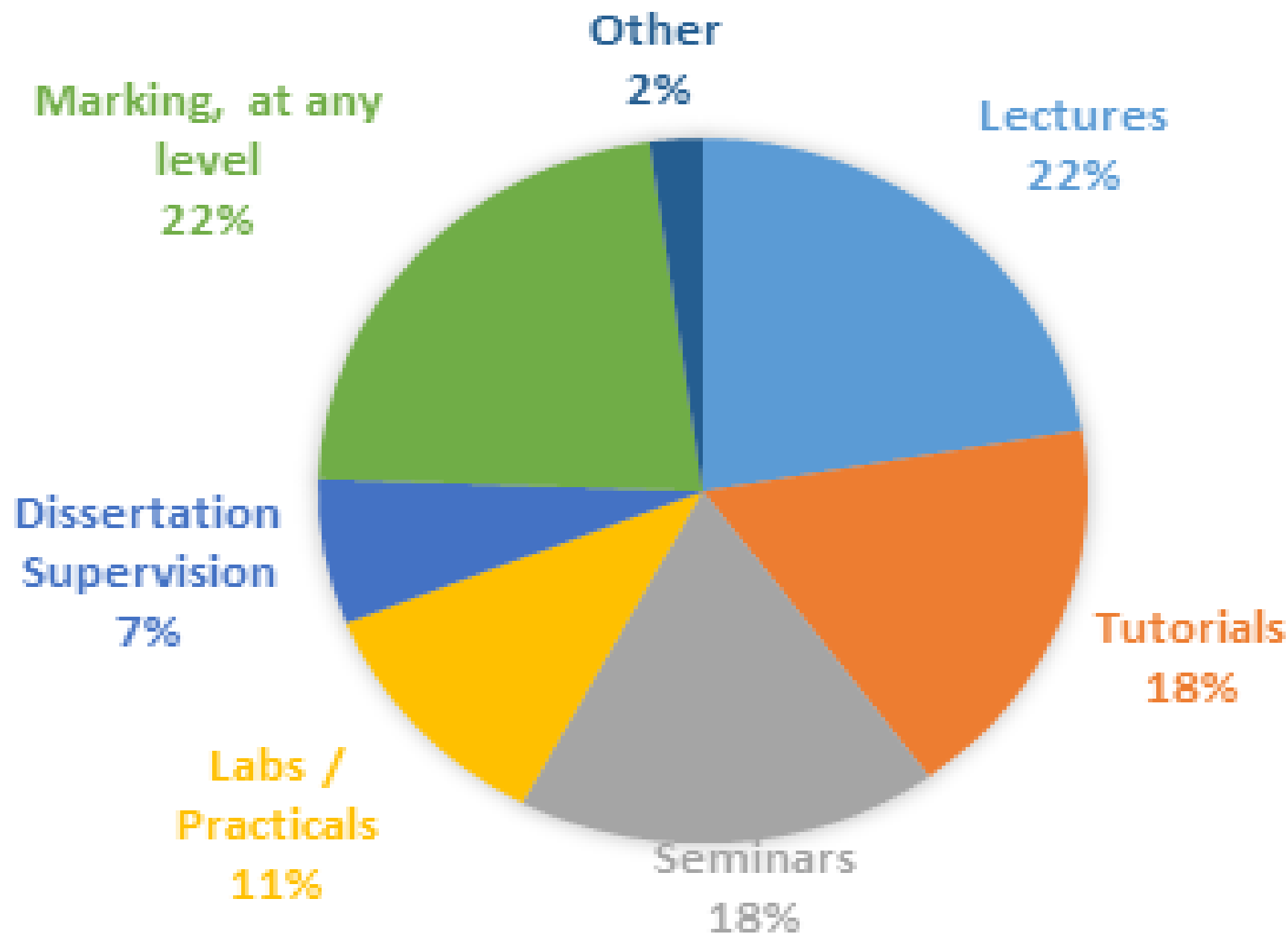
# Issues which emerged



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# TEACHING ACTIVITIES





# *Levels of comfort with **negotiating** aspects of teaching*

	Extremely comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Not comfortable at all	There was no negotiation
Type of teaching activity	2	 8	1	1
Content of what was taught	3	 5	2	2
How the content was taught	1	 11	0	0
Timing around the student's PhD	2	 6	3	1

# Identity

- *“As a PhD student, you’re half student / half staff. I still felt like a student, but being able to teach does help you find a different identity” (Interviewee 4)*
- *“.....when you’re in that classroom you’re on your own” (Interviewee 2)*



*“there needs to be more **clarity** about what is expected from teaching, ie number of hours. And also more clarity and **uniformity** across the schools as to what **remuneration** is given for teaching outwith that required by the PhD bursary. For example, some students are paid as VLs for giving lectures outwith the teaching expected from them as part of their bursary. However, some students are **paid for preparation** time for these lectures, while others are not, and there seems to be no clear **University-wide guidance** in place about this.”*

# Clarity



# Does it matter?

*“...when doctoral students don’t feel part of something, or their contribution is not recognized, then it all falls down”*

*“It’s the small things like this that can make the difference as to whether the teaching experience is positive or negative for the PhD student, who may already be stressed by their PhD”*  
*(Interviewee 1)*



# What support and guidance do doctoral students have?

- CAP Short Course
- Informal discussions
- Support from doctoral supervisory team members
- Discussions with module coordinator re: practical help with specifics
- Attending similar lectures before delivering own teaching
- Attending a presentation skills course (external)
- Dual teaching
- Shadowing and observation (2 GTAs)
- Youtube videos.



# Suggestions

- Clarity, equity, consistency re expectations of bursary students
- Equity, consistency in remuneration
- Clear understanding about when doctoral students can say no
- Standardised support, not haphazard
- Standardised feedback for all personnel new to teaching
- CAP Short Course coordinated with teaching activities, e.g. weekly two hour workshop?



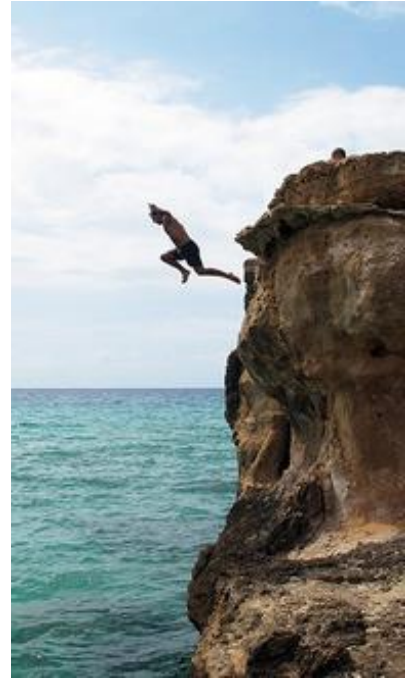


# In summary

*“If you are offered teaching, do it as it’s a great opportunity and good experience for any future job applications”*

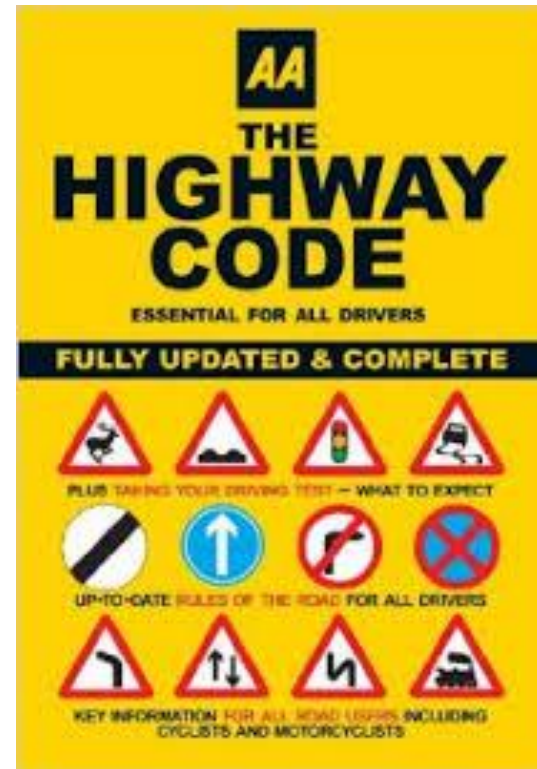
BUT

- Variation across subject areas
- Inequity
- Clarity



# Resources / guidance requested

- Webpage
- Checklists
- Workshop re expectations
- Teaching agreement: doc student / dept



# Year 2 PETL Project Aims

Produce a support resource for doctoral students, to facilitate successful transition to teaching and learning



<http://www.thebluediamondgallery.com/wooden-file/s/support.html>



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# Project - Year 2

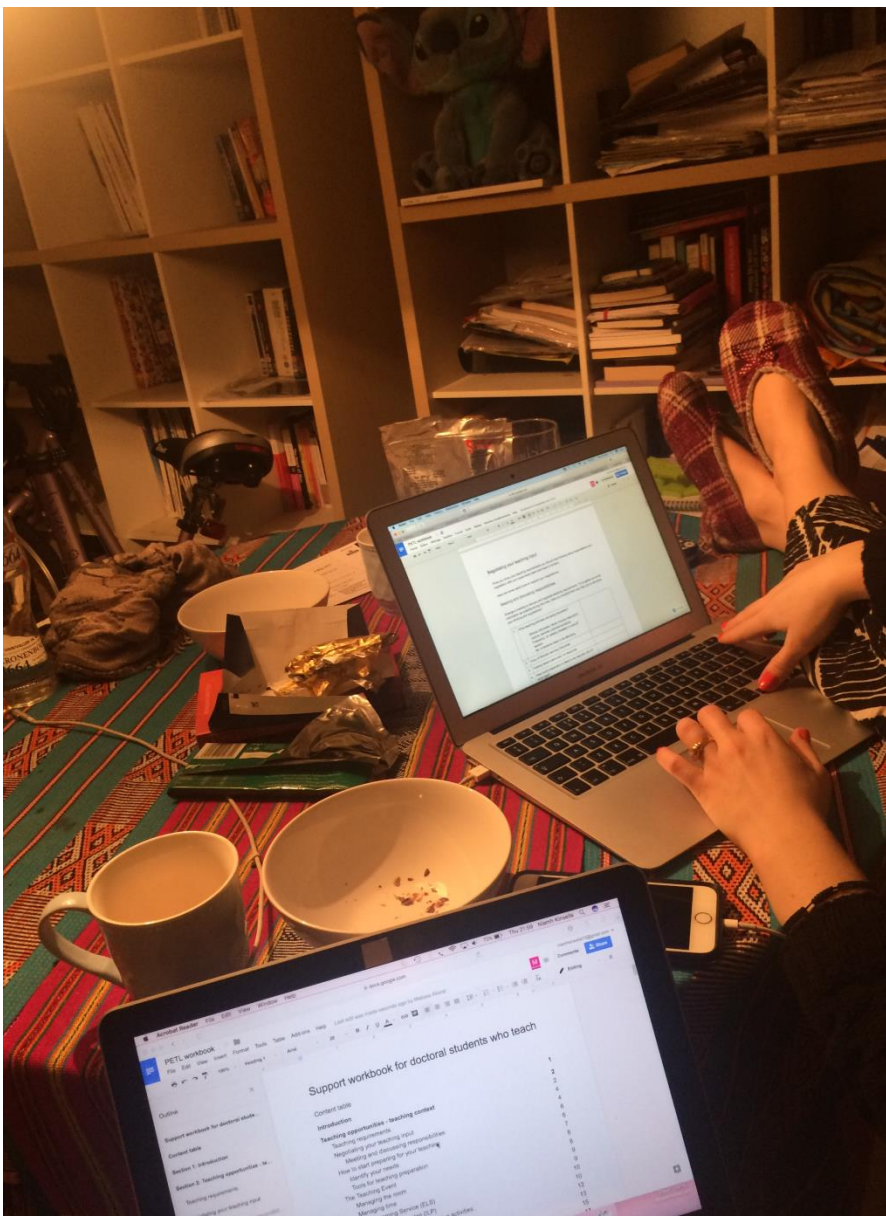
2 doctoral students from two Schools:

- What will be useful?
- What is out there?
- What are the questions we need answers to?



# What have we done as a result?

- 
- Support workbook for doctoral students who teach



# Our process



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# We wanted...

- ✓ A workbook that is relatable
- ✓ Easy to use as a reference at different stages
- ✓ Supportive
- ✓ Informative
- ✓ Fun



# We used...

- Top tips
- Images
- Jokes
- Flowcharts
- Words

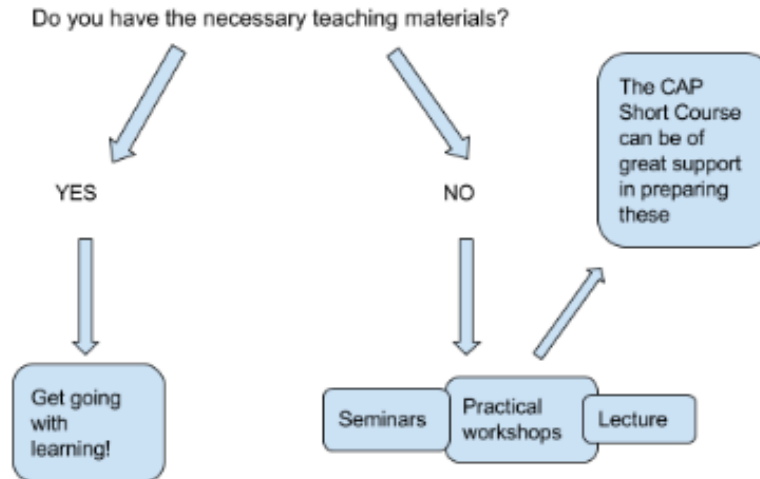


<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Section 2: Teaching opportunities - teaching context</b>	<b>3</b>
Teaching requirements	3
Negotiating your teaching input	4
<b>Section 3: How to start preparing for your teaching</b>	<b>5</b>
Identify your needs	5
Tools for teaching preparation	6
<b>Section 4: The Teaching Event</b>	<b>7</b>
Organising the room	7
Organising time	7
<b>Section 5: Inclusive Teaching Practice</b>	<b>9</b>
Effective Learning Service (ELS)	9
Individual learning plan (ILP)	9
<b>Section 6: Reflection and feedback on teaching activities</b>	<b>10</b>
Learning Outcome Scales	11
<b>Section 7: Looking after yourself</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Section 8: Key Contacts</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Section 9: Treat yourself</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Section 10: Resources</b>	<b>18</b>



## Section 3: How to start preparing for your teaching

### Identify your needs



#### Practical preparations

What kind of room will the teaching take place in?

Is there enough room for small group work if required?

Is there enough time for all activities?

Any special equipment required?

What is the AV equipment in the room?

Do you need to order any AV equipment?

Are there desks in the room?

#### Centre for Academic Practice (CAP) - Short Course in Facilitating Learning and Teaching

More information on:

[http://www.qmu.ac.uk/i/hd/short\\_courses/short\\_courses1.htm](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/i/hd/short_courses/short_courses1.htm)

This 5 day course is a great start for teaching that will help you to build a foundation for your educational practice. It is aimed at people who have teaching experience and who are new to teaching.

For those who are interested and gain enough experience, the short course is also one of the first steps towards achieving recognition as (Associate) Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**You are expected to complete the CAP Short Course prior to starting to teach during your doctoral studies.**

Link to HEA fellowship application information:

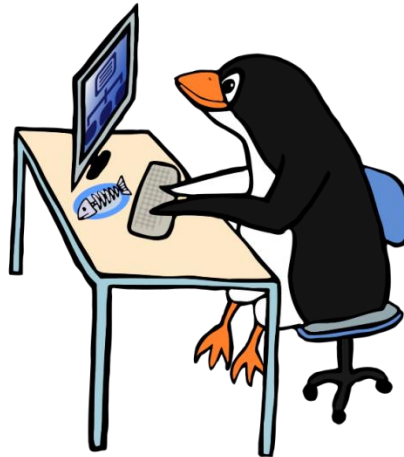
<http://intra-serv/sites/cap/qmucpd/default.aspx>

# What is next

- Share the workbook with doctoral students to ask for feedback and adapt accordingly, i.e. inclusive process
- Presentation of process and outcome at ET and QMU conferences
- Write reflective article re: experience of process and workbook outcome
- Teaching agreement?



# Thank you



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