



جامعة قطر
QATAR UNIVERSITY

مكتب الدراسات العليا
Office of Graduate Studies

Graduate Assistant Job Policy



- Policy Number: 1.0
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- Approved by University Council On: May 28th, 2018



Source/ Authority:

This policy and its relevant procedures have been developed by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies.

The Office of Graduate Studies is responsible for the implementation and supervision of this policy and its relevant procedures.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish and implement clear guidelines for the standardization of the offering of Graduate Assistant (GA) positions at Qatar University. This policy also aims to utilize Graduate Assistantship positions as a means of increasing Qatar University's research output and, subsequently, enhancing the university's international reputation and ranking by attracting and employing high-caliber graduate students.

Policy Description:

This policy describes the eligibility criteria for the nomination of Graduate Assistants at Qatar University as well as the procedures relevant to GA appointments, responsibilities, workload, remuneration, evaluation, and contract duration/termination.

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Rationale:

Qatar University offers financial support in the form of Graduate Assistantship (GA) positions to graduate students who engage in teaching and/or research activities that contribute to the university's academic mission and to students' education. Graduate Assistants play a vital role in the enhancement of the university's ranking by supporting the research productivity of QU faculty. GAs also provide academic program support under the direct supervision of faculty; GAs may assist faculty with teaching assignments, grading of problem sets, lab assignments, or examinations as well as support faculty research. GAs are not permitted to provide administrative services as part of their responsibilities.

Two Categories of Graduate Assistant Positions:

1. Graduate Research Assistantships
2. Graduate Teaching/ Research Assistantships

A Graduate Research Assistant position designates an appointment for which the workload is comprised entirely of research-related tasks, while the Graduate Teaching/ Research Assistant position designates an appointment for which the workload is comprised of primarily research-related tasks with a number of hours dedicated to teaching support. The breakdown of load responsibilities is described in this policy.

Graduate Assistantship positions are offered on a competitive basis to students admitted to a graduate program at Qatar University.

Eligibility Criteria:

- A prospective graduate student seeking admission to a QU graduate program and who meets the program-specific requirements is eligible to apply for a Graduate Assistantship at the time of applying for admission;
- Currently admitted students may apply for a Graduate Assistantship upon the Program's approval by submitting a GA Application to the Office of Graduate Studies prior to the deadline;
- The deadlines for the submission of GA applications are the same as those for admission;
- The number of Graduate Assistant positions offered involving teaching-related activities is contingent upon the college's demand for teaching assistants (i.e. course offerings, laboratory sessions, enrolment, number of faculty, available funds, etc.)

Appointment Process:

- The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies/ Center Director or their representative shall prepare a list of Graduate Assistant positions needed by each program/center along with the required qualifications of each position to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies;
- The Office of Graduate Studies in collaboration with the Human Resources Department shall electronically advertise vacancies for Graduate Assistant positions;
- The Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies shall form a committee/committees responsible for the selection of candidates for Graduate Assistant positions;
- Applicants selected for a Graduate Assistant position shall receive a offer letter from the Human Resources Department upon admission to a graduate program at Qatar University;
- GA candidates must confirm their acceptance of the job offer to Human Resources and the Office of Graduate Studies within five (5) business days of receiving the offer letter;
- Upon confirmation of the job offer, the Human Resources Department shall finalize the appointment procedure including the GA contract specifying the position as either a Graduate Research Assistant or a Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant, the detailed job responsibilities, work load, direct supervisor, and benefits package as well as any financial responsibilities the GA is responsible for such as accommodation and health insurance in accordance with this policy;

- The Office of Graduate Studies shall inform Programs/College of those applicants selected for a GA position;
- Students shall sign the official contract at Human Resources and maintain a copy of the contract for their record;
- In the first week of commencing duty:
 - o Colleges/Centers shall send a list of GAs and their assigned supervisors to the Office of Graduate Studies
 - o GAs are required to participate in a Graduate Assistant orientation at the college. The orientation includes, but is not limited to, a description of the specific duties assigned, standards for evaluation of performance, training (if relevant), and information on available resources. A hard copy of the assignment duties must be given to GAs with a signed copy to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs in the Office of Graduate Studies
 - o Renewal of a GA contract is contingent upon prior performance, the teaching and/or research needs of the assigned unit, and availability of funds
- A GA seeking to resign from his/her position must notify the supervisor by the end of the semester AND prior to the end of the application period for graduate admission for the following semester;
- The resigning GA must complete the Resignation Form located on the Office of Graduate Studies website and obtain the required approvals from the assigned unit. The signed GA Resignation Form must be sent to the Human Resources Department (copying the Office of Graduate Studies).

Responsibilities:

- Graduate Assistants are required to perform a variety of tasks, which are directly related to the academic and research goals of the assigned unit. Graduate Assistants shall not be assigned any administrative duties as part of a GA appointment. Moreover, GAs are not permitted to work on any research project supported by external funding without prior approval of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies;
- The GA duties and responsibilities shall be clearly stated in the contract. GAs will serve under the direction and supervision of appointed faculty members as designated by the college/center. The following guidelines apply:
 1. The Graduate Teaching and Research Assistantship (GTRA) commitment is defined as a workload of 35 hours per week, which can be distributed among different tasks as per departmental needs where the maximum teaching responsibilities shall not exceed 10 hours per week, 10 hrs of research-related tasks that support the research output of QU faculty and merit the GA's inclusion in the authorship, and 15 hours per week reserved for the student's graduate research.
 - o Graduate teaching responsibilities must be supervised by a faculty member and must comply with the teaching credential policy. Teaching responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, assisting in laboratory sessions, teaching tutorials and help sessions, help in grading laboratory reports/papers and quizzes, proctoring exams, and organizing/uploading course handouts as instructed by the supervising faculty;
 - o GTRAs are required to publish (or have confirmation of acceptance

of) at least one paper as a result of their research-related responsibilities on an annual basis.

2. The Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) commitment is defined as 35 hours per week with 20 hours committed to research-related tasks that support the research output of QU faculty and merit the GA's inclusion in the authorship and 15 hours reserved for the student's graduate research.

o GRAs are required to publish (or have confirmation of acceptance of) at least two papers as a result of their research-related responsibilities on an annual basis.

3. A Graduate Assistant shall not have any other employment inside or outside of Qatar University.

4. A Graduate Assistant is required to register for 9 credit hours per semester or 6 credit hours per semester for those belonging to research-based programs except in the last semester in which the student is expected to graduate.

5. A Graduate Assistant is expected to maintain good academic standing, satisfactory progress towards his/her graduate degree and contribute to the academic/research goals of the assigned unit;

6. A Graduate Assistant is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity and abide by college and University rules and regulations;

7. A Graduate Assistant is not permitted to enroll in any course for which

he/she is assigned assistantship responsibilities;

8. A Graduate Assistant who withdraws from a course, the University, or resigns an assistantship position after the add and drop period of the semester shall be responsible for all expenses paid, including tuition fees

Compensation:

- Graduate Assistants are appointed as full-time employees based on a 12-month contract with a 35/hour work commitment per week;
- A Graduate Assistant shall be paid a monthly salary as determined by the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies throughout the duration of the contract;
- A GA contract shall be subject to renewal for a maximum period of two (2) years for Master's students and four (4) years for doctoral students;
- A Graduate Assistant shall receive a waiver for 50% of the tuition fees connected to the program study plan;
- A Graduate Assistant who withdraws from a course, the University, or resigns an assistantship position after the add and drop period of the semester shall be responsible for all expenses paid, including tuition fees;
- A Graduate Assistant, particularly non-residents coming from abroad, may be eligible for Health Insurance and Housing;
- A Graduate Assistant shall be eligible for a 45 day vacation provided the timing of such vacation is in line with the QU academic calendar and does not conflict with regularly scheduled teaching times. Any vacation time must be approved by the direct supervisor and the head of the department/center.

Evaluation:

- A Graduate Assistant must fill a GA Report to the direct supervisor at the end of each semester with a copy to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in the Office of Graduate Studies;
- The faculty member supervising the assignments of the GA and the Head of the assigned unit must provide an evaluation of the GA's performance to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs in the Office of Graduate Studies prior to a request for renewal of a GA contract. The evaluation must provide evidence of research output such as published papers, conference proceedings, posters, action research, etc.;
- Graduate Studies will evaluate the performance reports provided by the assigned units at the end of each year to determine the re-allocation of GA positions. Evaluation criteria may include:
 - o Teaching performance
 - o Number of published papers
 - o Book chapters
 - o Scientific reports
 - o Conference proceedings
 - o Posters
 - o Action Research, etc.

Maintaining a Graduate Assistant Position:

- The maximum duration of a full-time Graduate Assistant appointment is limited to the normal length of time for completing the degree; in most cases, the normal length of time is not to exceed two years for a Master's degree student and four years for a PhD student;
- Graduate students who have been offered a GA position must satisfy the following:
 - o Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0
 - o Not hold any other employment commitments
 - o Maintain a positive evaluation from the supervisor in accordance with the GA duties assigned upon acceptance of the position

End of Contract:

- A Graduate Assistant contract may be terminated in the event the GA fails to meet performance standards or fails to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 by the end of each semester;
- A Graduate Assistant contract may be terminated by the end of the current semester at any time the GA's performance is considered to be unsatisfactory by the assigned unit or the Office of Graduate Studies;
- Although, immediate end of contract may be called upon for serious misbehaviour or failure to perform and attend to duties, all terminations must follow the legal guidelines adopted by QU. Appeals to the termination decision must be submitted within one week of the termination letter to the Office of Graduate Studies. The student will be notified of the appeal outcome within one month.

