

TERMINOLOGY FOR GSE STUDENT APPOINTMENTS

Research Fellows

Research Fellows (RF) are PhD students. An RF appointment usually includes a stipend plus support for tuition, general fee, clinical fee and health insurance. Usually an RF is appointed for 20 hpw during the academic year (September 1 through May 31) for a total of 700 hours. An RF can be appointed for less than this and any support the student receives would be prorated based on their assignment (e.g., 10 hpw is considered 50% effort so the stipend and other support would be prorated to reflect 50% effort). At this time GSE guarantees funding for PhD students during their first four years (8 semesters—Fall and Spring only). This support includes tuition for up to 8 course units taken for a grade for the academic year, general fee, clinical fee plus health insurance for the student. Students must maintain full-time status which is defined as 3 or 4 course units per semester (Fall and Spring) for a grade **OR** once coursework is completed registration for dissertation supervision (EDUC 995).

It is the responsibility of the person supervising the work to make sure that the student maintains a log of the hours worked in order to document that the student is meeting their work commitment.

Research Assistants

Research Assistants (RAs) can be EdD or Masters students. An RA appointment usually includes a stipend plus support for tuition and general fee. Usually an RA is appointed for 20 hpw during the academic year (September 1 through May 31) for a total of 700 hours. An RA can be appointed for less than this and any support the student receives would be prorated based on their assignment (e.g., 10 hpw is considered 50% effort so the stipend and other support would be prorated to reflect 50% effort). The RA stipend for a masters student is slightly lower than that for an EdD student. At this time GSE guarantees funding for full-time EdD students during their first year, and usually for their second year. This support includes tuition for 6 course units taken for a grade for the academic year (3 each in the Fall and Spring semesters) plus the general fee. Depending on the source of funding this appointment could also include the clinical fee and health insurance for the student. While receiving this funding students must maintain full-time status which is defined as 3 or 4 course units per semester (Fall and Spring) for a grade **OR** once coursework is completed registration for dissertation supervision (EDUC 995).

It is the responsibility of the person supervising the work to make sure that the student maintains a log of the hours worked in order to document that the student is meeting their work commitment.

Teaching Assistants

A Teaching Assistant (TA) is a full-time graduate student enrolled in a degree program who teaches or guides students under the direction of a faculty member. A TA appointment at GSE includes stipend support only. The stipend is subject to Federal income tax, Pennsylvania

personal income tax, and City of Philadelphia wage tax. In addition, as a full-time graduate student, a Teaching Assistant's stipend is exempt from FICA/Medicare tax. While receiving this funding students must maintain full-time status which is defined as 3 or 4 course units per semester (Fall and Spring) for a grade **OR** once coursework is completed registration for dissertation supervision (EDUC 995).

Student Workers

Student Workers receive an hourly wage, and payment is issued via Payroll either through direct deposit or the ADP card, based on the submission of weekly time sheets through the e-timesheet system. The hourly rate of pay for student workers varies with the type of work assigned, but cannot exceed the current rate of \$21.00 per hour for masters students and \$25.00 per hour for doctoral students. In addition to the hourly rate, part-time employee benefits are charged (the current rate is 9.0%).

Work-Study

Student Financial Services determines eligibility and awards federal work-study (FWS) to eligible students for the academic year (Fall/Spring). Students must file a current year FAFSA to be considered. Work-Study eligibility is reflected on their financial aid award, but is not applied to their bill; they will be paid weekly based on the actual hours worked.

Currently, the department pays 40% of the students' wages while the FWS pays the remaining 60%. Work-Study students are issued an award for the FWS and the FWS funds are drawn down against this award. If the student exhausts their award and the department wishes to keep the student, then the student becomes a Student Worker. The department then pays 100% of the wages and part-time employee benefits are charged (the current rate is 9.0%).

Work-Study students receive an hourly wage, and payment is issued via Payroll either through direct deposit or the ADP card, based on the submission of weekly time sheets through the e-timesheet system. The hourly rate of pay varies with the type of work assigned and is determined by the employer. The hourly wage must be at least the level of PA state minimum wage and cannot exceed \$13.00 per hour unless approved by the Student Employment Office. Part-time employee benefits are not charged against work-study salaries.

Graduate Assistants

A Graduate Assistant (GA) is a form of student employment managed through GSE programs directly. Students admitted to programs with GA opportunities are encouraged to apply at the time of their admission to GSE. The benefit of a GA is that it may provide academically relevant work-experience and pays a higher wage than the typical on-campus job. Domestic students will be funded through GSE and Federal Work-Study, if eligible. International and ineligible domestic GAs will be funded entirely by GSE. Students may hold both a GA and other student employment, but the total combined hours cannot exceed 20 hours per week. If hired as a GA, the student will be required to perform 167 hours of work over the Fall and Spring semesters at GSE while completing their academic program. GAs are compensated at \$21.00 per hour and

can earn up to \$3,500 in gross, pre-tax earnings. They are paid weekly by the employing department, and the compensation will reflect the number of hours worked per week. GAs are only offered to full-time masters students.

It is the responsibility of the person supervising the work to make sure that the student maintains a log of the hours worked in order to document that the student is meeting their work commitment and does not exceed the hours allocated (167 hours).

GAs are usually not compensated through sponsored project resources.

Scholarship recipients

Scholarship students receive scholarship awards, credited to their tuition accounts. Since **no** service is required, no taxes are withheld. Scholarships are only offered to full-time students.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Students should be aware that some funding is subject to taxes. A Guide to Graduate Student Appointments, including payroll and tax issues, is available on the University's website at <https://www.finance.upenn.edu/content/guide-graduate-student-appointments>.

All students, in any University-funded position, are responsible for keeping a clear and accurate log of their hours and should share them with their appointment supervisor on an agreed-upon basis.

For appointments that include tuition, general fee, clinical fee or health insurance support, it is expected that each student monitors his/her bill closely and address any questions in a timely manner with Joyce Cook in the GSE Business Office. If Joyce is not available, the student may contact GSE's Financial Aid Office or Penn's Student Financial Aid Office.

During the academic year students may only work up to 20 hours per week, with the exception of EdD students who may work up to 28.5 hours per week with special permission. There is a form that needs to be completed if an EdD student wishes to work beyond the standard of 20 hours per week (please ask Joyce for this form).

During the summer a student may work more than 20 hours per week if they are not taking classes; however, the weekly hours are usually capped at 28.5 hours per week. If a student works 29+ hours for **four** consecutive weeks OR an average of 29+ hours over 12 weeks there are financial implications that would impact any compensation earned during the fiscal year.

No student should start working until it has been confirmed with the Business Office that there are resources available to pay the student and that the student has completed the necessary personnel forms.

Please speak with Joyce Cook (898-8223 or joycec@upenn.edu) from the GSE Business Office if you need any clarification on these appointments.