



The Teaching-Research Nexus

A guide for academics and policy-makers
in higher education

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Examples from Australian universities

Encouraging Postgraduate Research Students to Develop Their Teaching Skills

Associate Professor Peter Harrison
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Broad discipline area:

Natural and Physical Sciences

- Marine Studies

Year level:

Across year levels

TRN strategy:

- Academic career development: developing the teaching ability of postgraduate research students
- Encouraging researchers to become more involved in the teaching

Teaching and learning context:

- Large group lectures
- Mentoring of individual students

Brief description of the initiative:

This academic encourages postgraduate research students to become involved in the teaching culture of their Department. He mentors these students' future academic careers by progressively introducing them to the teaching process so they develop not only their research skills but also their lecturing ability. This academic gives these research students encouragement and feedback on their teaching. First, he encourages his postgraduates to give lectures or parts of lectures by providing them with the notes he has used for a particular topic, to build their confidence. Second, he meets students prior to the scheduled lecture to discuss and evaluate their lecture plans and presentations before they are given. This academic also sits in on the lecture and subsequently provides the postgraduate student with feedback on their delivery.

This academic's mentoring philosophy is to guide all phases of initial postgraduate lectures then, as they become more confident, gradually encourage them to take control of the process for themselves.

Evidence of effectiveness:

Postgraduate research students mentored by this academic have been appointed to associate lecture and lecturer positions and promoted to senior lecturer status.

For further details:

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