Newcastle University

Digital Skills Demonstrating

in the

Faculty of Medical Sciences

Postgraduate IT Demonstrator: Handbook

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1 Introduction to the Role

1.1 Background

A variety of IT courses are run each year with training being delivered to over 5000 students (undergraduate and postgraduate) in all three University Faculties. Courses are repeated many times because of the size of the student intake, the availability of computers in the clusters, and the availability and numbers of teaching/ demonstrating staff.

All courses aim to improve students' opportunities for, and efficiency in, using IT. A problem-based approach to teaching has been adopted to encourage students to learn how to help themselves.

Most courses are delivered via online tutorials which remain available throughout the year. Other supporting documentation is also available online.

In order to make the teaching more meaningful for the students, and to offer more support for them during their studies and beyond, attempts are made to link the IT sessions to specific pieces of work, e.g. if a group has an essay to submit, the Document Management sessions will be timed to support them in the production of the essay. Similarly, presentation skills sessions have greater impact if they precede an assessed oral or poster presentation for which students are preparing.

1.2 About the IT sessions

Demonstrating IT to students during courses carries with it a responsibility to teach skills and techniques rather than answering questions (see 2.3).

There is an increasing range of courses offered throughout the faculties, with many courses being tailored for specific student groups so that specific development and academic requirements can be better addressed and supported.

All materials are available online at https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/. A summary of the main courses provided is available in Appendix 1 at the end of this document, but you should be aware that other courses will be offered. You should ensure that you are fully conversant with the materials for the course on which you are demonstrating. You should also be familiar with the general key skills, which are common themes throughout the range of courses.

1.3 Contacts

The Digital Skills Officer, Elliot Cruikshanks, can be contacted via email: nmedit@newcastle.ac.uk or via Teams. He can be contacted on any issues relating to teaching and learning in general and issues relating to pay, teaching rotas, absences and support for any extra teaching hours.

In the event the Digital Skills Officer is unavailable, the nmedit@newcastle.ac.uk inbox will be actioned by the eLearning Team, For any urgent queries, please contact the eLearning Theme Lead, Gemma Mitchelson, via email: gemma.mitchelson@newcastle.ac.uk or via Teams.

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2 Duties and Responsibilities of an IT Demonstrator

2.1 About the role

You will work in a team of up to 20: this will always include a session lead - either the Digital Skills Officer or a postgraduate demonstrator who has been assigned a lead role. The Digital Skills Officer will be ultimately responsible for the class and will provide you with instructions for the smooth running of the session. The number of demonstrators varies depending on the class size and content. Most sessions involve classes of between 20 and 70 students, and all take place within computer cluster rooms. At times, drop-in sessions offering a more tailored approach may be required. In this instance, the Digital Skills Officer will be present and provide any additional/necessary guidance prior to the session.

Most classes run for 2 hours, and you will be scheduled to demonstrate around the 15th of the month prior to month you will teach (i.e. teaching in November will be scheduled on or around October 15). Classes are only scheduled during term-time, and most teaching takes place in terms 1 and 2. **On average**, you should expect to work between 4 and 6 hours per month, although this varies significantly throughout the year on inter-school demand and demonstrator skillsets.

You should ensure that you inform the Digital Skills Officer of any times that you are unavailable to demonstrate, so this can be taken into consideration when completing the demonstrator schedule. If you are scheduled to teach at a time that you cannot attend, you should arrange for a swap or replacement and inform the Digital Skills Officer of this change (see 2.4 part 1.)

All communications should be sent to: nmedit@newcastle.ac.uk unless it is private or confidential. In this instance, you can directly email the Digital Skills Officer at: elliot.cruikshanks@ncl.ac.uk or via Teams at your discretion.

2.2 Scheduling

Demonstrators will be assigned sessions based on an alphabetical rotation with consideration to the number of hours assigned per month where applicable. Rotations will continue into subsequent months, i.e., if January's rotations end on letter "G", February would start on "H". This process is used to provide the greatest possible equity among demonstrators' hours. If you notify the Digital Skills Officer of a period of unavailability, you will be removed from the rotation until your return. Scheduling rotation is based on sessions assigned, not sessions complete. Therefore, if you cancel or refuse an assignment, the rotation will continue normally. I.e. If Dem A and B are assigned a session each in week 1 but dem B has to cancel, then dem C will be the next in the scheduling rotation. Suitability to sessions may factor into decision making during high demand periods: i.e. an Excel specialist may be more in demand during certain periods of the year.

2.3 Core duties of an IT Demonstrator

Before sessions

1. Prepare for each session by completing the online session tutorial. You must be familiar with the session's content prior to any session.
2. Ensure you are at your session with enough time to prepare the facilities as needed.

During Sessions

3. Attend all sessions for which you are scheduled.
4. Teach academic IT skills and resolve questions in such a way as to assist student learning and support online teaching materials.
5. Ensure students learn through a question-based approach to teaching; the key being to encourage students to apply logic and problem-solve for themselves and not to complete the work for them.

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6. Answer student queries within the classroom, accurately, succinctly, and professionally. Seek advice from other members of the Digital Skills Team when necessary.
7. Report to a member of staff acting as class leader, ensuring that any additional responsibilities are understood and completed efficiently.
8. Work as a member of a team during the teaching sessions to ensure that the class is well supported, that student queries are responded to promptly, and that proactive teaching advice and support is provided.

After Sessions

9. Assist with tidying up as required.

2.4 Absences

You are responsible for attending all sessions for which you are scheduled.

If you have a valid reason for non-attendance at a session, e.g., sickness absence, you must notify a staff member in the Digital Skills Team as soon as possible prior to it.

Payment

You will be paid for the number of hours you were scheduled to work. This means that if a 2-hour class finishes after 1.5 hours, you will still receive 2 hours of pay. The current hourly rate is £17.19 per hour.

Wages are paid one month in arrears through central payroll. Therefore, hours worked from September 18 to October 18 (if approved on time) will be paid on the last working day of October.

A summary of the hours to be sent to payroll will be circulated and you should check that this is correct. You should also ensure that payment reaches your bank account and alert the Digital Skills Officer immediately if there are any discrepancies.

2.5 Tier 4 Student Employment

All Tier 4 student should be aware of the strict working conditions attached to your visa. The conditions cover both paid and unpaid employment. The consequences of breaching the conditions of your visa can be severe and could have a long-term detrimental impact on your immigration status and your studies in the UK.

Tier 4 students can work for Newcastle University via ***one of three routes:***

- *centrally recruited part-time roles with set hours – these are usually advertised on the Newcastle University recruitment website and/or Vacancies Online*

• Jobs On Campus (JobsOC)

• teaching and demonstrating roles, across multiple academic units

If you are a Tier 4 (General) visa holder and work on campus you need to:

• only work one role at a time, via the routes set out above

• ensure that you do not work more than your visa allows during term-time, 20 hours per week - term dates differ for undergraduate and postgraduate taught and research courses, make sure, you're aware of these dates.

• provide the university with your visa and/or biometric registration card to confirm your right to work in the UK - you need to do this before starting work

• respond to weekly emails from your manager about planned working hours

• make your manager aware of any other paid or unpaid work you are undertaking off campus.

-Career Services, Newcastle University (2017) "International Students," Accessed 18 December 2017 from http://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers/jobs/internationalstudents/#workingoncampus

Newcastle University has an obligation as your Tier 4 sponsor to ensure that you do not risk over-working during your studies. To safeguard students against accidental breaches of visa conditions, Newcastle University is required to monitor the hours Tier 4 students plan to work.

All Tier 4 students will be required to complete a Weekly Hours Check Estimate summarising the hours for paid and unpaid, FMS ITSkills and with non-university work. Failure to submit the weekly hours check estimate will result in you being removed from the week's schedule.

3 Training and Preparation

3.1 The Training Session

Increasing importance is being placed upon Demonstrator training and recognition within the University; responding to the demand for high-quality teaching to be provided across the University, and to reward and support Demonstrators who are vital to the success of this.

You must attend the 4-hour training session prior to the start of term and actively participate in the event to become a member of the Demonstrating team. This training will cover key teaching techniques specific to the role; key skills that you must be proficient in to be able to fulfil the role successfully; and an opportunity for your IT and Teaching skills to be assessed in a practical situation.

You will be paid the usual level 6 rate of £17.19 per hour for this training.

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3.2 Course Aims and Learning Outcomes

The aims of IT Demonstrator training are:

1. To familiarise students with the duties and responsibilities of an IT Demonstrator.
2. To provide information about the administrative processes of the role, key contacts and wage information.
3. To provide an overview of the main IT skills sessions delivered within the faculty and identify how the courses relate to each other.
4. To identify any significant changes to the courses and to update returning demonstrators.
5. To assess IT skills competency of applicants and returning demonstrators, to ensure that they are sufficiently proficient in IT and IT-problem-solving skills.
6. To introduce main teaching techniques to be employed by Demonstrators in the classroom and provide the opportunity to practise and gain awareness of these skills prior to teaching.
7. To underpin principles of the Professional Standards Framework set out by Advance HE, Descriptor level 1 (Associate Fellow).
8. To answer questions regarding the post and ensure familiarity with the role prior to the start of the academic year.

The learning outcomes of IT Demonstrator training include:

1. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the post and the support offered to teaching staff to deliver IT skills sessions to students within the faculty.
2. Knowing how the role is administered and who to contact with questions and for advice.
3. Understand how courses are linked and key skills are developed through course progress.
4. Thorough knowledge of the main skills sessions (DMCL/DMIT/DHSS) and appreciation of the key skills within these courses.
5. Be able to problem solve common queries as practised within the training session.
6. Develop problem-solving skills and be aware of the techniques and processes of effective problem solving within the practical classroom.
7. Understand the importance of effective communication skills, including listening, questioning and explaining.
8. Identify poor communication techniques; explain why they are poor and how they could be improved.
9. Know the weaknesses in core communication skills that the demonstrator has and be able to improve them to enhance teaching skills.
10. Understand the importance of the role of demonstrator, and the importance of effective teaching methods.
11. Be aware of the impact that the demonstrator has on quality of learning and teaching, and the role in enhancing and assuring quality.

3.3 Postgraduate Training Requirements

The IT Demonstrator Training Course and subsequent role of IT Demonstrator support the Researcher Development Framework under the following domains:

Domain A: Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities

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- A1.5 Information literacy and management.
- A1.7 Academic literacy and numeracy.
- A2.5 Problem solving.
- A3.1 Inquiring mind.
- A3.2 Intellectual insight.
- A3.3 Innovation.

Domain B: Personal Effectiveness

- B1.1 Enthusiasm.
- B1.2 Perseverance.
- B1.3 Integrity.
- B1.4 Self-confidence.
- B1.5 Self-reflection.
- B1.6 Responsibility.
- B2.1 Preparation and prioritisation.
- B2.3 Time management.
- B3.1 Career management.
- B3.2 Continuing professional development.
- B3.3 Responsiveness to opportunities.
- B3.4 Networking.

Domain C: Research Governance and Organisation

- C1.1 Health and safety.
- C1.4 IPR and copyright.
- C1.5 Respect and confidentiality.

Domain D: Engagement, Influence and Impact

- D1.1 Collegiality.
- D1.2 Team working.
- D1.3 People management.
- D1.6 Influence and leadership.
- D1.8 Equality and diversity.
- D2.1 Communication methods.
- D3.1 Teaching.

4 Recognition

Attendance at this Training session can be recorded within your electronic portfolio and used as evidence of teacher training, undertaken within your degree. This course has been recognised by the University Teaching and Learning Committee Chair. This means that it provides training at a suitable level for the role undertaken and can be used as evidence of teaching training on your CV.

A letter acknowledging the role undertaken and certificate outlining the skills gained and demonstrated will be provided at the end of employment. This letter, on University headed paper and signed by the Digital Skills Officer outlines

the roles and experiences that this post requires and can be used as part of documentary evidence for future jobs, including those within the University.

The Digital Skills Officer will provide references on request, as agreed between the demonstrator and the Digital Skills Officer. The Digital Skills Officer must be informed by a demonstrator if they use them as a referee.

5 Continuing Support

You will be supported throughout your employment as an IT Demonstrator to successfully fulfil your role and develop your teaching skills.

Feedback on the session and any specific points to note regarding individual teaching will be provided as appropriate at the end of each session.

If you are completing the ILTHE course, you will be able to discuss what further teaching opportunities you require to support you through this area of your personal development. Every effort will be made to provide these opportunities, but you must notify the Student Digital Skills Manager during the autumn term in order that plans can be put in place to help support you achieve the learning outcomes of this course.

6 Demonstrators' web page

Information regarding how to become a demonstrator, access to training, application documents and what our current demonstrators have to say, can be found at:

https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/prospectivedems.

7 Appendix 1: Overview of Main Sessions

7.1.1 IT Induction course (ITIC)

https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/inductions

- Use of the computing facilities, including health and safety considerations.
- Logging on to and off the computers and changing your password.
- Office365, AVD, Canvas.
- Connecting your own devices to the campus network.
- Good file and print practices.
- Getting help.

7.1.2 Document Management – Content and Layout

https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/managingdocs

- In MS Word, use styles and stylesets to format your documents.
- Using multilevel lists.
- Inserting table of contents.
- Insert header and footer text.
- Insert equations.
- Insert columns.
- Insert footnotes.
- Effectively use the spelling and grammar checker and autocorrect features.

7.1.3 Document Management – Images and Tables (DMIT)

https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/managingdocs

- In MS Word, inserting tables and formatting table.
- Insert images from other sources i.e. Irfanview, PowerPoint, PDFs.
- Use captions and cross-referencing to link figures and keeping them up to date.
- Insert equations.
- Insert and create shortcuts for symbols.
- Effectively navigate a document.

7.1.4 Information Skills Assimilation (ISA)

https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/ugbns

- Make effective use of typical research-related applications software including EndNote and Word.
- Use this software to synthesise a complete research paper of the type typically seen in scientific journals.
- Appreciate the possibilities of using information technology.
- Solve many problems which may arise.

7.1.5 Presentation Skills and Using PowerPoint

(PPT) https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/posters

- Understand the process of creating a good presentation.
- Plan and draft a successful presentation.
- Use MS PowerPoint to create an appropriate, professional and informative presentation.
- Avoid problems associated with poor presentations and misuse of PowerPoint.

- Create appealing animated diagrams to effectively illustrate complex concepts.
- Resolve issues in PowerPoint and make sound judgements regarding presentations.

7.1.6 Data Handling and Spreadsheets (DHSS)

https://www.digitalskills.ncl.ac.uk/dataanalysis

- Use MS Excel to manipulate data on a spreadsheet, format it and analyse data statistically.
- Create graphs from the data and manipulate and format the graph.
- Complete statistical comparisons or data manipulation functions in line with coursework requirements.