



# MIC Departmental Assistantship Award Information Sheet

## AY2020/21

### INTRODUCTION

The terms and conditions of the Mary Immaculate College (MIC) Departmental Assistantship (DA) Award Scheme are approved by the Executive Team (ET). The Scheme is managed by the Research and Graduate School (RGS) on behalf of the ET, including management of appointment contracts, annual renewal and discontinuation of DA Awards. Selection, induction, definition and apportionment of duties, monitoring and evaluation of Departmental Assistants (DAs) operates through Academic Departments.

Through the DA Award Scheme, the College makes provision for the appointment of a number of registered postgraduate research students (PGRS; MA by research and thesis and PhD only) as DAs. DAs benefit from the financial support afforded to them and gain valuable experience through teaching and working with academic colleagues. DAs in turn make a valuable contribution to the academic activities of Academic Departments, Faculties and the College in general.

### 1 Overview of the MIC Departmental Assistantship Award Scheme

One DA Award per annum is available to each Academic Department. This is annually renewable for up to 3 years subject to satisfactory performance as determined by the Head of Department (HoD). This is offered by open and publicly advertised competition. All current and prospective PhD and MA (research and thesis) students may apply for a DA Award, but the Award can only be taken up by PGRS once they are registered in MIC.

Academic Departments can also avail of an opportunity to compete for one additional DA Award in the same Academic Year under the Floating Departmental Assistantship (FDA) Award provision within the Scheme (see Appendix A).

A DA Award currently provides for a stipend of €6,900.00 per annum (AY2020/21) along with a full fee waiver in Years 1, 2 & 3 for PhD students. Where a DA Awardee enters a 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies, a full fee waiver is provided, but no stipend is payable in Year 4 and no duties are required in Year 4. MA (research and thesis) students who receive a DA Award are entitled to a stipend of €6,900.00 (AY2020/21) with a full fee waiver for a two year period. Stipend instalments are paid monthly

beginning in September and ending in May.

DAs are required to provide up to a maximum of 120 hours of assistance to their home Academic Department across the Academic Year or an average of 5 hours per week per semester. DAs may not exceed 10 hours Departmental duties in any given week during the semester.

In compliance with the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2018, the allocation of these duties must be recorded by the HoD on the Departmental Assistantship Contract Request Form 2020. This form needs to be received by the RGSO before DA Award contracts can be processed.

## **2 Departmental Assistant Roles and Responsibilities**

DAs may be required to provide:

- Tutoring on timetabled tutorial sessions
- Preparation for tutoring/seminars/workshops
- Assistance with tutorial/lecture/seminar/workshop activities
- Recording of lecture/seminar/workshop attendance
- Supplementary lecture, seminar and workshop activities
- Field work supervision and assistance with activities
- Attendance at training sessions organised by the Research and Graduate School (RGS) and the Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Centre (LEAD).

Examples of work that DAs may not be required to provide would include:

- Curriculum design and review
- Selection of teaching styles and modes of delivery
- Writing of examination formats and questions
- Creation of unapproved teaching materials
- Covering / substituting for academic and professional staff
- Covering / substituting for academic office hours
- Supervision and/or management of fellow Departmental Assistants

DAs are required to work under the close and monitored supervision of the HoD, and are not expected to have full responsibility for management, administration and / or control of any assigned task.

## **3 Selection and Recommendations for Departmental Assistants**

Each Academic Department shall create as required a Postgraduate Awards Committee (PAC), composed of the HoD and two other members of faculty which will be convened to review applications and make recommendations for the offer of an Award via the RGS to the ET.

The receipt of recommendations are normally required by the RGS by the deadline for the last ET meeting of the Academic Year.

#### **4 Call for Applications**

The HoD seeks the widest field of applicants through promotion and advertising in the print and electronic media inside and / or outside MIC, in consultation with Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM).

#### **5 Application**

Applicants make an application in writing directly to the HoD.

#### **6 Offer of an MIC Departmental Assistantship Award**

Following consideration of the recommendations for a DA Award, ET via the RGS will notify the HoD of the outcome of the competition. HoDs will then notify the successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Before August 31<sup>st</sup>, the RGS will notify Student Academic Affairs (SAA), Information and Communication Technology (ICT), LEAD, and the Finance Office of the list of approved DAs for the next academic year.

#### **7 MIC Departmental Assistantship Award Contract**

The DA Award Contract includes information regarding the stipend and fee waiver details associated with the Award, the period of the Award, and the Terms and Conditions of the Award.

Upon signing the MIC DA Award Contract, the Awardee must provide bank account and relevant tax certificate details before a payment cycle can be activated by the Finance Office.

Only MIC PGRS who have completed the MIC registration process may benefit from these Awards.

#### **8 Discontinuation of a MIC Departmental Assistantship Award Contract**

A DA Award Contract is discontinued where any one of the following circumstances arise:

1. The Awardee decides to withdraw from their programme and completes the PGR Exit Form in consultation with their Research Supervisor.
  - On submission of the PGR Exit Form via the RGSO, the Postgraduate Research Subcommittee (PRSC) notifies the Dean of Faculty, HoD, SAA and the Finance Office, and payment is ceased. The Awardee's withdrawal is acknowledged in writing

- The Awardee remains responsible for repayment of any outstanding fees.
- 2. The Awardee completes and graduates from their programme.
- 3. The HoD via the Dean of Faculty, in consultation with the Head of Graduate School (HGS), requests the discontinuation of the DA Award.
  - Discontinuation of a DA Award Contract must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Dealing with Staff Disciplinary Issues.

## **9 Annual Leave**

Requests for annual leave must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Annual Leave. Annual leave requests must be approved by their Research Supervisor in consultation with the HoD.

## **10 Leave of Absence**

Requests for Leave of Absence (LoA) must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Leave of Absence. LOA requests must be supported by the Supervisor and HoD and require approval from the Student Status committee.

## **11 Publishing and Dissemination of Research**

It is required all publications or disseminations of research on the thesis topic must acknowledge the financial support of MIC.

## **12 Support Services for Departmental Assistants**

DAs are required to participate in the “Teaching Induction Seminars” provided by the RGS in consultation with LEAD at the beginning of each academic year. In accordance with the RGS’s commitment to the professional development of DAs, the following support mechanisms are made available:

- The RGS includes a focus on early career professional development frameworks in its training needs analysis, teaching portfolio design, and best pedagogical practices in “Teaching Induction Seminars”. This includes formative discussions on generic and transferrable skills training courses, available via the RGS, in consultation with LEAD.
- The relevant Academic Departments provide induction on how to perform and develop as DAs within their home department
- The HoD provides written details of the tasks to be undertaken before work commences and ensures that DAs fully and comprehensively understand their role and responsibilities. This must include a reasonable estimate of the number of hours expected of the DAs on each task, and the distribution of hours across each semester and the academic year.

- The HoD keeps a record of the DAs' performance in relation to the duties performed.
- Both the HoD and the DAs are required to monitor and record total hours worked, along with any annual leave availed of, and ensure that agreed time commitments relating to the DAs' duties are not exceeded.

### **13 Departmental Assistants Annual Review**

- The HoD records the outcome of the Annual Review as satisfactory or not satisfactory.
- The outcome of the Annual Review should be sent in simple email message to the HGS, normally by the deadline for the last ET meeting of the Academic Year.
- Only DAs with a satisfactory review outcome will be offered a contract in the forthcoming academic year.

# APPENDIX A: MIC FLOATING DEPARTMENTAL ASSISTANTSHIPS (FDA) AWARDS COMPETITION AY2019/20

## 1 Outline of Competition

A set of 4 Floating Departmental Assistantship (FDA) Awards will be provided on a competitive basis in the Academic Year 2020/21. 2 FDA Awards will be reserved for Departments allocated an FDA Award in the AY2019/20 (Category 1) and 2 will be reserved for Departments that were not allocated an FDA Award in the AY2018/19 and/or AY2017/18 (Category 2).

## 2 Deadline

The deadline for receipt of applications is no later than 2.00 pm on Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2020. Applications should be sent directly to the RGSO HEO at: [Mary.Collins@mic.ul.ie](mailto:Mary.Collins@mic.ul.ie)

## 3 Applicant

The Applicant for the purposes of this competition is the Head of Department (HoD).

## 4 Eligibility

The competition is organised into two categories and the Applicant must apply under the appropriate category.

- Category 1 is for Departments who were allocated an FDA Award in the AY2019/20.
- Category 2 is for Departments who were not allocated an FDA Award in the AY2018/19 and/or AY2017/18.

## 5 Proposal

Category 1: Departments allocated an FDA Award in the AY2019/20

- The HoD will show how all Departmental Assistants (DAs and Floating Departmental Assistants (FDAs)) have been deployed in the Department over the last three years (to end of May 2020), using a tabular format and statement of up to 750 words.
- The HoD will make a case for why the Department should be granted one FDA Award in the AY2020/21, including details of how the full complement of DAs and FDAs will be deployed in the AY2020/21 (to end of May 2021), using a tabular format and a statement of up to 750 words.

Category 2: Departments not allocated an FDA Award in the AY2018/19 and/or AY2017/18.

- The HoD will show how all DAs (DAs and FDAs) have been deployed in the Department over the last three years (to end of May 2020), using a tabular format and a statement of up to 750 words.
- The HoD will make a case for why the Department should be granted one FDA Award in the AY2020/21, including details of how the full complement of DAs and FDAs will be deployed in the AY2020/21 (to end of May 2021), using a tabular format and a statement of up to 750 words.

A Committee consisting of staff with college-wide roles and responsibilities including the HGS (or nominee) who will serve as Chair, the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Vice President of Governance and Strategy will use the above documentation as the basis for determining the allocation of FDAs in AY2020/21.

The outcome of the competition will be communicated via email following the June 2020 meeting of ET to the Vice President Research, Faculty Deans and HoDs.