



# Teaching Assistant(TA) Handbook

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. What You Need to Know Before Becoming a TA.....</b>	<b>- 1 -</b>
<b>2. TA System of Hiroshima University.....</b>	<b>- 2 -</b>
2.1.Objectives of the TA System.....	- 2 -
2.2.TA Job Description.....	- 2 -
<b>3.Tips on Working as TA's.....</b>	<b>- 4 -</b>
3.1.Work as mediators between professors and students .....	- 4 -
3.2. Engage in classes from the standpoint of instructors. ....	- 4 -
3.3.Be thoroughly prepared for classes .....	- 4 -
<b>4.Points to Keep in Mind at Work.....</b>	<b>- 6 -</b>
4.1.Work Rules.....	- 7 -
4.2.Protection of Privacy .....	- 9 -
4.3.Harassment Prevention .....	- 10 -
4.4.Accessibility Support.....	- 11 -
4.5. Safety and Sanitation.....	- 13 -
<b>5.Q&amp;A.....</b>	<b>- 14 -</b>
5.1. Before Accepting to Become a TA.....	- 14 -
5.2. Rules and Responsibilities of TAs .....	- 15 -
5.3. Student Correspondence .....	- 16 -
5.4. Salary.....	- 17 -
5.5. Measures to Take in Unanticipated Situations .....	- 17 -
<b>6.References .....</b>	<b>- 19 -</b>
6.1.Guidelines Concerning Employment and Other Treatments of Hiroshima University Teaching Assistants .....	- 19 -
6.2.Guidelines for the Teaching Assistant System at Hiroshima University .....	- 22 -
<b>Chief Editor's Note.....</b>	<b>- 26 -</b>



# 1. What You Need to Know Before Becoming a TA

Why would you want to be a TA?

TA is neither a job with hourly wages nor a reward.

The TA system had not existed in Japan until its introduction in 1992. The purpose was to provide financial support to excellent post graduate students, enhancement of undergraduate education, and to offer postgraduate's an educational platform.

Hiroshima University can ensure the quality of education by employing TA's.

The university teachers can expect smooth development of the class. The students can expect more effective scholarship thanks to support from TA's. And most importantly, TA's can gain valuable experiences that cannot be gained as students.

On the other hand, the responsibility of Hiroshima University that formally appoints TAs as part-time staff might come to be scrutinized when incidents occur due to insufficient knowledge, or when cases of harassment arise due to the TA's actions or remarks. Guidelines have also been imposed on university instructors to contribute to the growth of TA's.

The TA system brings together various advantages to the university, the instructor, the participant, and TAs respectively. However, it also demands appropriate actions and responsibilities.

So what is required of TA's?

It is needless to say that as part-time staff of the University, a moderate character and accountable attitude, and expertise, skills and knowledge in their respective individual fields, will be required of TA's. Hence the request! The problem university instructors failed to notice despite being a student many years ago is best perceived by the TA's themselves. In fact, it is TA's who will be key persons in creating future university classes.

With a sense of mission, please think how your class can be improved by your role as a TA. Finally please act in such a way so that your TA experience above everything else adds meaning to your own personal growth.

At this University, orientation sessions are held for newly appointed TA's by the University as a whole as well as by each graduate school. In addition, the university also holds TA training sessions (advanced session) that discusses how both the instructor and TA can provide better classes through mutual cooperation. Please make use of these opportunities.

## 2. TA System of Hiroshima University

### 2.1.Objectives of the TA System

The TA system was introduced to achieve the following three objectives. Although the TA is a paid position, it is not an ordinary part-time job.

- (1) Improving university education by such means as giving more fine-tuned instruction to undergraduate students;
- (2) Providing training opportunities as teachers and instructors; and
- (3) Paying salaries and thereby ensuring a financially stable environment for graduate students to concentrate on their studies

### 2.2.TA Job Description

Based on educational considerations, TA's are expected to carry out the following range of teaching assistance duties. However, contents and methods of educational assistance provided by TAs will vary depending on faculties, graduate schools, and courses. Accordingly, the expected roles and duties of TAs will also vary. When engaging in actual work, therefore, be sure to discuss with your supervising instructors and fully understand the duties you are expected to fulfill.



TA going around the classroom, checking how students are doing with their assignments, and giving them advice and instruction

### <TA Job Description >

Class related duties (Target classes: Classes, etc. that are given to HU students in undergraduate courses or the first term of doctoral courses (including master's courses))	
<During class hours>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advice on student's individual or group work</li> <li>- ICT operation</li> <li>- Material distribution</li> <li>- Class' VTR records</li> <li>- Lead assistance in out of school visits</li> <li>- Maintenance of class order</li> <li>- Facilitating interactive classes</li> </ul>	
<After class hours>	
<u>Student Support</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support in preparation of class report and announcements</li> <li>- Guidance and support in promoting class comprehension</li> <li>- Guidance in student's class report and papers</li> </ul>	
<u>Assistance to the Instructors</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assistance in making resumes, teaching materials and other documents</li> <li>- Sorting of report, quizzes, class reflection papers, communications paper, materials, etc.</li> <li>- Assistance in grading of small report and quizzes, etc.</li> <li>- Lead assistance in out of school visits</li> </ul>	
<u>Maintenance of the Environment</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation of experiments and practicum, organization and arrangement of things</li> <li>- Assistance in maintenance and operation of ICT tools in the class such as WebCT</li> </ul>	
<u>Other duties related to learning in faculty and research institutes</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Studies' Consultation</li> <li>- Assistance in supervising graduation thesis</li> <li>- Support in independent study activities</li> <li>- Assistance in development and preparation of faculty common teaching materials</li> </ul>	

### <Jobs TA's are NOT Allowed to Do >

Grading (*)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluation (Grading on five-point scale, GPA, achievement evaluation in each course, achievement evaluation in each program)</li> <li>- Recording and keeping students' scores and performances</li> <li>- Typing in students' final grades on the HU official computer site</li> <li>- Marking final exams and reports</li> </ul>
Jobs not related to university classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Office work relating to academic societies and conferences</li> <li>- Maintenance of websites not related to classes</li> </ul>

(\*) However, provided that the instructor in charge of the class is responsible for the final marking, TA's may help mark simple multiple-choice quizzes, do preparatory checks of short essays, and check student attendance records.

### **3. Tips on Working as TA's**

#### **3.1. Work as mediators between professors and students**

As partners of faculty members and sympathetic supporters of students, TA's are expected to function as mediators between instructors and students. In some cases, TAs must work from the student's viewpoint, addressing needs and troubles experienced by each student. In other cases, TAs may have to take the standpoint of educators and think what assistance they can extend to provide better classes. Or they may sometimes be expected to function as observers and critically analyze classes given by their supervising instructors.

#### **3.2. Engage in classes from the standpoint of instructors.**

Those who are about to start working as TA's may have had an experience only as students. Some of you may assume that TAs' job comprises only assisting in photocopying or experiments. However, TA's are also required to commit themselves to classes from the standpoint of instructors

When assisting in class lessons and out-of-classroom questions and answers, TA's will have many opportunities to interact with students from a standpoint close to the faculty members. On such occasions, TAs can evaluate and take some action toward students who talk among themselves during classes or come late to classes.

It is important, therefore, to have thorough discussions with instructors who are in charge of classes about students' classroom behavior and effective ways of teaching them.

#### **3.3. Be thoroughly prepared for classes**

Be sure to consult your supervising instructors about what preparations you need to make before classes. You can ask your supervising instructors or senior TAs about class preparation standards used in the previous year or ask them to draw up a preparation manual for TAs to follow. You are also advised to study beforehand about what is going to be taught in your next class to the extent that you can comfortably help students during the class.

For classes involving experiments, for example, be sure to check the kinds and quantities of reagents that will be needed and make thorough preparations, thereby preventing a situation where you don't have enough reagents in actual classes. It is advisable to make a list that indicates things to be prepared, how much of them should be made and by when, and prepare and store preservable reagents ahead of time.

### 3.4 Adequate Self-reflection post Experience

Drawing upon lessons learnt during one's term as TA or considering reflections for the next academic year, let's seek the advice of instructors by revisiting the content of what you have learned and organizing this into a report. It will be good if you also reflect on what you have gained from this TA experience and how this experience can be capitalized in your current or future student life and activities out in the society post graduation.



TA watching how often each student answers questions and helping to decide which student will be the next presenter



When students find an assignment or question too challenging, the TA shows a model answer (by working together with students).



## 4.Points to Keep in Mind at Work

Working as a TA makes you a part of the education organization of this university. As a member of this education organization, responsible attitude is required, for this reason there might be cases where lack of knowledge or insufficient knowledge is unacceptable. Further, TAs sometimes fall victims themselves.

Thus, it is essential that you are completely aware of the "**Work Rules**", "**Protection of Privacy**", "**Prevention of Harassment**", "**Accessibility Considerations**", and "**Health and Safety**", etc. before assuming your duties as TA's. If there is any point that needs clarification, make sure to confirm with the respective departments to avoid responding on knowledge or assumptions that is based on error.

Your approach as a TA leads to the improvement of the educational environment of this university.



TA sharing what he experienced when working as a part-time instructor



TA summing up a lecture on behalf of the instructor



Inquiries

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#### **4.1. Work Rules**

##### **(1) Eligibility and Employment Period**

Individuals who are eligible to work as TAs must be excellent students who are currently enrolled in a graduate school in Hiroshima University (An excellent student is someone who possesses enough knowledge and communication skills to perform the responsibilities of a TA as determined by a Faculty member)

Employment periods will be decided by relevant offices for each academic year (from April of the current year to March of the next year)

##### **(2) Procedures in Appointment and End of Service**

- [1] Recommendation from Faculty-in-Charge → Submit TA form through Faculty-in-Charge
- [2] Examination of submitted documents
- [3] Submission of copies of Student ID, account details for transfer request, account details for salary payment, tax exemption for dependents, declaration form and withholding tax table with the applicant in the signatory either as the implementing or receiving party, to the Person-in-Charge of TA Employment in each department.
- [4] Decision to Hire → Notifying the Personnel Department and Notification of Work Conditions
- [5] Participation in TA Training Conference
- [6] Period of Duty → Accomplish attendance sheet
- [7] When leaving within the period of duty to TA's volition → submit withdrawal documents

\*The above-mentioned procedures and documents to be submitted are somewhat different according to the respective departments. Please inquire with the Person-in-Charge of the TA employment in each department for more details.

##### **(3) Work days and working hours**

Please confirm the work days and working hours with the instructor in charge and the support office in the respective research institutes. Please contact the support office in the respective research institutes beforehand when there is a supplementary lecture or a change in the class time. The main task of postgraduate students is research. So work hours in each week must not exceed a limit of 30 hours, and they must not obstruct the studies and research activities that are the main tasks of graduate students. If you hold posts at HU (RA [Research Assistant], Technical Assistant, etc.) other than TA, in particular, please ensure that your working hours in such other capacities do not coincide with those as a TA. Also, please avoid working for such long hours as a TA since it would affect your service in those other capacities.

#### **(4) Attendance Book**

Please stamp on the "Attendance book" in the support office on the day you have worked. For international students who do not use stamps, please sign. A calculation of the salary is done based on this actual result of work (number of working hours).

(The salary cannot be paid in the next month if this document has not been stamped or signed by the end of the month) When lectures are cancelled, there will be no record of work so it is not possible to stamp or sign the attendance book.

#### **(5) No Work due to Sickness, etc.**

Please contact the instructor in charge or the support office when you cannot work due to sickness etc. (The attendance book cannot be stamped or signed in this case).

#### **(6) Salary Payment Method**

For TA's who are in the first term of doctoral courses or master's courses, ¥1,000 an hour will be paid. For TAs in doctoral courses (excluding those in the first term of doctoral courses), ¥1,200 an hour will be paid. Payment will be made in the month after the classes or thereafter into the account that each TA wrote on the "Salary Transfer (Request/Change) Form." When changing your salary transfer account, promptly notify the relevant support office.

#### **(7) Income Tax**

The income tax collected from the salary is calculated, and deducted based in the "Declaration Card for Employee's Tax Exemption for Dependents (reallocation)" every month.

Please inform the support office when there are new changes in the head of the household and members of the household.

#### **(8) Health Insurance**

Please use the health insurance you are currently covered by. . (There are no necessary procedures to be followed in this agreement).

#### **(9) Injury etc. during work**

Please contact the support office promptly when the injury or sickness originates in the line of duty)

#### **(10) Report of employment**

In case of other works aside from TA work (RA research assistant in this university) or part-time jobs outside the university, the income might not correspond with the parents' amount of income so please inform your parents about your employment.

Inquiries

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#### 4.2. Protection of Privacy

There are a lot of opportunities to access personal information (especially of students) when working as a TA. As a rule, a TA should know which information among these corresponds to "personal information" that is protected under the "Act on the Protection of Personal Information".

**\*Student's contact information, etc. are important information that should be strictly protected.**

#### <Points to Keep in Mind When Obtaining and Using Personal Information>

- (1) If you need to obtain individual information for the fulfillment of your duties, clearly inform in a written form the person, whose personal information will be obtained, of the purpose of use of such personal information before obtaining said information. (As for information provided by faculty members and whose purpose of use is unclear, please check with the said faculty members.) Do not obtain such personal information that is not necessary for carrying out your duties.
- (2) Please use the information within the range of purposes described, individual information should not be used for other purposes even related to your duties.
- (3) Please do not leak individual information to another post outside the university, etc.
- (4) Please do not take out information related to your duties to outside the school. When carrying such information from one place to another inside the university premises, please handle with great care so as not to lose it.
- (5) The collected personal information (especially, individual records and contact information) is kept strict and needs the written instruction of the professor in charge when it needs to be saved or retrieved.
- (6) When using PC or USB stick, etc. in handling the information, make sure the following security settings are running.

PC – latest version of anti-virus software, OS and each software, password lock and unnecessary information hidden

USB-encrypt data stored on USB memory sticks, run virus checks with latest versions and unnecessary information hidden

Inquiries  
Harassment Consultation Clinic  
Tel: 082-424-7204 • 4352 • 5689  
E-mail: [harassos@hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:harassos@hiroshima-u.ac.jp)

### **4.3. Harassment Prevention**

#### **(1) What is harassment?**

It is a form of unlawful violation of one's rights and dignity or disruptive behaviors and bullying that deviate from duties related to work and academic advising within the relationships of involved parties in teaching and learning in the university.

Besides sexual harassment involving sexually explicit statements and behaviors, there are other forms of harassment called power harassment in work relations and academic harassment in academic relationship. Physical assault, verbal attack, malicious accusation, abuse, threats, severe disregard, cold treatment, baseless remarks, indiscriminate abuse, discriminating behavior, forceful sexual behavior, sexually degrading words or mock treatment, sexual jokes, and stalking, etc. may constitute harassment.

#### **(2) Avoiding being an assailant or a victim of sexual harassment**

Please note the following reminders when you are working as a TA.

- The students are not your subordinates. Treat them, their feelings and standpoints with respect.
- Avoid bringing in your own emotions and personal values to work.
- Consult with the Harassment Consultation Clinic if you have any tasks that are unable to do, unacceptable to you or any troubles that you have

\*The "Guidelines in Prevention of Harassment in Hiroshima University" aims to promote awareness on how to prevent harassment on campus. Please check more information about it in the university website at <http://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/harass/>

#### **(3) Consultation**

There are two Harassment Consultation Clinics which provides consultation on matters related to harassment in Hiroshima University, one in Higashi-Hiroshima Campus and the other one is in Kasumi Campus. Please make an appointment in the HC Clinic when you wish to have a consultation session.

Harassment Consultation Clinic      TEL. 082-424-7204 • 4352 • 5689  
FAX. 082-424-7204 • 4352 • 5689  
E-mail: [harassos@hiroshima-u.ac.jp](mailto:harassos@hiroshima-u.ac.jp)

#### **4.4. Accessibility Support**

##### **(1) What is the accessibility support?**

It is the basic policy of Hiroshima University to provide high quality education for all students.

A number of students enrolled in Hiroshima University who are blind, deaf, or have disabilities or special needs in writing or movement need some assistance. If you feel there are some students in your class who have such difficulties, please provide the necessary attention and arrangements or support.

##### **(2) Arrangement in the class "Request for Special Arrangement"**

In the case that a student needs some special arrangement in your class, the instructor receives an arrangement request that states which kind of special arrangement is necessary. You, as a TA, are expected to act according to the instructions of the instructor in charge.

##### **(3) Examples of students who need accessibility considerations**

- Information and communication considerations: Students with visual, hearing, speech, or memory impairments
- Physical and spatial considerations: Students with upper or lower limb impairments, students using wheelchairs or canes
- Considerations depending on situations: Students with unstable health conditions, students who tend to feel excessively tense or have seizures, students who have a problem adapting to sudden changes of plans or unanticipated events

##### **(4) In case a student who needs special arrangement is attending a lecture**

Please take the following steps as instructed by your supervising instructor.

[1] Examples of considerations given during classes

- Understanding, consideration, and assistance with regard to what makes it easier to see, hear, read and write, and understand
- Understanding, consideration, and assistance with regard to moving, handling, and working
- Understanding, consideration, and assistance with regard to excessive tension, seizures, and ill health
- Understanding, consideration, and assistance with regard to communication and effective ways to get messages across

[2] Supporter in the class

In case of note taking, transcribing, movement support, operation assistance, etc. TAs might be requested to provide partial support.

[3] Arrangement in making teaching material

There are cases when it is necessary to produce enlarged copies, translating into Braille or sound, putting subtitles, etc. Please make necessary arrangements for class material following the instructions of the instructor in charge.

[4] Arrangements during examinations

Some arrangement like [1] is also necessary during examinations. At times, TA's are requested to work for special measures such as supervising tests in another room, writing on behalf of the student and so on.

**(5) To learn more about accessibility**

Hiroshima University delivers online accessibility training courses on its WebCT.

Inquiries

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#### 4.5. Safety and Sanitation

##### (1) Basic Essentials of Safety

- [1] Keep working environment comfortable and promote efficiency of education and research by maintaining order, organizing, cleaning, keeping neat and keeping regular habit (5S).

There are few accidents which occur in environments that firmly followed and kept the 5 actions above.

##### [2] Definition of 5S actions

- To order: distinguishing unnecessary things from necessary things, and putting them away.
- To organize: putting things in places from which items can be easily taken out in an appropriate manner with clear signs
- To clean: maintaining clean conditions with firm actions of ordering, organizing and cleaning
- To keep neat: checking every part of the working place along with restoring to a clean condition
- To make it customary: Making it a custom to execute organized tasks in a determined manner

##### (2) Safety management in class

Some classes are conducted as experimental lessons or practical trainings using chemicals or/ and machine tools. Following the precautionary points of each class and the instructions of the professor in charge, administer the safety management of class experiments and practicals.

##### [1] Handling of chemicals

- Acquire accurate knowledge about property of chemicals.
- Wear safety outfit (white gown, protection goggles, rubber gloves)
- Use draft chamber for experiments that generate poisonous gas
- Dispose of liquid wastes following procedure instructions

##### [2] Handling of machines

- Understand well how to operate the machine tool
- Wear safety outfit (work clothes, work shoes, protective gloves).
- Inspect a machine tool before using it.

## 5.Q&A

### 5.1. Before Accepting to Become a TA

#### Q1.What are the advantages of becoming a TA?

A1.First of all, learning how a class develops and how to interact with students, etc. from the standpoint of teachers serves as a good training ground for becoming educators and instructors in the future. Of course receiving salary is also an advantage, as well as including it in your professional background when applying for a scholarship or job hunting.

#### Q2.Wouldn't working as a TA obstruct one's own research?

A2.TA duties include not only class hours, but also a wide range of other things such as preparations before and after the class, coordination with instructors , student support, etc. You might feel burdened with these duties or work that confines you to long periods of time. When it gets complex, you may consult your instructor in charge, seniors who have TA experience, etc. However, as already mentioned, the TA system aims towards not only the improvement of education for the students and treatment of postgraduates but also as training for postgraduate students. The experience of teaching students actually becomes a task to confirm your own research area again. If TA duties are seen not as a separate aspect to the research activities, instead a part of it, then it wouldn't become an obstruction in one's own research.

#### Q3.How much time is needed for class preparation?

A3.Though hours spent for preparation and cleanup are included in the salary of a TA, individual consultation of students and miscellaneous activities constitutes +  $\alpha$  of the work hours. When longer time is needed for class setup please consult the student support group or the instructor in charge in the respective faculties. TA's are not to be pulled out for extra tasks so it is advised that you think about taking these tasks and listen to seniors who have experience of working as a TA in case you are worried.

**Q4.How much time will actually be spent when working as a TA?**

A4.The time spent on performing the duties as a TA is different depending on the course content assigned to them. Let us refer to the following two people as examples.

For Mr./Ms. A:

"It was about three hours a week because I used to make preparations just before class and then attend the class."

For Mr. B:

"Usual research activities and TA duties overlapped so it is difficult to count, but roughly six hours a week."

**5.2. Rules and Responsibilities of TAs**

**Q5.How much ability is TA required to have?**

**I am worried that I may give wrong answers to students' questions.**

A5.Because TA's are employed on the recommendation of faculty members, you can rest assured that you are fully capable of doing your job. Before participating in classes as TAs, be sure to make sufficient preparation and obtain necessary knowledge about what is going to be taught. If you are still not sure about your ability to answer questions from students, you can handle their questions in some other ways, such as prompting students to ask the instructor in charge of the class. (See "TA Job Description" on page 2.)

**Q6.Until when are self -judgments ok?**

A6.It is necessary to respect the judgment of the instructor in as much as possible because after all the TA is assistant to them. However, depending on the circumstances (in case of emergency etc.), self-judgment of the TAs might be requested especially when ensuring the balance between the number of participants and the progress of the class. In this case, it is necessary to make prior arrangements with the instructor in charge. (See "TA Job Description" on page 2.)

### 5.3. Student Correspondence

**Q7.As a TA, what kind of attitude should I take toward students?**

A7. TA often comes as the closest position to a teacher by assisting in the class and by taking in questions and providing answers outside the class. At that time, TA can evaluate and take some actions against students, who whisper in class, come late to class, etc. It is important to have a detailed consultation with the instructor in charge regarding the student's appearance as observed in the usual class, and what guiding principle you should follow. (See “Tips on Working as TAs” on page 4.)

Moreover, consideration should be given to students who have disabilities or a delayed understanding ability, or have special needs. How you respond to these situations will influence the relationship between yourself and the students, and the relationship between the instructor and students and the atmosphere of the entire class. It is essential to be careful not to create a one-sided judgment and make disparaging remarks that might hurt the student's self-esteem. Moreover, it is preferable to think about individual correspondence or use the accessibility center. (See “Accessibility Support” on page 11.)

**Q8.I'm worried whether I can respond well to the students' questions.**

A8. It does not necessarily mean that all TAs were able to respond well from the very start.

At first, it can be puzzling and distressing to interact with students. The university is also mindful of this. More so, the university is offering you the chance to be involved in education for which you become trained.

**Q9.Will taking students in ones charge to one's laboratory drinking party constitute harassment?**

A9. You may hold a “drinking party” but if it a forced event through the inappropriate use of one's position as a TA (that might affect the student's academic evaluation in class if he/she did not attend such an event, etc.) or other inappropriate acts ( such as making the under-age student drink alcohol) then that constitutes harassment. (See “Harassment Prevention” on page 10.)

**Q10.The student was asking for my personal email address and phone number. How should I deal with this?**

A10. Personal information is limited to that required within the range of duties of the person involved. Please use your own judgment to decide whether the information is required for the task and take the responsibility upon yourself. (See “Protection of Privacy” on page 9.)

**Q11.Up to what extent can a TA know about the personal information of students?**

A11. Personal information is limited to that required within the range of duties of the person involved. TAs should not judge this alone by himself/herself and instead consult the instructor in charge. (See “Protection of Privacy” on page 9.)

**5.4. Salary**

**Q12.How much would I receive working as a TA?**

A12. For instance, the amount of money of the salary that can be received in half year becomes as follows with one class as TA in the first term. You will also receive a pay slip every month.

For the first term of the doctor's course or master's course:

30,000 yen (=1,000 yen/hour) × (two hours/time × 15 times)

For doctor's course (excluding first term)

36,000 yen (=1,200 yen/hour × (two hours/time × 15 times)

(See “Work Rules” on page 7.)

**Q13.Having obtained an income as TA, would I be I disqualified to apply for tuition exemption and scholarship application?**

A13. When there are sources of income besides the TA job, and the total amount of income together with the TA salary has exceeded the income limit, it is likely that such an application will be disqualified for tuition waiver. Please confirm the amount of money with the Student Life Support in the Education Office Group (Student Plaza 3F). Because the examination concerning the scholarship is made based on the income of the guardian or the student himself, the income of TA does not have any bearing.

**5.5. Measures to Take in Unanticipated Situations**

**Q14.Due to academic conferences, business trips and study abroad, I could not assume my duties as TA. What should I do?**

A14. First of all, consult with the instructor in charge on what to do. The sudden change in schedule of TA will put heavy strain on the instructor in charge and other TAs so please inform them ahead of time, as much as possible.

(See “Work Rules” on page 7.)

**Q15. When one's studies suffer and it becomes difficult to carry out the duties of a TA due to unavoidable circumstances, can a TA withdraw from while in the middle of his/her service?**

A15. Please consult with the instructor in charge and apply for withdrawal document.

(See "Work Rules" on page 7.)

**[Column] TA is an Instructors Partner  
– An Instructor's Perspective**



Nowadays there are a lot of students who do not enjoy or feel interested in their studies. I think that TA's are essential in conveying interests and fun to the education of students.

When a TA joins students' discussions and students' answers are precise or they give excellent remarks, this is due to the TA for boosting not only the instructors but also the students' confidence.



I think that even if there is an increase in interactive classes, without the TAs assisting the class or setting the equipments, the execution of interactive classes would be impossible.



I use a Mac computer and I do not know much about Windows operating system. In my Information Class, following the TA in running the Windows computer in the classroom was a big help. The TA knows a lot about computers and has a quick mastery of computer operations so he/she is indispensable in my Information Class.

TAs are a big help since they prudently do the monitoring of attendance, sorting of reports, printing of materials, etc.



Before, it was necessary to allot considerable time in responding to student's questions but since there was a TA, the time required for professors to answer students' questions have decreased giving more time for research. I am very thankful.

## 6. References

### 6.1. Guidelines Concerning Employment and Other Treatments of Hiroshima University Teaching Assistants

April 1, 2004

Approved by Vice President (Human Resources and General Affairs)

(Outline)

#### Article 1

These Guidelines explain the application of the Rules Concerning Employment, Working Hours, Holidays, and Leaves of Hiroshima University Part-Time Faculty and Staff (Rule No. 70 dated March 28, 2008) to Teaching Assistants (hereinafter, “TAs”) who are to be hired under the provisions of the Work Rules for Hiroshima University Part-Time Faculty and Staff (Rule No. 102 dated April 1, 2004).

- 2 In addition to these Guidelines, provisions set forth in the Guidelines Concerning Working Hours, Holidays, and Leaves of Part-Time Faculty and Staff (Approved by Vice President [Human Resources and General Affairs] on October 1, 2004) shall also apply with regard to matters concerning TAs’ working hours, holidays, and leaves.

(Purposes of Employment and Job Title)

#### Article 2

On the basis of educational considerations, the TA system is designed to hire competent graduate students of Hiroshima University (hereinafter, “HU”) to carry out educational assistance duties, with the aim of enhancing the effects of undergraduate education, providing said graduate students with teacher training opportunities, and ensuring better treatment for such graduate students by paying salaries for their services.

(Job Description)

#### Article 3

In classes involving experiments, practical training, seminars that are provided to HU students in undergraduate courses or the first term of doctoral courses (including master’s courses; the same applies hereinafter), TAs shall fulfill teaching assistance duties under the instructors in charge of the classes.

(Qualification)

Article 4

TAs shall be hired from among the best students enrolled in HU graduate schools.

(Selection)

Article 5

Graduate schools, etc. (graduate schools, research institutes, attached research institutes, the Headquarters for Liberal Arts Education, National Joint Usage Facilities, Joint Education and Research Facilities on Campus, Executive Office, or centers or offices under the Executive Office; the same applies hereinafter) shall carry out the selection of TAs, by considering the budget allocated for the TA system and the purposes of hiring TAs and by working in close cooperation with graduate schools, etc. or faculties where TAs actually provide educational assistance.

2 Graduate schools, etc. shall establish TA selection standards and methods.

(Affiliations)

Article 6

TAs shall be affiliated with the graduate schools, etc. or faculties in which they fulfill their educational assistance duties.

(Points to Note)

Article 7

When implementing the TA system, note the following points:

- (1) Give TAs necessary and appropriate orientation about TA duties in advance.
- (2) Give TAs continuous guidance and advice from their supervising instructors. .
- (3) Establish a mechanism for hearing opinions of TAs, etc.
- (4) Ensure that TA duties do not affect the research activities and classes of the graduate students working as TA's.
- (5) When hiring doctoral course students (hereinafter, "DCs") under the Research Fellowship for Young Scientists provided by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) as TAs, ensure that their TA duties do not affect their research activities as DCs.

(Miscellaneous)

Article 8

Matters other than those mentioned in these Guidelines that are necessary to be decided for the implementation of TA educational assistance duties shall be determined by the respective graduate schools, etc.

Supplementary Provision

These Guidelines shall come into force as of April 1, 2004.

Supplementary Provision (Partially revised on March 16, 2009)

These Guidelines shall come into force as of March 16, 2009. Provisions of the Guidelines Concerning Employment and Other Treatments of Teaching Assistants revised in accordance with the revision of these Guidelines shall take effect as of April 1, 2008.

Supplementary Provision (Partially revised on July 1, 2010)

These Guidelines shall come into force as of July 1, 2010. Provisions of the Guidelines Concerning Employment and Other Treatments of Teaching Assistants revised in accordance with the revision of these Guidelines shall take effect as of April 1, 2010.

Supplementary Provision (Partially revised on April 19, 2011)

These Guidelines shall come into force as of April 19, 2011. Provisions of the Guidelines Concerning Employment and Other Treatments of Teaching Assistants revised in accordance with the revision of these Guidelines shall take effect as of April 1, 2011.

## **6.2.Guidelines for the Teaching Assistant System at Hiroshima University**

Approved on July 2, 2010  
by the Vice-President In Charge of Education Practices

These guidelines explain the aims and appropriate applications for the Teaching Assistant (hereafter, TA) System at Hiroshima University (hereafter, HU).

### **【The Objectives of the TA system】**

1. Based on the approval of the HU Vice-President (in charge of personnel and general issues) on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004, we can hire good and prospective graduate students as TAs at HU. The goals of this program are:
  - To enrich the quality of education at HU,
  - To provide opportunities for training as teachers, instructors, and
  - To support students financially by giving modest salaries for TA jobs.

### **【The affiliation of TAs】**

2. TA's are expected to belong to and be paid by the specific graduate school or faculty of HU which hires them as TA's.

### **【Job description】**

3. TA's are expected to do the following jobs to help with undergraduate classes and master course classes at HU (As for those TAs who are appointed as well as Research Assistants (hereafter, RAs), they are able to become TAs unless it affects the RA job.):
  - (1) Helping with classes
    - [1] During-the-class jobs
      - Helping teachers and learners in class (e.g., giving support or advice to students in need, and group activities)
      - Making classes more effective and fruitful by getting feedback and questions from students
      - Managing classes (e.g., operating IT machines, distributing handouts, recording classes with VTR, accompanying study-tours, enforcing class manners, etc.)

[2] Outside-the-class jobs

- Helping with presentations and reports
- Preparing and putting things in order for experiments and training sessions
- Helping students to understand the contents of classes better
- Helping students to write reports and papers for the classes in concern
- Helping teachers to develop handouts and teaching materials for the classes
- Helping teachers to implement WebCT classes and maintain the system for them
- Helping teachers to take students on study-tours
- Collecting and checking reports, short quizzes, class feedback, correspondence between teachers and students, class materials, etc.
- Helping teachers to mark short reports and quizzes

(2) Helping with other class jobs in the department

- Consultation about studying
- Supporting thesis writing
- Supporting students' voluntary projects
- Helping with the material development for undergraduate general courses in the department

4. TAs are NOT allowed to do the following jobs:

(1) Grading (the final evaluation of the course performance)

Evaluation (Grading on five-scale of the course, GPA (Grade Point Average), achievement evaluation for the course, achievement evaluation for the program of the student's major), recording and keeping students' scores and performances, typing in the final grade on the HU official computer site, making the final exams and reports.(NOTE: However, if the teacher of the class is responsible for the marking, TAs can help to mark objective-type test items such as multiple choice questions, doing preparatory checks for short reports, and checking the attendance record.)

(2) Jobs which are not mentioned in the Section 3 above

Jobs for research societies and organizations, maintenance work for any homepages not related to the classes

**【The supervising-teacher's responsibilities (Points to Note)】**

5. Supervising teachers are supposed to do the following four things for TAs:
- (1) Giving necessary and appropriate orientation about TA jobs in advance, including exact working hours for TA jobs, detailed job descriptions, etc,
  - (2) Giving continuous guidance and advice,
  - (3) Not intervening in the TA's own research and giving enough consideration about it, and
  - (4) If TAs happen to be special researchers (hereafter, DC) under the JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science), be sure to give enough consideration to their jobs as researchers and have them work appropriately as TAs in class.

**【Roles of faculties and graduate schools】**

6. Faculties and graduate schools are supposed to carry out the following three TA employment issues:
- (1) Giving necessary and appropriate orientation about TA jobs in advance: when employing TAs, each faculty and graduate school should give an orientation to explain working hours, holidays/ leaves, and expected jobs to perform,
  - (2) Having a system in which HU can get feedback from TAs: departments and research centers which employ TAs should establish a system of getting the feedback from the TAs, the teachers and the students helped by the TAs, and
  - (3) If faculties and graduate schools employ DCs as TAs, they should give enough consideration to their jobs as researchers of JSPS and have them work as TAs appropriately in class.
7. Each graduate school should understand the aims of the TA subsidy fully, and work together with the faculties to provide classes with TAs, and then choose TAs within the allotted budget.
8. Deans of faculties and directors of graduate school are responsible for the implementation of the TA system according to the guidelines, and their supporting offices should facilitate the TA system.

**【Others】**

9. If any other things need to be mentioned in addition, each graduate school, etc. can decide on its own.



## TA's Duties Checklist

### **When the class assigned to the TA has been decided.**

- Have you read the syllabus of the class?
- Is your knowledge as required in the class enough?
- Do you have adequate coordination with the professor-in-charge?

### **Before the class starts**

- Is the room well lit and the temperature just right?
- Have the materials, ICT equipments (PC, screen projector) and lab wares to be used in today's class been well prepared?

### **When the class has started.**

- Is the class going on smoothly?
- Are the ICT equipments and the PC operation properly used?
- Isn't there any late comer to the class?
- Are all the members of the class present?
- Are the students' experiment procedures properly done?  
(for experiment subjects)

### **When a question has received from the student.**

- Would you advise the student to think about the answer by himself?
- Can you answer with the right wording and attitude as a TA?

### **When the class has ended.**

- Is the classroom well arranged?
- Have you finished the report to be handed in to the professor?
- Have you coordinated with the professor in charge the arrangements for the next class?

## Chief Editor's Note

Human Resources Training Promotion Office (FD Department) has been administering various training conferences to cultivate the educational research abilities of graduate students (especially in the doctoral course) as future faculty. In particular, the TA Training Conference has been held from 2010 fiscal year as a training opportunity for graduate students who are expected to be involved in educational support as TAs.

This handbook was written, mainly to serve as an educational resource for the TA Training Conference, and essentially, to advance a common understanding of the TA system among involved parties (graduate students, faculty and staff members) in using the system effectively to maintain and improve the quality of education in HU.

We welcome your comments about how this Handbook has been effectively used as well as your suggestions to help us improve the subsequent editions of this Handbook.

On this occasion, we wish to express our gratitude for the graduate students and their experiences as TAs for their help in writing this handbook.

February, 2014

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### **(References)**

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- *FD/TAD Guidebook* (Office for Educational Planning and Research, Institute for Education and Student Support, Ehime University, 2008)
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