RECOMMENDED SALARY RATES FOR
STUDENT AND NON-STUDENT ASSISTANTS
PAID FROM RESEARCH GRANTS

http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/grants/guidelines.html
Recommended Salary Rates for Student and Non-Student
Assistants Paid from Research Awards

1. Graduate Research Studentships (GRS) and Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA)

**Graduate Research Studentships** should be viewed primarily as support for students while they are working on their academic program(s) under the mentorship and guidance of the faculty supervisor. These funds are paid through the Graduate Office on a once per term basis, are not taxable, and do not have benefits applied. Please note that U Waterloo has a minimum rate of $19,650 for doctoral students.

**NOTE:** As of September 15, 2011, the Tri-agencies (NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR) no longer impose limits upon stipends for graduate students or postdoctoral fellows. Please apply the standard rates of the home department for the graduate students in your application budgets.

**Graduate Research Assistantships** support graduate students from university-administered accounts to perform a designated list of research duties under the supervision of one or more faculty members. The student is expected to complete tasks on a fixed schedule and reports progress to the supervisor(s) on an agreed schedule. Duties and assigned tasks may be routine or advanced but normally fall outside the scope of the student’s research. The relationship between supervisor(s) and student is similar to that of employer and employee, and income received by the student as a result of this service is taxable in the student's hands. Graduate students must be enrolled in a graduate program to receive these payments. Payments are processed on a monthly basis and reported as T4 Employment Income, and have non-discretionary benefits (~10%) and vacation pay (4%) applied. There is a 10 hour per week maximum for a GRA. For rates, see General Assistants, section 3.

2. Postdoctoral Fellows (PDF)

At University of Waterloo, postdoctoral fellows are paid through payroll, with taxes and benefits applied, depending upon the length of the PDF contract (see section 4). As noted above, NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR no longer regulate postdoctoral stipend rates.

3. General Assistants

(a) A person employed to work on a research project is classified as a General Assistant when a faculty member hires someone to work full or part-time on a project who **is not registered as a full-time student during the period of employment**, then the employee is classified as a General Assistant and normal UW Human Resources policies must be followed. For example, a student who has been employed as a RA during the academic term would be paid as a General Assistant for work undertaken during a non-academic term or in the summer.

(b) **A Job Description** will be required for any General Assistant position which is more than 1/3 of a full-time position. This should be discussed with the Human Resources Department well in advance of grant application deadline dates.

(c) **Salary Rates** for General Assistants must fall within University salary scales. The Human Resources Department can help researchers to determine suitable rates of payment for specific
research staff positions. Researchers should phone ext. 32524 and ask for the Staff Relations Coordinator for their Faculty.

Salary rates for General Assistants may be determined according to the following guidelines provided by UW’s Human Resources Department. USG level information can be found in Policy 5 (http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy5.htm):

(i) Salary rates for assistants at the undergraduate level may range from $16.64 to $23.99 per hour (USG range: low-3 to mid-5). Examples: Research Assistant performing clerical work or secretarial work on a project.

(ii) Salary rates for assistants who hold an undergraduate degree or equivalent may range from $19.19 to $28.97 per hour (USG range: low-5 to mid-7). Examples: data collection or survey data work.

(iii) Salary rates for assistants who hold a graduate degree or equivalent may range from $25.32 to $34.46 per hour (USG range: low-8 to mid-9). Examples: data analysis or report writing.

(iv) Those wishing to hire Co-op Students should contact the Co-op Education Department.

(iv) Professional positions such as Research Engineer should be discussed with Human Resources.

The above rates are based on a 35 hour work week.

(v) Salary rates for Technicians on a project or contract start at $17.47 per hour and should be commensurate on the responsibilities and qualifications required for the work. These rates are based on a 37.5 hour work week. This excludes machine shop technicians, etc. who are charged out at rates determined by the Faculty.

4. Statutory Deductions and Benefit Costs

In addition to the salaries of research personnel (excludes studentships), the employer’s share of the cost of benefits is to be paid from research awards. The statutory on non-discretionary deductions, payable by the employer, which apply to all employees, are Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Worker’s Compensation and Employer’s Health Tax. These approximate 10% of the basic salary. Also, if the term of employment is less than one year, the employee may receive vacation pay at 4% or time off in lieu thereof. Research staffs who are employed for less than 30 hours per week are entitled to these basic benefits to a maximum of 14%.

Full-time research staffs, including PDFs, who hold a minimum of a one-year full-time appointment, are also eligible for insured benefits (Life Insurance, Extended Health Care). For these employees, the total benefit cost would be approximately 12% for single coverage and 19% for family coverage (* if appointment is >2 years, note pension plan costs below). For full-time research staff, vacation entitlement is 2 weeks during the year after one year of employment, and is not to be taken as vacation pay. Please note, graduate students are not considered full-time appointments, but are considered temporary employees hired on a per term basis, and therefore are not eligible for these insured benefits. (If they are registered as full-time students, they will be billed the premium for student health insurance on their tuition fee statement.)
For further details on benefits eligibility, visit the UW Human Resources web-page at http://www.hr.uwaterloo.ca/benefits/benefits.html.

5. **Pension Plan Participation**

After an employee’s one year temporary authorization has been renewed once for a total of 2 years OR if they are eligible, in accordance with their T4 slips, the UW Pension Plan may be an added benefit. The cost of Pension Plan participation increases the total benefit cost to approximately 19% for single coverage and approximately 24% for family coverage.

6. **Annual Increments for Continuing Staff**

Full-time Assistants may be eligible for increases annually at May 1\textsuperscript{st} per normal University policy. Researchers applying for multi-year grants should include, if permitted in their budgets, an adjustment factor for salary expenses, as well as for consumables and travel to offset the effects of inflation in the subsequent years of the grant. For salaries, it would be appropriate to allow for an annual increment of about 3 percent. (This is assuming that the employee’s starting salary was well below the maximum level allowable for the position). While in most cases granting agencies do not recognize inflationary (cost of living) increases, applicants should take into consideration, when planning their budgets, the likelihood of increasing costs in subsequent years.