

Teaching Assistantships (TAs)
Performance
(and Relationship to Minimum Level of Funding)

Prompted by an acceptance letter that stated that the minimum level of support was contingent upon adequate performance of TA duties (statement is usually more generic, e.g., contingent upon successful performance in one's studies), the Graduate Student Relations Committee considered the issue from two perspectives (evaluating performance and consequences if performance is deemed to be inadequate), keeping in mind that TAs are a common source of funding for students.

While there is no institutional mechanism available for evaluating teaching assistants, departments are expected to have in place clear, fair and transparent mechanisms to evaluate performance and to provide students with feedback in a timely manner. Evaluation can provide valuable information to the TA and, in order to impose consequences for repeated poor performance, performance must be measured.

When a TA is not performing at an acceptable standard, the department will issue a warning in writing and the course instructor must discuss her/his concern(s) with the teaching assistant and provide an opportunity for her/him to improve. Ideally, formal disciplinary action of this nature should follow informal attempts by the course instructor to provide feedback to the TA. If after repeated written warnings, performance remains poor, the instructor / department is not required to provide the student with future TAs and there is no obligation on the part of the department to compensate for the funding that would have been provided through a TA, provided the department can demonstrate that it does have in place mechanisms to evaluate performance that are clear, fair and transparent. In the event this occurs, the student should be so informed and has the right to appeal the decision through the usual channels.*

* <http://gradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca/?pageID=95368>

*Approved by Graduate Student Relations Committee; December 3/08
Endorsed by the Graduate Student Association Council; December 11/08*