

How Important are GTAs to Students?

- Over 80% of the students said their lab demonstrators impacted:
 - Their understanding of the theory behind the experiment
 - Their enjoyment of the experiment
 - Their final results from the lab

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What Characteristics do Students Link to GTAs?

Positive



A word cloud of positive characteristics linked to GTAs. The words are in shades of green and yellow. The most prominent words are 'Understanding', 'Enthusiastic', 'Knowledgeable', 'Communicative', 'Patient', 'Approachable', 'Helpful', 'Engaging', 'Reliable', 'Clear', 'Friendly', 'Available', 'Meticulous', 'Involved', 'Attentive', 'LaissezFaire', 'Insightful', 'Concise', 'Competent', and 'Prepared'.

Negative



A word cloud of negative characteristics linked to GTAs. The words are in shades of red and brown. The most prominent words are 'Quiet', 'Boring', 'Condescending', 'Disinterested', 'Judgemental', 'Rude', 'Impatient', 'Unreliable', 'Vague', 'Unhelpful', 'Unfriendly', 'Unapproachable', 'Careless', 'Blunt', 'Confused', 'Unfair', 'Inexperienced', 'Irritable', 'OverAttentive', 'Unavailable', 'Unclear', 'Engaging', 'Involved', 'Meticulous', 'Reliable', 'Approachable', 'Patient', 'Attentive', 'Helpful', 'Engaging', 'LaissezFaire', 'Insightful', 'Concise', 'Competent', and 'Prepared'.

What Does Good Look Like?

“The demonstrator was patient, kind, and clear with their explanations. They seemed to genuinely enjoy what they were teaching, and it was really apparent in the way they spoke to us as students.”

“When we were measuring the quantity incorrectly and hadn’t known that yet, the demonstrator walked by and showed us the correct way.”

“When I was stuck as to how to calculate an uncertainty, the demonstrator asked me questions about the experiment to hint as to how to do it.”

“We worked together instead of the demonstrator just fixing for me. We didn’t find a solution in the end, but I learned a lot more about problem solving in labs.”

“The demonstrator would always make sure it was clear what they meant and that we understood.”

Top Tips for GTAs from Students



Know your experiment



Give your own explanations as well as showing students where they can find the information in the lab scripts



Be available and approachable, proactively engaging with students whilst still creating a learning space



Check students have understood your explanations and know what their next steps are and why



Ask questions that promote the students to problem solve and learn themselves



Spend time problem solving with the students, explaining what you are doing as you go. Talk to peers or do some research to find a solution if you need to



Show patience when students don't understand at first and relate explanations to the aims of the experiment



Share your passion for your subject