PRES 2019 – School of Psychology Action Plan

In the 2019 PRES, the School of Psychology once again scored excellently with an overall score of 86%, which is well above the average for the Sector and the Benchmarked Groups (e.g., Welsh, Russell Group). This reflects a heavy investment of resources and ongoing development of structural support and internal professional development opportunities for PGR. We are confident that the PRES score, in fact, underestimates the high quality experiences of our PGR community, and to illustrate this, responses to questions that scored below 80% are given below:

	Question	Comments / Actions	Action owner(s)
Supervision	2.1.a. My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research		
	2.2.a. I have regular contact with my supervisor/s, appropriate for my needs		
	2.3.a. My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities		
	2.4.a. My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher	Identification of training and development needs is a key part of the admissions process and induction procedures within the school. Moreover, progress committee chairs are tasked with ensuring there is a clear plan for fulling these needs.	
Resources	4.1.a. I have a suitable working space		
	4.2.a. There is adequate provision of computing resources and facilities		
	4.3.a. There is adequate provision of library facilities (including physical and online resources)		
	4.4.a. I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research		
Research Culture	6.1.a. My department provides a good seminar programme	The School has a strongly attended weekly research seminar during term time. Further there are two internal research/scholarship colloquia. We will be encouraging our PGR to work with faculty to nominate external speakers that broaden the diversity of research topics discussed at these meetings.	School PGR Lead and Seminar coordinators – ongoing
	6.2.a. I have frequent opportunities to discuss my research with other research students	The school hosts two annual PGR conferences and a PGR colloquium. They offer opportunities for sharing and feedback on research ideas, skill sharing and socialization, both in the presence and absence of faculty. Staff rooms and meeting rooms are also freely available to PGR for ad hoc and/or less formal research meetings.	
	6.3.a. The research ambience in my department or faculty stimulates my work	We frequently reconfigure the allocation of offices and laboratory space to account for new arrivals and departures, and to bring those working on similar research activity closer together and facilitate interaction amongst research faculty and trainees.	Head of School/College Manager and Psych PGR Lead – ongoing
	6.4.a. I have opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department	To promote wider participation, the school fully supports a new college-level PGR conference and encourages attendance. This year, representatives of the College, the Student Union and PGR Societies were invited to the school PGR induction to promote awareness of activity outside the school	Psych PGR Lead and College PGR Director – action completed.
Progress and Assessment	8.1.a. I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme		
	8.2.a. I understand the requirements and deadlines		

	for formal monitoring of my progress		
	8.3.a. I understand the required standard for my thesis	This year, we have substantially revised our Introductory Guide to PGR in Psychology, and the induction, to make expectations clearer. This complements the guidelines provided within the University PGR Regulations and offers a more accessible description of the requirements and procedures. The key contacts for addressing related questions have also been made clearer.	School PGR Lead – action completed
	8.4.a. The final assessment procedures for my degree are clear to me	This year, we have substantially revised our Introductory Guide to PGR in Psychology, and the induction, to make procedures clearer. This complements the guidelines provided within the University PGR Regulations and offers a more accessible description of the requirements. The key contacts for addressing related questions have also been made clearer.	School PGR Lead – action completed
Responsibilities	10.1.a. My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students	PGR reps are invited to School PGR committee meetings to represent our PGR community and provide feedback, and they are encouraged to attend similar events at the College and Doctoral School level. The value of feedback to the school and the role of the PRES has emphasised at induction this year, and the presence of PGR reps elevated.	School PGR Lead – action completed
	10.2.a. I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student		
	10.3.a. I am aware of my supervisors' responsibilities towards me as a research degree student		
	10.4.a. Other than my supervisor/s, I know who to approach if I am concerned about any aspect of my degree programme	This year, we have substantially revised our Introductory Guide to PGR in Psychology, and the induction, to make clear all of the roles played within the school, the college and the doctoral school which directly relate to PGR. We have also made sure to more clearly identify the multiple alternative pathways and procedures to seeking advice, etc.	School PGR Lead – action completed
Research Skills	12.1.a. My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have developed during my programme		
	12.2.a. My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my programme		
	12.3.a. My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme	We have reworked a school-run Continuous Professional Development seminar series for PGR to have greater emphasis on issues such as high impact publishing and innovation. Further, we are continuously trying to find new ways to enhance our already excellent research environment in ways that inspire confidence and creativity.	School PGR Lead and CPD seminar series coordinator – action completed
	12.4.a. My understanding of 'research integrity' (e.g. rigour, ethics, transparency, attributing the contribution of others) has developed during my programme		
Professional Development	14.1.a. My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme		
	14.2.a. My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse		

	audiences has developed during my programme		
	14.3.a. I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme	The school is currently reviewing the possibility of two new initiatives to help PGR network, including a competitive travel award scheme and a weekly PGR-only Q&A session with visiting seminar speakers.	School PGR Lead, Seminar Organisers and School Exec - ongoing
	14.4.a. I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme		
Overall	18.1.a. Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme		
	18.2.a. I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme within my institution's expected timescale	In addition to a formal annual review process, our PGR undergo two additional first year review meetings where concrete 3-year plans are established. The School PhD committee intermittently checks on progress year round and intervenes, as appropriate, in cases where it is felt by the supervisor or student that unsatisfactory progress has been made.	