

SMS action plan for improved PRES scores

October 2019

It has been minuted in our latest meeting of the research committee (15/10/2019) that the PRES scores for SMS had been the second lowest in the University. The scores were presented to the RC, with scores for each question presented and data split for M.Res. and Ph.D. students. The Research Committee (RC) for SMS has come up with the following action plan/ proposals for our school:

- i. We will develop a 'meet the speakers' session for our seminar series. This will enable M.Res. and Ph.D. students to discuss science and career development with world experts. Group leaders will not be permitted to attend. The aim is to help address a number of features of the P.Res. which had low scores, such as issues relating to networking.
- ii. All PIs to contribute to the seminar series.
- iii. All group leaders to consult directly with their Ph.D. students in one-to-one sessions to identify any pathways to improve what we do. The course leader (EH) to discuss this with the M.Res. students prior to the survey date.
- iv. To develop the PGR representative cohesion sessions to permit students to offer a route for communication as a group.
- v. To encourage attendance of the College Ph.D. conference.
- vi. To schedule Ph.D. and M.Res. students into the seminar series to enable them to interact and communicate their data.
- vii. To request technical support for research. All RC members felt the lack of technical support was a core cause of the poor PRES score for a range of reasons.
- viii. To request an RC controlled budget for equipment and strategic investment.
- ix. To request a payment to the group leader from the University Ph.D. fee to cover specific costs for students (e.g., to attend national level meetings to foster networking and research engagement). It was estimated that this should be in the region of £500 per annum per student.
- x. To develop an informal journal club.
- xi. It was felt group leaders were not given a budget to attend international level meetings themselves, so it was thus more difficult to assist in Ph.D. student network development. The removal of full staff account access was one restrictor.