

Improving the Experiences of Postgraduate Research Students

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Context

- **What is PRES?**
- **UCL Response Rate: 36%**
- **What are UCL researchers satisfied with?**
 - supervision and library/specialist resources
- **Unfortunately, Only 57% of respondents agreed: “my institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students”**

Space

PRES results:

- 74% of students agreed “there is adequate provision of computing resources and facilities.”
(43% Arts & Humanities / 58% Built Environment / 86% Population Health)
- 72% of students agreed “they had a suitable working space”
(34% Arts & Humanities/ 44% Laws / 86% Life Sciences)



Space

- Currently working on a survey of all PGRs to report back to the IOE, Doctoral School and Vice Provost (Research)
- Should we focus on departmental space? More central UCL space?
- Get involved in space feedback!



Skills

PRES results:

- 32% of students received advice on career options
(13% IOE / 43% Population Health)
- 78% of students received training to develop research skills
(72% Laws / 90% Population Health)
- 47% of students received transferable skills training.

Skills

Requesting feedback for the Doctoral Skills Training Board.

“

short introduction talks run by postdocs or PhD students

academic careers in the arts and humanities

workshops are heavily oversubscribed, repeat sessions.

Access to expert data support, beyond supervisors.

working methodologies in the humanities

more statistics workshops (there are quite a few on specific statistical packages, but fewer on general statistical methodologies)

I think UCL should have a mechanism/system in place through which PhD students can attend modules that are delivered as part of an undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme, providing it is relevant to their work (and a small fee payable).

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PGTAs

PRES results:

- 45% of respondents taught (or demonstrated) during research degree programme

(22% IOE / 55% Engineering)

- Of those, 48% received formal training for their teaching

(29% Population Health / 63% Arts & Humanities)

PGTAs

- Speak with UCU rep on Wednesdays in Graduate Hub
- Circulate a 'Know your rights' flyer
- Sign up for CALT training



Research Community (support and mental health)

PRES results:

- 64% agreed that they have frequent opportunities to discuss research with other research students

(54% Arts & Humanities/ 58% IOE/ 89% Laws)
- We know anecdotally that PGR students suffer unique pressures (self-motivation, isolation, etc)

Research Community (support and mental health)

- Mental Health working group
- PGA & Doctoral School events- 3 Minute Thesis Competition, Monthly Pub Quiz, Poster competition, Research as Images competition, Socials
- Peer support network
- Student Psychological Services



POSTGRADUATE
ASSOCIATION
UCLU



MT[®] **THREE
MINUTE
THESIS**

FOUNDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Regulations

UCL/IOE is looking to change these, you will be consulted.

Example:

Word length of thesis submissions, policies around interruption, upgrade timelines, etc.

Ideas from you....

What are your ideas on:

- Space
- Skills
- Teaching
- Support