PGR Admin Network table discussions:

Wellbeing:

- Concerns about significant increase in interruptions due to anxiety/ stress/ mental health
- Peer support/ buddy system for PGRs i.e. for new international students
  - Advice on how to adopt
  - Recognition for mentors
- Guidance on who to contact if a student is in crisis, for admin and academics
  - Tendency to be shared with those (staff) already in the know
  - Confusion on who provides what i.e. differences between counselling/ DASS/ Occupational Health
- Completion rate push is impacting on students
  - Anxiety/ stress
  - Interruptions/ extensions
  - More consistent approach to extension applications
  - University targets
  - Circumstantial support required for academics – not very robust
- Training for admins/ academic staff on how to deal with student issues (anxiety/ stress/ depression/ appropriate referral)
  - Ask for support at the right time – i.e. not respectively asking for maternity leave
  - Issues with supervisors doesn’t always come to light until the end as some students feel it may jeopardise their PhD
  - International students are under particular pressure, either because of sponsorship or cultural expectations, and also culturally are less likely to disclose problems/seek help
  - More information on referral routes
  - Colleagues are unclear about the limits of their responsibilities
  - Training should be compulsory (Australian style mental health first aid training)
- Student welfare team in each school needed
- Promotion of Bullying Policy and The Dignity in The Work Place
- External mental health first aid course for PGR admins
- Awareness of services and processes to follow i.e. how can we use the atrium more?
- Proactive support – identifying issues earlier
- PGR students tend to be more likely to need support because this level of study lacks structure and students have to be more self-driven
- Support needs may be hidden because there are not the same checks (attendance) as on a taught course
- PGR wellbeing strategy
  - Promote wellbeing as a positive rather than wait for the student to reach crisis point
  - Proactive rather than reactive support
  - More consistency across the board needed i.e. consistent support provided
  - Well-being work should be led at Faculty/university level for consistency, rather than piecemeal interventions at school level
- Build wellbeing into the routine
  - eProg
    - signposting
    - raising concerns (traffic light system)
    - using milestones
- Information campaign – target at different points
- Intro week for Jan/ April/ July starters – nothing available
- Pastoral role for students by year, build in an academic for this role e.g. on personal issues rather than academic performance
  - PG tutor = disciplinary co-ordinator
- Students need to know who to go to
  - Define roles clearly to students
  - Make communication clear
  - Send handbook again a couple of months after registration
  - Communicate to students of the services available
  - Move timing of support/well-being messages away from the beginning of semester one; pre-Christmas break was suggested as optimum time
- Run a PGR specific session on anxiety/ wellbeing in groups rather than 1:1
  - Create an environment where students feel comfortable talking
  - Students don’t have offices/ desks – no sense of cohort/ group
  - Wellbeing workshops
- International Society have their own counselling service for international students
- Counselling service to have an online session that academics could access as they don’t have resource to come out
- Supervisors are the ones who have daily contact with students and don’t always notify someone
- Make sure that female students have at least one female panellist
  - Academics don’t know who to direct students on to e.g. support administrator
- Use PG reps to identify someone who is willing to talk about their problems/ issues or inform them about resources available to pass information on about support available; i.e. in a social event
  - Workshop for students (maybe through reps?) on well-being and support, delivered just before Christmas (Unismart theatre, currently used for undergraduates by some schools, could be aimed at PGRs)
- Promote more PGR events within faculties to make students feel connected
  - Coffee mornings
  - Social Events
  - Rep-meetings
  - Buddy system
  - Facebook groups
  - Contact with other students before arrival
  - Peer support
- Advertise wellbeing information in Faculty/ School communications e.g. Newsletters
  - Formal introduction to welfare officers
  - Put welfare resource info. In the handbook
○ Develop a culture of collective responsibility for mental well health
○ Tips currently contained in newsletters from Claire Hughes could be brought together into an online resource
- Student experience office doesn’t address PGR
- Welfare should be separate from experience
- Support for students when they return as well as at crisis point
- Issue of DASS nor reporting back to after staff/ academic has referred the them [the student]
  ○ What the recommendations are
  ○ The feeling that DASS don’t have enough knowledge of PGR programmes
- Have an independent advisor i.e. from another school

**CDTs**
- Raising awareness of CDT
- Integration of CDT/ other PGR students
- Administrator in post prior to the bid succeeding in order to plan
- More information given to Schools/ departments

**eProg**
- Updating pathways
  ○ Apply to all milestones that milestones are on
- Risks
  ○ Training catalogues
  ○ CS
- Student access to eProg through My Manchester
- Issues with rolling out new software and discontinuing old software
  ○ Only limited testing with actual users
- Issues with Sharepoint
- Concerns with introducing too many new systems at the same time