

## Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2019 Guide for PGR Administrators

The 2019 PRES survey will open at the University of Manchester on **1 April 2019** and will stay open until **17 May 2019**. From mid-February a toolkit of resources including posters, email templates will be made available via the [University's PRES webpages](#). The aim of this briefing note is to help answer any questions PGRs may raise during the survey.

### What is PRES?

PRES is a national survey, coordinated by Advance HE, around 70 institutions across the UK will be taking part in PRES 2019.

### Who will be surveyed?

All PGRs who have registered for a research degree and are in programme or submission pending and who started no later than September 2018 will be invited to participate in the survey. Visiting and exchange research students and some specific programmes identified by Schools and January/February 2019 starters are not surveyed.

### How will the survey be completed?

All eligible PGRs will receive an email with a link to the survey and there will also be a link to the survey on MyManchester. The survey will take around 15-20 minutes to complete. PGRs will receive regular reminders to complete the survey, these reminders will come from Professor Melissa Westwood, Associate Vice President for Research, and Schools are encouraged to send personal reminders.

### What will be asked?

The survey is about the **entire PhD programme** and questions are broken down into the following categories; within each of these categories PGRs are asked to agree or disagree with statements on a scale of one to five, there is also a free text box at the end of each category for additional comments.

- Supervision asks questions relating to the supervisory team.
- Resources cover issues relating to working space, computing resources and facilities.
- Research culture covers issues relating to access to seminars, opportunities to network and discuss research ideas with others. In this context the word department relates to division/discipline area.
- Progress and assessment relates to the entire PhD programme and from the induction that took place at the start of the programme right through to completion.
- Responsibilities focus on whether PGRs understand the different roles and responsibilities of themselves, their supervisor and the University.
- Research skills refer to the specific skills needed to complete a PhD, for example, methodologies, analysis and evaluation and research integrity.
- Professional development relates to whether PGRs have had access to and the opportunity to develop generic skills such as project management, communication and networking. These are also often referred to as transferable skills and may have been discussed when the PGR completed their skills development needs analysis.

- Wellbeing covers broader issues relating to personal life and feelings of emotional wellbeing.

In addition PGRs will be asked about the opportunities that have been made available to them in the areas of professional development, for example, research skills, transferable skills, conference attendance and teaching opportunities. PGRs will also be asked about their motivations for undertaking a research degree and to rate their overall satisfaction with their programme.

### **Is the survey anonymous?**

All results are treated confidentially and reported anonymously. The survey asks that any comments that a PGR makes should not identify themselves or any specific members of staff.

### **What happens to the responses?**

The University will use the results to identify areas that need improvement and Schools and Faculties will be asked to produce action plans which will be monitored via the annual review process. School are encouraged to highlight to PGRs examples of the changes and improvements that have been made as a result of PGR feedback.

### **Why should a student take part?**

The survey is an opportunity for PGRs to feedback on their experience; we need to know what PGRs think so we can address issues. Completing the survey is an opportunity to say what is going well and also how we can make improvements. The more PGRs who complete the survey, the more representative it will be.

### **Is there an incentive for taking part?**

Individual Schools may offer incentives.

### **Key Dates**

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| February                    | General comms to staff and students via MyManchester, PGR newsletter, PGR Life.              |
| By end of February          | PRES Toolkit available.  |
| March                       | PRES pre-launch comms from AVP Research to Faculty Deans, Heads of School and PGR Directors. |
| March                       | PRES pre launch comms to PGRs via MyManchester, PGR Newsletter, PGR Life.                    |
| 1 April                     | Survey launch with personalised email from AVP Research.                                     |
| 8 April, 29 April and 8 May | Reminder email from AVP Research.  |
| 17 April and weekly         | Weekly updates re response rates and School to send personalised emails.                     |
| June 2019                   | Data analysis and reporting.   |
| August 2019                 | Message to PGRs re results and actions.  |

### **Further Information**

For further information contact [claire.faichnie@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:claire.faichnie@manchester.ac.uk).