

# Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2021

## Briefing Note for Staff



The 2021 PRES survey will open at the University of Manchester on 15 April 2021 and will stay open until 17 May 2021. The aim of this briefing note is to help answer any questions PGRs may raise before or during the survey.

### What is PRES?

PRES is a national survey, coordinated by Advance HE; around 60 institutions across the UK will be taking part in PRES 2021.

### Who will be surveyed?

- All PGRs who have registered for a research degree and are in programme or submission pending and who started prior to January 2021 will be invited to complete the survey.
- Visiting and exchanges research students and some specified programmes along with starters from **January 2021 onwards** will not be surveyed.

### How will the survey be completed?

All eligible PGRs will receive an email on 15 April 2021 from the Associate Vice President Research, Professor Melissa Westwood, with a link to the survey. The link will also be available in My Manchester. The survey is completed online using the JISC online survey system and will take around 20 minutes to complete. During the survey period, PGRs will receive reminders from the Associate Vice President Research and from their Schools and departments.

### What will be asked?

The survey is about the **entire research 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.
- Progress and assessment relates to the entire programme 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.
- Support relates to support for academic research skills, IT support and support for health and wellbeing.
- Research skills refer to the specific skills needed to complete research, 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.

- COVID-19 relates to the impact of COVID-19 on the place of work, current or future plans to address the impact and the accessibility of training and online opportunities.
- Wellbeing relates to factors that negatively and positively affect wellbeing and use of support services.

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 Departments, Schools and Faculties will be asked to produce action plans, which will be monitored via the annual review process. Departments, Schools and Faculties 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 PGR 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.

### **What if someone doesn't want to take part?**

We strongly encourage PGRs to complete the survey because their experience and views are very important. However, it is not compulsory. PGRs are able to opt out and can respond to invitation emails and let the University know they don't want to take part.

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

Individual Schools and Departments may offer incentives.

### **Key Dates**

End March	Staffnet article and message from AVP Research to Faculty Deans, Heads of School and PGR Directors. Article in MyManchester and PGR newsletter.
End March	PRES Comms Toolkit available.
15 April	Survey launch with personalised email from AVP Research.
28 April and 14 May	Reminder email from AVP Research.
29 April and weekly	Weekly updates to Faculties, Schools and Departments re response rates.
June	Data analysis and reporting.
July	Presentation of results to MDCSG and PGR Directors.

### **Further Information**

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