

PRES 2013 ran from 5 March 2013-16 May 2013. The response rate was 57% (n=1088) of the PGR population, compared with 38% in 2012, 23% in 2011 and 36% in 2009. The national response rate was 42%. The next Survey will run in early 2015.

Overall Satisfaction and University KPI

The University's strategic plan sets a target of 90% for overall satisfaction for Postgraduate Research Students. This was based on question 15g in previous surveys, which asks researchers to rate whether their overall experience has met their expectations (selecting from -3 to +3). In 2012, 87% of researchers selected between 0 to 3 (i.e. saying that it met or exceeded expectations).

For PRES 2013, the PRES questionnaire was updated by the Higher Education Academy and this question, relating to expectations, was removed. The overall key performance indicator for PGR satisfaction will therefore relate to question 17a, below (as agreed with the VP (Strategy and Resources, on review of the updated question set):

Q17a. Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme

83.9% of 2013 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, compared with 82.4% in the Russell Group. Although this figure is lower than for the previous question, it should be noted that for the 2013 question two out of a possible five points on the scale are being used as a measure of satisfaction. In previous years, four out of a possible seven points were being used as an indication of satisfaction.

On consideration of each of the key survey areas, it can be seen that levels of satisfaction have improved in each of the four Graduate Schools.

Overall satisfaction by Graduate Schools for the 2013 survey (Q17a.) is:

Arts: 84.1%
Science and Engineering: 82.4%
Social Sciences: 81.2%
MVLS: 86.7%

Table 1 Response rate by Graduate School

	Total respondents	Total students in Graduate School	2013 response rate	2012 response rate
Arts	240	342	70%	27%
MVLS	358	676	53%	49%
Science and Engineering	307	517	59%	41%
Social Sciences	183	368	50%	24%
OVERALL	1088	1903	57%	38%

Survey results can be found in Annex 1 of this report. Key areas in the survey and changes in satisfaction levels have been highlighted below.

Key area 1: Supervision

This is an area in which Glasgow typically performs well in comparison to the Russell Group averages and we have seen further improvements in this area in 2013. Across all four Colleges there has been an improvement in satisfaction with supervisory skills and knowledge and students agreement with the statement 'I have regular contact with my supervisor, appropriate to my needs'. 2013 has seen a 5.5% increase in satisfaction with supervisor feedback.

Key area 2: Resources

The percentage of respondents agreeing that they have a suitable working space has improved overall this year but we are still below the Russell Group average in the Colleges of Arts and Social Sciences. We are above the Russell Group average in satisfaction with access to specialist resources. The text comments for the survey are useful in helping to understand exactly what respondents expect in this area and these comments have been provided to Graduate Schools.

Suggested action:

Graduate Schools / Schools will review local results (including text comments) in order to identify and address any particular concerns with working space or access to resources.

Key area 3: Research culture

Satisfaction with seminar programmes has improved and we are now equal with Russell Group averages in this area, and in the provision of *opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department* (although it should be noted that only 59% of students agree that they have such opportunities). We have seen a 20% increase in satisfaction with provision of PG social space.

Suggested action:

Graduate Schools and PGR representatives will investigate what further opportunities researchers would like to see available, to allow them to become involved in the wider research community.

The SRC is launching a PGR Welcome Month in 2013 and, in partnership with the Graduate Schools, will appoint a cohort of PG ambassadors to welcome new students to Glasgow. The Gilchrist PG Club will also host a series of events as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2013.

Key area 4: Progress, assessment and understanding of roles and responsibilities

When compared to the Russell Group average, we perform poorly in relation to satisfaction with induction, understanding of requirements / deadlines for monitoring of progress, knowing who to approach if students have concerns and institutional response to feedback. Small improvements have been seen in the Graduate Schools across each of these areas. However, it is likely that a communication problem exists, with students being unsure where they can get the information and support that they need.

The survey text comments (perhaps due to the timing) raise questions regarding annual progress review and who students should speak to if they are concerned about progress.

Suggested action:

Graduate Schools will review induction processes and how information is presented and provided.

Communication of expectations with regards to researcher training (and attendance at courses) will be discussed by the Researcher Development Committee in 2013. Key activities have already been implemented, such as the design of training brochures for Colleges and the appointment of a PGR communications intern in Social Sciences. It is hoped that the use of My Campus across all four Colleges and the LTC / centrally available courses will make it simpler for research students to understand course booking and cancellation procedures.

Graduate School action plans for PRES will be published on the web December 2013 and the link will be sent to research students, as well as being linked to from Graduate School webpages. Action plans will then be updated by July 2014, with a review of progress against actions.

Key area 5: Research Skills and Professional Development

Satisfaction with research training is roughly comparable with Russell Group averages. However, a lower percentage of respondents feel their understanding of research integrity has improved during their research degree programme.

Glasgow respondents agree that their ability to manage projects and their own professional development has improved during their programme. However, a lower percentage of respondents agree with the statement '*my ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme*' than the Russell Group average. Agreement with this was particularly low in the Social Sciences, where respondents also didn't feel they had the opportunity to make professional contacts or develop networks during their programme. Further information on access to training and development can be found in Figure 1, at the end of this report. Participation in training is reviewed by the Researcher Development Committee, in collaboration with Graduate Schools.

Suggested action:

Graduate Schools will consider how they provide in research integrity training as part of the PGR induction process and how supervisory responsibilities in this area are communicated. A research integrity FAQs website is under construction.

The Researcher Development Committee will review communication and public engagement training across the university, as well as that available at other institutions (with particular reference to training for social science researchers, where satisfaction in this area was lower).

The Research Strategy and Innovation Office will appoint a public engagement officer to provide training and support to researchers in developing skills for public engagement. We also hope to see an increase in participation in the 3 minute thesis competition in 2014, following a highly successful first event in Spring 2013.

Key area 6: Teaching opportunities

54% of respondents had participated in teaching or demonstrating during their research degree. Satisfaction with support and guidance for teaching has improved significantly since 2012. However, it remains slightly lower than the Russell Group average.

Suggested action:

School-level satisfaction scores and text feedback will be disseminated to School teaching convenors, via University Learning and Teaching Committee.

The Arts Graduate School received funding from the Researcher Development Committee in May 2013 to pilot a GTA network, providing peer-support for teaching assistants from the Colleges of Arts and Social Sciences. Feedback and evaluation of the network will be provided to the Researcher Development Committee (and shared with Graduate Schools) in May 2014.

Annex 1: PRES 2013 breakdown by Graduate School and comparison with 2012 results. The 2013 question set has been updated and differences to questions since previous years have been noted in the table below. For each Graduate School, results have been compared with the 2012 results and the higher score highlighted in bold (for a difference >1.5%). UofG results have also been compared to the Russell Group average and where the difference is >1.5% this has been highlighted in either green (positive) or red (negative).

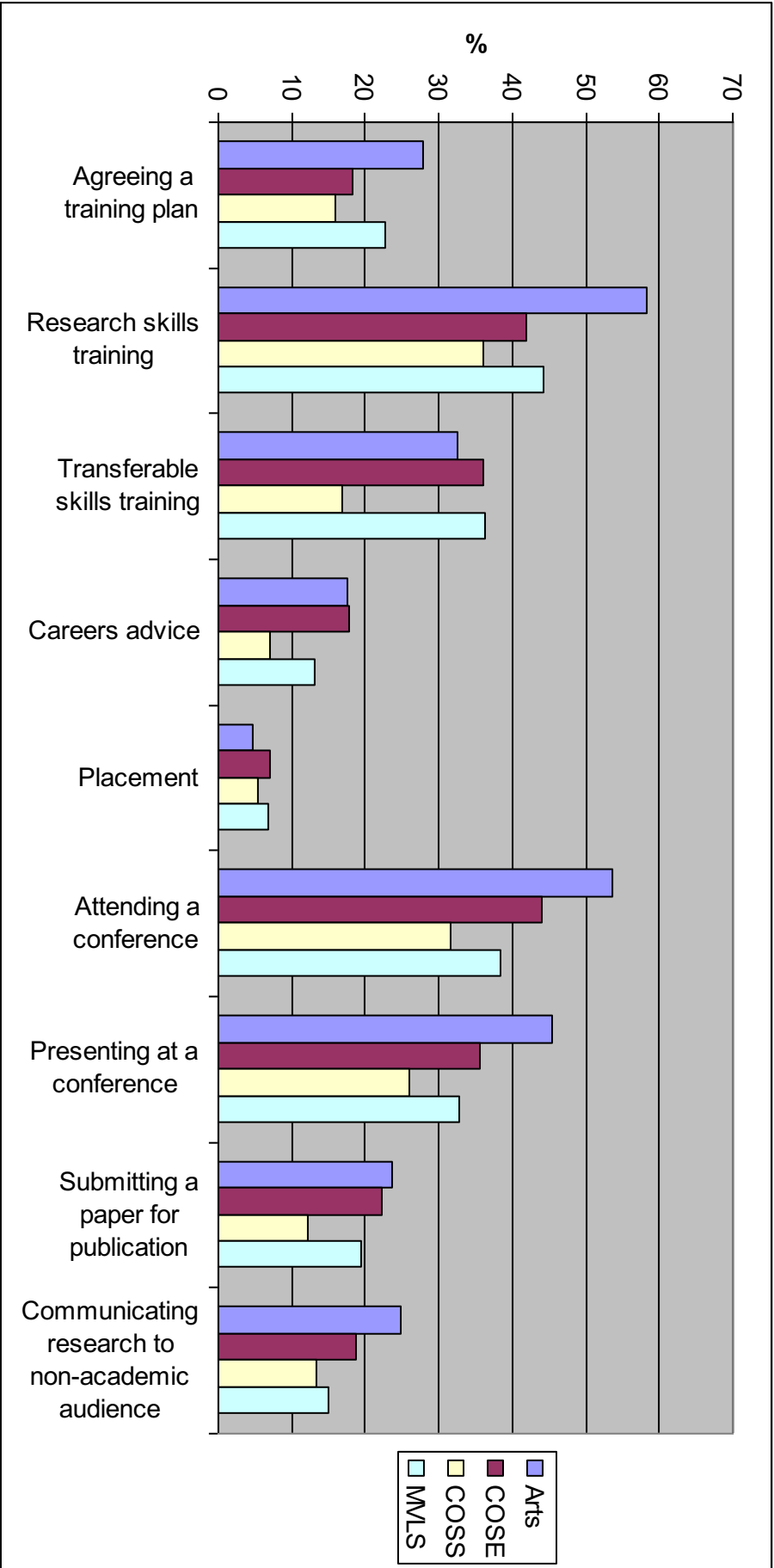
My supervisors have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research	Arts 2013	Arts 2012	Sci Eng 2013	Sci Eng 2012	Soc Sci 2013	Soc Sci 2012	MVLS 2013	MVLS 2012	UofG 2013	UofG 2012	Russell Group 2013
	90.0	88.5	90.2	87.4	89.5	85.4	93.1	92.4	90.9	89.4	90.3
I have regular contact with my supervisor, appropriate to my needs (previously 'availability of supervisor')	85.8	73.6	86.6	75.7	86.7	85.4	87.3	85	86.6	81.1	86.1
My supervisors provide me with feedback that helps me direct my research activities	87.9	72.4	82.0	75.3	86.1	86.7	88.4	86.4	86.1	80.6	85.5
My supervisor helps me identify my training and development needs (NEW)	71.7		65.7		74.3		77.3		72.4		71.6
I have a suitable working space	64.4	50.6	87.9	79.1	72.3	77.3	85.8	85.4	79.9	77.7	78.2
I have access to specialist resources necessary for my research (NEW)	75.7		84.7		77.2		87.5		82.3		78.9
My department provides a good seminar programme	75.7	61.7	74.7	62.6	72.2	59.5	78.4	70.8	75.6	65.7	75.5
I have opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department (previously 'my department provides opportunities for me to become involved in the broader research culture')*	62.3	58.1	63.8	56.8	49.2	54	59.0	67.4	59.2	61.3	59.5

I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme (Previously 'satisfaction with induction procedures')	Arts 2013	Arts 2012		Sci Eng 2013	Sci Eng 2012		Soc Sci 2013	Soc Sci 2012		MVLS 2013	MVLS 2012		UofG 2013	UofG2 012	Russell Group 2013
I understand the requirements and deadlines for the formal monitoring of my progress (NEW)	81.7			71.1			80.2			83.9			79.1		84.5
My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students	54.5	44.8		54.5	48.8		53.8	47.3		61.2	59.0		56.6	52.5	58.9
I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student	90.0	77		83.7	76.4		86.7	84		89.9	85.0		87.7	81.1	88.2
I am aware of my supervisor's (previously institution's) responsibilities towards me as a research degree student	90.7	50.6		80.9	51.8		84.4	58.7		90.1	70.8		86.7	60.7	86
I know who to approach, or where to find this out, if I am concerned (previously dissatisfied) with any element of my research degree programme	79.5	49.4		70.1	60		69.1	64		79.8	67.1		75.2	62.1	77
My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have developed during my programme (NEW)	89.4			90.1			84.0			93.3			89.8		89.8
My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my programme (NEW)	88.1			89.0			82.4			91.2			88.3		88.3

My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme (NEW)	Arts 2013	Arts 2012		Sci Eng 201 3	Sci Eng 2012		Soc Sci 2013	Soc Sci 2012		MVLS 2013	MVLS 2012		UofG 2013	UofG 2012	Russell Group 2013
	79.6			77.9			74.4			82.5			79.0		78.4
My understanding of 'research integrity' has developed during my programme (NEW)	76.5			82.8			88.0			85.2			81.5		83.2
My ability to manage projects has improved during my programme (NEW)	75.6			83.0			74.2			87.4			81.4		79.9
My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme (NEW)	76.6			78.3			66.7			82.0			77.2		78.3
I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme (NEW)	69.4			68.1			59.1			69.1			67.2		68.8
I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme (NEW)	82.6			77.1			77.1			82.2			80.0		79.5
<i>(Only asked of respondents who teach)</i> To what extent do you agree that you have been given appropriate support and guidance for your teaching?	51.6	36.1		54.3	43.5		49.4	36.6		57.1	38.9		53.8	39.6	57
There is adequate provision made for PG social space	46.6	15.8		59.5	31.6		51.6	25.4		52.7	43.5		53.0	33.4	
Overall I am satisfied with the experience of my research programme (previously asked whether expectations were met and using a different scale) *	84.1	82.7		82.4	86.3		81.1	86.6		86.8	88.7		83.9	86.9	82.4
I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme more or less within my institution's (previously 'the planned') timescale	81.9	65.5		80.5	72.7		81.8	76.4		85.3	82.7		82.2	76.4	80.6

* Note that Russell group results have also fallen, compared with 2011. This may be due to differences in the question being asked.

Figure 1 Response to: which of the following opportunities have you experienced during your research degree programme?



Graduate Schools Action Plans in Response to PRES 2012

Key Area 1: Supervision

Satisfaction with supervision has remained high. We are ahead of the Russell group (by 2%) in all areas relating to supervision although we have seen a 2% decrease in satisfaction with supervisor subject knowledge. As Colleges have noted in their actions plans, key to a more positive response is likely increased attention paid to the supervisor student match.

Arts	MVLS	CoSE	CoSS
Take further action to ensure proper review of application forms and review of supervisor's comments on supervisory match.	Scored 92% in this area but will continue to monitor supervisor/student matching.	No specific response given.	Continue to refine the process of supervisor allocation, noting the possible limitations of this in the light of increased PGR numbers. Supervisor-student matches will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis with responsibility for this falling to PGR directors.

Key Area 2: Training and Development

There is a slight increase but we are still below the Russell Group in satisfaction for research skills development (3.6%). No clear themes emerged from text based comments on the question 'what additional training would you like'. Activity in the area of transferable skills development is monitored by the Researcher Development Committee with the support of the Researcher Development Officer.

Arts	MVLS	CoSE	CoSS
<p>More workshop places are being made available via the Graduate School and attendance, availability and demand are carefully monitored. The progress review process was revised and rolled out in June 2011.</p> <p>Improvements to induction include dissemination of information about Researcher Development Framework and student volunteer opportunities.</p> <p>Supervisor training, including creating awareness of training provision, is under development.</p> <p>The Graduate School undertook research on skills development in light of research commissioned by the Graduate School, the website has been radically redesigned, including detailed reference to the Researcher Development Framework.</p>	<p>MVLS does very well in this area largely due to the credit skills programme that has been implemented. Students complete a log of development activity which is reviewed as part of Annual Progress Review.</p> <p>The Graduate School is currently looking to improve supervisor compliance with skills training activities and this will be included in supervisor training during 11/12.</p>	<p>The College intends to enhance 'creativity' training within the transferable skills course as a way to encourage students to enter into or consider cross-disciplinary or thematic research.</p> <p>The Graduate School is also working with the Researcher Development Officer to increase the number of courses and places available.</p>	<p>The Graduate School will continue to ensure robust and effective progress reviews are in place and look at ways to embed progress considerations into more frequent student supervisor interactions.</p> <p>Further, more skills training workshops are being offered in 11/12 with increased total capacity. Social media outlets, such as Facebook are being trialled to improve communication with students.</p>

Key Area 3: Intellectual Climate

This area is broadly in line with the Russell Group average and shows improvement from the 2009 PRES results. However, areas which lower the average score in this area are a lack of satisfaction in local seminar programmes and a new question on support for developing interdisciplinary research.

Arts	MVLS	CoSE	CoSS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 2011/12, the visiting speakers' series will be resurrected and made more visible. • In Semester 2, we are planning an 'emerging scholars' series, inviting early career academics from across Scotland to participate in a new series. • We are funding an interdisciplinary, student-led graduate conference, scheduled before Easter. • We are considering the possibility of having a web page that lists seminar activity. 	<p>MVLS scored very highly in this area and cultivates a dynamic programme of seminars for students.</p>	<p>It has been agreed that we will empower students to be responsible for running their own PhD seminars. Seedcorn funding for this activity will be provided by the Graduate School to ensure that school programmes are in place by the New Year. Thematic seminars will be supported by the Chancellor's Fund award including "Changing the World".</p> <p>The Graduate School last year introduced Mobility Scholarships for PGR students which are aimed at promoting new collaborations and will enable the PGR student to work in internationally renowned laboratories or research environments. Applications are particularly encouraged for awards which either enable the student to be introduced to new methods, or which provide a research environment that is substantially different from that in Glasgow.</p> <p>We will also use our resources to enhance "creativity" training within the PGR transferable skills courses (as a way to encourage students to enter into cross-disciplinary or thematic research).</p>	<p>November 2011: Develop a GS Student Board with resources and responsibility to support local initiatives.</p> <p>December 2011: Increase publicity around the support available to RLLs, including clear identification of a single point of contact.</p>

Key Area 4: Infrastructure

Satisfaction with the University's infrastructure and facilities for postgraduate research is generally high (75%) and on par with the Russell Group. Across all Graduate Schools, it was agreed that Postgraduate Researchers do not have access to adequate social areas and this is being addressed via a working group led by Andrea Nolan.

Arts	MVLS	COSE	COSS
<p>In the College of Arts, the most pressing issue is dedicated desk space. Arts scores particularly poorly in this section in PRES. The Dean and the former HoGS have persistently raised this issue in various fora.</p> <p>The Graduate School has one dedicated study space in the Alexander Stone Building. This has hot desk capacity for 56 students - for use by both PGR and PGT. 135 lockers have now been made available. Students are encouraged at induction to use this space. 46 key cards were requested in Semester 1 alone, by new students. This space is on the fifth floor, and has no disabled access. Hot desking is not a popular option amongst the research student body, as the PRES report indicates.</p> <p>Students are encouraged at induction to make use of the space and establish regular use of available desks. 135 lockers and keys have now been made available, so students have somewhere to leave their books etc.</p>	<p>At 42% we face dissatisfaction about social space although at 68.6% we are above the RGA of 64.5% at providing social opportunities.</p> <p>This is a difficult one as provision of PGR space at the moment is up to the supervisor and for various reasons, some are better off in this regard than others.</p> <p>The PGR space being discussed by the space committee should improve this in time.</p>	<p>No response provided in this area.</p>	<p>The GS sees the lack of PG social space, and indeed the lack of study space, as highly problematic and unlikely to improve soon.</p>

Key Area 5: Goals and Standards

Knowledge of goals and standards has improved, particularly with respect to students understanding their own responsibilities and what is required from them in the thesis examination. There has also been a 10% increase in satisfaction with the institution's response to feedback. However, satisfaction with induction is disappointingly low at only 37%. Text comments indicate that (a) problems with registration also impacted on scores given to induction and (b) restructuring meant that some information was not ready in time for induction.

Arts	M/LS	CoSE	CoSS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Graduate School did not run any viva workshops last year. It is clear that two a year need to be scheduled. These are programmed for 2011/12, • The Annual Progress Review system was rolled out in 2010/11, with information sent to all students. However, this was after the PRES survey was closed. The Graduate School website now has a clear statement about the progress review process, and expected milestones. • The PGR CoP has been uploaded onto a USB drive for every new PGR student in the college. • Progress was discussed at induction. • The Induction in the College was a longer, fuller event in 2011/12, to allow for fuller sharing of information. 	<p>We are working with our PGR committee to improve induction. As the College is now so broadly based, many find parts of it irrelevant to their particular field. On the whole the SRC committee favoured decreasing the more general components and increasing the more specific but to targeted groups. We revised and repeated the PGR induction during the year this year to accommodate those who do not start in October and we will continue to do so.</p> <p>Our SRC committee thought that the changes made this year already showed improvement. They have suggested we need to provide more detailed information about the programme beforehand, suggested making the programme more practical and would also like to see more social events associated with Induction.</p> <p>All agreed suggestions for improvement will be implemented in our 2012 and 12-13 programmes.</p>	<p>Improvement of the Induction processes for both PGT and PGR students has already been acted upon. Informal feedback shows that both PGT and PGR Inductions were better than those last year. A further induction meeting will be held in January 2012 for students who started after the September Induction meetings. As well as the College wide Induction meetings which allow students to meet other PGR students from outwith their discipline, each School also holds discipline specific Induction meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2012: Supervisors to emphasise the significance of induction activities (via PGR Committee) • The GS staff have been committed to assisting with registration during August, September and part of October 2011.

Key Area 6: Teaching Opportunities

Only 50% of researchers felt they had been given adequate opportunities to participate in teaching – although this is slightly higher than the Russell Group (47%). Within this, only 37% of respondents felt that they had been given adequate support and guidance for their teaching. It should be noted that within the text comments to this question it was clear that not all were aware of the support available from the Learning and Teaching Centre. The text comments also showed that satisfaction was lower in this area for International students and for interdisciplinary researchers.

Arts	MVLS	COSE	COSS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dean of Graduate Studies is undertaking an audit of current provision of GTA opportunities in the College to review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How many GTAs are employed on average per year – How many hours of GTA time is bought in the college per year – The year of study, length of employment and number of hours worked by GTAs • The DoGS is aiming to produce a code of practice for the College for the employment of GTAs. • A greater range of opportunities for teaching experience are being explored via other initiatives including Graduate School workshops led by students for students (peer learning). 	<p>We have asked our MVLS PGR SRC reps to discuss this and let us know what type of teaching experience they would like. Possibilities under consideration are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater responsibility for lab supervision under the leadership of a member of academic staff. • Support for exam revision. • Mentoring and role models. This might be around career options or pathways into research. • Providing opportunities in the medical and dental curricula and possibly even BVMS. • Students could become involved in "Stem Network", working with secondary pupils in schools. • PGR students could host journal clubs for PGT students. • Teaching within certain PGT courses. • The students would like the opportunity to contribute to a lecture together with an experienced lecturer. <p>The SRC committee responses were very supervisor-dependent. Some supervisors actively discourage their students from demonstrating. We will mention this also at our supervisor training workshops as in many</p>	<p>The opportunities for PGR students to participate in Teaching and Demonstrating have been discussed at the Graduate School Board. A statement to all students has been clearly articulated on the Graduate School website about transferable skills training in preparation for "teaching" and the opportunities for PGR students to participate in teaching / demonstrating / marking on completion of the mandatory University skills course will be highlighted by Schools.</p>	<p>January 2012: Review available teaching opportunities across the College.</p> <p>January 2012: Review hiring practices.</p> <p>Spring 2012: Put together a working group on the implementation of teaching scholarships (PGR Committee).</p> <p>Summer 2012: Explore ways to improve the representation of teaching of transcripts/PDPs etc.</p>

	<p>cases it is the supervisor who limits these opportunities and it is felt that we need time to create a culture change.</p> <p>There also seems to be a problem of communication. The same students are invited to demonstrate regularly, i.e. those who have already done demonstrating. We need to ensure all are invited to demonstrate. There were also issues with being able to register to be a demonstrator and pay regulation. This will be addressed by the Graduate School and T&L committee.</p> <p>Timescales: Discussion at MVLS T&L committee: by end of 2011.</p> <p>Agreed provision of new teaching opportunities advertised to students and supervisors early in 2012.</p> <p>Recommendations will be highlighted at supervisors workshops.</p>		
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