



2008-09 Satisfaction Survey Results Summary for PGR Students

Graduates from December 2008 and December 2009 were surveyed in April 2009 and April 2010 respectively about their experiences of studying at the School. Given the low number of responses received, the results from the 2008 (2) and 2009 (2) surveys were combined to provide a more accurate report on the postgraduate research student experience at the School.

The following summary is based, therefore, on the experience of 4 graduating PhD students.

Areas covered by the survey for PGR students:

- Motivations
- Supervision
- Skills development
- Research infrastructure and support
- Intellectual climate
- Goals and standards
- Thesis examination
- QAA Code of Practice
- Teaching opportunities
- Overall level of satisfaction

Demographics

2 of the respondents were home (UK) students, 1 was an EU student, and 1 was an overseas student. 3 students studied full-time and 1 was a part-time student. 3 of the respondents worked while studying, of which 1 was in full-time employment. Respondents funded their studies from a variety of sources: 1 respondent was entirely self-funded, 1 respondent received a research council scholarship, 1 respondent was UK-government funded, and 1 respondent was partly self-funded and partly School-funded (scholarship). The age of respondents was wide-ranging, the average (median) age of respondents was 41 years. English was given as the first language for 3 of the respondents.

Motivations

All respondents cited personal interest as the main reason for undertaking a research degree. The most significant factor influencing respondents to pursue their doctoral research at the School was the subject expertise of their supervisor (3), followed by the reputation of their Institute (2) and the overall reputation of their supervisor (2). Other influencing factors were the overall reputation of the University (1), the location (1) and because they had studied here before (1).

Levels of satisfaction

All respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction with a wide range of their experiences as a research student.

The areas where the greatest level of satisfaction was expressed by respondents were for supervisory support and guidance, the research environment, and access to appropriate facilities. Good levels of satisfaction were expressed for opportunities to develop a broad range of research and transferable skills, and the provision of guidance on institutional standards and expectations.

Areas where lower levels of satisfaction were expressed were with the opportunity to gain experience of teaching, with the provision of computing resources and facilities, with appropriate financial support for research activities, and with the research student seminar programme.

The overall level of satisfaction was extremely high. All respondents reported that their expectations in each area of their doctoral studies programme had either been met, exceeded or significantly exceeded. When asked whether their overall expectations for the programme had been met, all respondents reported that their expectations had been exceeded.

See how the postgraduate research experience at the School of Advanced Study compares to other UK institutions in the [2009 PRES national survey](#).