



Excellence in Doctoral Education and Career Development Programme

Progress Reports

May to December 2017

Researcher Experience Committee (REC)



Quick Refresher

REC is the Programme board (approved Feb 2017)

Three work streams:

- 1. Supervisor Training and Support***
- 2. Mentorship and wellbeing***
- 3. Personal and professional development record***

- Coordinated through IAD and Academic Services
- Last comprehensive update given in May 2017
- Full reports found in the [REC papers](#) (Dec. 2017) REC 17/18 2B, 2C and 2D

Webpages: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/projects/excellence-in-doctoral-education>



Overview of Progress

| Area of work | Summary of Progress May 2017- December 2018 |
|---|---|
| Communication and Consultation | Progress made in both areas |
| Work Stream 1: Supervisor Training and Support | PGR supervisor network set up, enhanced programme of support for supervisors being piloted 2017/18. Enhanced communication. Initial steps taken on more efficient recording of attendance at supervisor briefings. |
| Work Stream 2: Mentorship and Wellbeing | Progress made in both areas Students association/IAD Peer mentoring post approved Report on 'Postgraduate Research Student Wellbeing Strategies' completed and considered by the Mental Health Strategy Group. REC requested to approve next steps. |
| Work Stream 3: Personal and Professional Development Record | Task group work completed and report here (REC 17/18 2D) |



Communication and Consultation

- Webpages on Academic Services pages
- PGR discussion groups held in Aug/Sep
- PGR Supervisors network launched in June
- Task group for work stream 3 consulted widely

- Reports will be shared with College Committees and in IAD PGR/ PGR Supervisor newsletters
- IAD Doctoral Training and Support Forum – January 25th



Response from Researcher Experience Committee (REC) 07/12/17

- Very satisfied with overall progress made
- Suggested some new lines of communication (eg. through Student's Association)



Work Stream 1: Supervisor Training and Support

- Set of actions approved in May 2017. Full overview of updates and further actions can be found in the [report](#) (REC 17/18 2B)

Main areas of progress

- PGR supervisor network launched and enhanced programme of optional support for supervisors being piloted 2017/18
- New [PGR supervisor IAD webpages](#) and newsletter
- University nomination made to THE awards (supervision)



Next steps

- Continue to build up online resources and tools for supervision – to be live by start of academic year 2018/19
- Continue to strengthen compulsory supervisor briefings
- Continue to link up with the review of the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students

Revised action and approval sought from REC

- Propose a short life task group to be set up to explore building a CPD framework for PGR supervisors (to include online training)



Response from Researcher Experience Committee (REC) 07/12/17

- Approved the creation of a task group to look at building a CPD framework for supervision. The proposed aims, objectives and composition of this group to be presented to REC in January 2018.

Work Stream 2: Mentoring and Wellbeing

- Set of actions approved in May 2017. Overview of updates and further actions in [report](#) (REC 17/18 2B)

Areas of progress in mentoring

- Joint Students' Association/IAD 6 month post approved to explore expanding peer mentoring to PGR (projected start: Spring 2018)
- Dialogue continues re alumni platform

Next steps from January 2018

- Guidance to be drawn up in consultation with Services/Colleges/Schools for anyone acting as a mentor for a PGR student in a pastoral capacity



Work Stream 2: Wellbeing

REC 17/18 2 C

Update on recommendations from the report, 'Postgraduate Research Wellbeing Strategies' by Dr Eve Hepburn June 2017

- Brief context
- 45 recommendations for the University/ REC and the Excellence programme
- The Mental Health Strategy Group requests that REC approve the next steps for REC and Excellence programme pgs 8-13



Response from Researcher Experience Committee (REC) 07/12/17

- REC welcomed the progress made (particularly the peer mentoring post and the Hepburn report on wellbeing)
- It was proposed that REC should now identify priority actions (for REC and Excellence Programme) from the Hepburn report in order to identify practical strategies for these. To be discussed at the January meeting.



Work Stream 3: Personal and Professional Development Record

REC 17/18 2 D

Recording PGR students' personal and professional development

Task group March – November 2017

Recommendation:

A personal and professional development record for PGRs should be introduced and called a PGR HEAR



Response from Researcher Experience Committee (REC) 07/12/17

- REC welcomed this report and it will now be shared with College committees
- It was reiterated that this piece of work should feed into [Service Excellence](#) and that REC will now continue to work closely with Service Excellence (PGR strand) to ensure a smooth transition for this work (when applicable)