Internal Periodic Review
Year on response report

Internal Periodic Review of: SPS PGR Programmes
Date of review: 7/8 November 2019
Date of 14 week response: 31 July 2020
Date of year on response: 15 April 2021

The School/Subject Area is responsible for reporting on progress with all recommendations, including those remitted to other areas of the University for action.
 If any recommendation has been fully addressed please record the action taken and date completed.   Any barriers to progress should be highlighted on this report.

Recommendation no	Recommendation	Timescale for completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
1	The review team recommends that the School prioritise the annual PGR Annual review process and actively lead reviewing practice to be redefined as a significant event in the academic cycle across all years of the PhD, implemented robustly and efficiently for all students (2.2 & 3.1).		Given the substantial culture change that implementing this recommendation will entail for the school and the ongoing sensitivities and difficulties colleagues face at present regarding work allocation and the call to streamline process wherever possible, the process of consultation around this issue will now take place in the 21/22 academic cycle. During this current academic cycle colleagues in the teaching office have been requested to obtain and organise data relevant to the upcoming consultation, particularly in reference to completion rates and issues of non-engagement.	**21/22 Academic Year**
2	The review team recommends that School management prioritise the dialogue with current students regarding the redeployment of student space within the school estate plan (2.4.2 & 2.8).		Implementation of this item continues to be contingent on the ongoing, fluid situation around estates that has been generated by the pandemic. Members of the PGR community continue to be included in all major discussions around building re-openings and use, particularly in reference to 27/28 George Square.	**Ongoing**
3	The review team recommends that consideration is given to provision of additional staffing within the professional support staff team of the Graduate School(2.7.1).		As mentioned in the 14 week review, we revised the graduate receptionist role to articulate support to the PGR team. The role continues to support the team and will be reviewed again once we have a clearer picture of the impact of future hybrid working.	**Ongoing**

4	The review team recommends the School review student representation to give prominence to the role and then ensure effective inclusion on all major school committees (2.4.3).		The Postgraduate Research Student community in SPS has demonstrated a high degree of self-organisation and engagement in the period during the pandemic. Engaging the new informal structures that students themselves have created remains a strong element of our own approach to improving student representation on formal committees and other appropriate School bodies. The Learning and Teaching Directorate has enacted a series of changes to the Postgraduate Committee and the PG Board of Studies that enhances the overall effectiveness of these bodies, including more robust mechanisms of ensuring robust, effective student inclusion.	**Ongoing**
5	The review team recommends that the School consider the increased involvement of core academic staff in the tutor role to ensure consistency and quality across this provision (2.3.4).		Substantial aspects of this recommendation have been superseded by the introduction of several new systems at College and University level around supervision, workload allocation and payment that will require major revisions of our line-management and oversight structure for tutors. Planned changes for the 21/22 academic cycle will retain the principle as outlined in (2.3.4), including consideration of the designation of a single role in subject areas responsible for the oversight of tutors.	**Ongoing**
6	The review team recommends further expansion of the Research Training Centre with a more directional suite of training opportunities and a portfolio of courses designed to support diverse student needs in research training (1.3 & 2.1).		5 new lecturing staff joined the RTC in the period January to September 2020. The RTC have continued to develop online resources for both staff and students conducting research at during the quite unique situation of the pandemic. Proposals for a suite of Micro-Methods courses offered for both 10 the usual longer 20 credits have been approved in principle by the Board of Studies (some minor revisions still outstanding).	**Ongoing**
7	The review team recommends that consideration be given to the appointment of a dedicated academic to manage performance and development of PGR tutors (1.6 & 2.3.4).		A Director of Student Development (0.2 FTE) has been appointed, taking up the role in May 2020.	**May 2020**

8	The review team recommends the process of PGR tutor workload allocation is communicated more effectively to make this more transparent and equitable (1.6 & 2.3.4).		As mentioned in the response to Recommendation 5, substantial change in workload allocation for tutors is underway. The SPS Learning and Teaching Directorate has also sought to more precisely define these allocations and account for substantial changes in course delivery throughout the 20/21 cycle and in reference to the hybrid teaching delivery required due to the pandemic. Feedback mechanisms supported by the Teams platform have also been instituted for tutors at School, and, where desired subject area, levels. For 21/22 the school is also working to align to work allocation to the WAM tariffs defined within CAHSS.	**Ongoing**
9	The review team recommend the School make it clear for recipients of the Alice Brown Scholarship that sufficient work exists within the School or if students require external employment (2.5.1).		The School has clarified the description of the ABS and revised the terms and conditions attached to the scholarship. Questions and discussion regarding the details of the ABS have also been incorporated into the interview structure that the scholarships panel conducts in reference to this specific award.	**April 2021**
10	The review team recommends that the School review the induction process and consider expanding the delivery timeframe beyond Welcome Week to enable a wider volume of information to be disseminated and understood by students (2.3.2).		For 2020/21, the School elongated the induction and orientation period for new students in order to pace out the dissemination of information. This was also in line with the University's new recommendation in response to the Covid-19 situation. Events were delivered largely online for 2020/21 and in-person where possible, with events dispersed across a six-week period, commencing two weeks before Semester 1 began and continuing for the first four weeks of the semester. The School continues to create more online content by theme so students can access it as appropriate throughout the elongated induction period. The intention is to retain elements of this new induction structure within the School on a permanent basis.	**Complete May 2021**

| 11 | The review team recommends development of EUCLID to permit recording of meetings by students and increased flexibility to permit administration access to annual reports by professional support staff (2.7.2). | | Reply received from Lisa Dawson of 11th Feb 2021 indicated that while aware of requests for further development of the PGR tools and aware that they are in need of enhancement. While not priorities at this time due to other higher priority changes, the request has been logged within the backlog of service improvements for the governance group to prioritise.

The school would be grateful for any support the IPR process can add to ensure the prioritisation of this request. | Complete from School perspective but we would be very grateful to know from SQAC if further support, beyond what we have completed at the School level, to progress this issue is available. |
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| | Please report on steps taken to feedback to students on the outcomes of the review | The School has provided feedback and discussed the outcomes of the review with students through the 2020/21 academic year as appropriate and generally within the context of consulting on necessary changes or actions due to the unique situation presented by the pandemic. | | |
| For Year on response only | Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review | The continued effort to streamline and reform all aspects of how we support tutors has been guided by, and benefitted great from, the recommendations of the review. We look forward to deploying the panel's recommendations in reference to the issue of annual reviews in the coming academic cycle, which will represent a sustained positive change as a result of the review. | | |