

The University of Edinburgh

Internal Periodic Review 14 week response report

Internal Periodic Review of: CMVM PGR

Date of review: March 2025

Date of 14 week response: 4 11.2025

Date of year on response:

The review area (College) 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.

Rec. No.	Recommendation (copy text from report)	Responsibility of	Timescale for completion	Comment on progress towards completion and/or identify barriers to completion	Completion date
R1	The review team recommend that the College ensure clear transitional arrangements are in place to support students and the PGR teams, comprised of both academic and Professional Services staff, based in Schools and the College throughout the Modernisation process.	College	1-3 M	- Specific communication sent to PGR students (August 2025) from PGR Dean regarding transition and pointing them to CMVM video resources explaining the structure. This email addressed their potential concerns around changes in supervision. Questions were sought but only one received and answered.	Q3 2025
			6 M	- Noted at College level and in conjunction with EUSA PGR rep, that many communications sent to staff groups were not sent to PGR students. e.g. invitations to Townhalls, College newsletter Scope. Thus a new initiative has been set up for CMVM PGR Dean to send follow on emails specifically to PGR students highlighting relevant areas in conjunction with Hazel Lambert (Head of Communications, Marketing and Engagement) who has advance sight of central comms. Monitoring of numbers of downloads of newsletters set up to evaluate impact.	Complete Q3 2025
			4 M	We are engaged with the University's Student Administration Review, as part of the L&T Workstream, and are working to align College Modernisation plans with University ambitions in terms of organisational design, process consistency, and effective resourcing.	Complete Aug 2025
			6 M		

	The review team recommend that the College consider the key roles required to support the PGR experience across the College and develop common job description to be used across the different Schools.		6 M	- PGR Dean is regular contact with School PGR Directors over period of change and gives updates at each Board of Examiners meeting.	Q3 2025
			6 M	- PGR Dean developed School PGR Director Job Descriptions (Golden copy, August 2025) to be used for recruitment and workload planning. The content was co-created with current role holders and benchmarked against other senior roles to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.	Ongoing
			9 M	- PGR Dean created new Terms of Reference for Board of Examiners and PGR Committee to be implemented by Jan 2026.	Ongoing
			12 M	- PGR Dean reviewed School PG Committees (completion due Nov 2025). ToR these Committees to be developed in coming months as Schools embed their operational structures	Ongoing
			3 M	- PGR administrative staff will be consolidated in a College-level PGR team, operating on a hub and spoke model to provide local support in Schools, which will improve consistency of student experience and enhance the resilience of support arrangements. Planning remains at a relatively early stage, to ensure alignment with University Student Admin Review.	Ongoing
			3 M	- The planned creation of a UE08 professional services lead for PGR, to sit within the College Education Team and provide strategic support to the PGR Dean and Head of Education Operations has been delayed as a result of wider University activity as well as local budget constraints. We hope to move forward with this in early 2026.	Ongoing
			6 M	- Grade 6 Finance officer recruited, starting Nov 25	Complete
	The review team recommend that the College gives specific consideration to			- CMVM hopes to implement a pilot of PGR Student Advisors, depending on budget availability and the outcomes of the University Student Administration Review - job description written	Ongoing

	the impact of the current University context on the PGR community.		12 M	- All PGR paperwork/wiki to be updated to reflect Schools rather than Deaneries underway	Ongoing
			6 M		
			3 M	- Functional emails for School PGR to be set up following University Student Administration Review. CMVM PGR Dean email in place, manned by Dean and 2 administrators to allow more rapid responses	Q4 2025
			12 M	- As above, it was identified that PGR students were not receiving direct communication regarding the Universities response to sector challenges and the PGR Dean working with College Head of Communications, Marketing and Engagement are alert to generating matched PGR emails in a timely manner and trialling this approach.	Ongoing
			3 M	- PGR Dean alert to monitoring gaps in supervisory teams/progression boards brought about by VS, VR or CR (in accordance with HR policies/GDPR).	Q1 2026
			12 M	- New forms created to achieve greater oversight requests for fee waivers and matched studentships to ensure that CMVM is sustaining a constant basic support model	Q1 2026
				- Training events with embedded networking to circulate round campus for equal experience in person - scoped with viva skills starting in the Vet School Spring 2026 and Research Culture and ethics training in INCR Spring 2026. Attendance to be monitored and feedback collated.	Q1 2026
Q1	The review team recommend that the College provide consistency and greater upfront clarity of how research costs are met for students, supervisors and projects.	College	12 M	- The College Restructure left a gap in finance support for PGR due to VS. A new finance officer is recruited and starting Nov 2025 whose first role will be to curate CMVM financial PGR commitments. - A Grade 8 professional services post is planned to allow a full review of CMVM expectations of	Ongoing

				costs/bench fees in different Schools can be undertaken as well as other crucial work. - Difference in perception of value/outcomes of self funding for PGR students between Schools highlighted – audit of outcomes of self funding vs stipend-supported students required pending Grade 8 administrator starting	
R3	The review team recommend that, on behalf of the University, the Deputy Secretary Students and University Initiatives Portfolio Board, consider a Student Support Model that extends Professional Services support to PGR students.	University - Deputy Secretary Students and University Initiatives Portfolio Board		-	
R4	The review team recommend that the College set out a clear experience offer to PGR students when they apply. There should be clarity on additional opportunities and resources, such as funded societies, travel events and community building opportunities. The review team also recommend that the College ensures there is a consistent	College	12 M 6 M 12 M 6 M 12 M	- In conjunction with the PRES survey outcomes, it was noted that PGR students lacked cohesive community and thus highlighted for action - The opportunities to run in person training events on the rotational themes are being explored based on the INCR ECR training series, with viva skills starting in the Vet School Spring 2026 and Research Culture and ethics training in INCR Spring 2026 - PRES survey highlighted lack of cross campus community. PG Committee will tackle a discussion about solutions e.g. network of “Community champions” but requiring clarity of PGR budget. - Doctoral College exploring Institution wide email to PGR students with IS capturing weekly events and seminars. - Induction in the new Schools will be reviewed by College PGR Committee.	Q4 2025 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

	and appropriate level of induction across the Schools.				
R5	The review team recommend that the College Dean of Research liaise with the Doctoral College to identify ways to enhance visibility of PGR representation at the top level of the University and to explore mechanisms for communicating back to the PGR communities at local areas.	College		To be addressed by the College Dean of Research. Progress delayed due to Professor Liz Baggs being appointed to a VP role and this will be taken forward by the acting Dean of Research, Professor Sarah Walmsley.	
R6	The review team recommend that the College increase the frequency of required supervisory refresher training for supervisors and develop opportunities for professional development training for all academic and Professional Services staff involved in PGR.	College	12 M	- PGR Dean explored with Doctoral College and this is not possible or supported as is embedded within the Regulations. However training of supervisors in more bespoke and tailored activities is being explored. Viva training for new supervisors workshop was run in INCR in Spring 2025 and will be next run in the Vet School Q1 2026, with a goal to roll out to other sites. This will launch a wider initiative to develop a support pathway for supervisors, under discussion with IAD (e.g. innovation training – under discussion Q3-4 2025).	Ongoing
R7	The review team recommend that the College work with colleagues across the relevant teaching offices in CMVM and CSE to ensure that teaching opportunities are visible, and to ensure all PGR students have equitable access to opportunities for teaching and training for teaching, which is dependent on their skills set, as opposed to their position in the University structures.	College	6 m	- PGR Dean has liaised with the relevant EMS lead to arrange that future Notes of Interest for tutoring and demonstrating are sent to all CMVM students (Spring 2026). The EMS are already considering starter training days to engage more students which will be revisited once the key staff in the EMS are bedded in, likely for 2026 intakes.	Oct 2025
R8	The review team recommend that the University's Future Students Committee should clarify the criteria for online and distance PhD programmes and give	University – Future Students Committee	12 M	University Fees and Scholarships Group (UFSG) is the sub-group of Future Students Committee to which responsibility for tuition fees is delegated. The Convenor responded on the element of the IPR around the fees for the online and distance PhD programmes. The 'criteria'	Complete regarding fees, criteria ongoing

	consideration to the fees for these programmes.			not in scope for UFSG, though if criteria change, the policy for fees may need to respond to this change. In relation to the fees, Court approved at its April 2025 meeting the following statement (Court paper 28). Court is also asked to approve the following proposals for changes to Online Distance Learning taught postgraduate fees: a. Tuition fees for Online PGT programmes should, by default, be charged at different rates from on campus PGT programmes fees b. Tuition fees for home fee status students should be charged at a different rate from those for overseas fee status students by default. UFSG should take steps as part of its examination of how we communicate the fees decisions taken to ensure that this is communicated to all communities within the University that need to receive this information; and continue to review this should it be widely considered that there is a need for the policy to be updated.	
	Please report on steps taken to feedback to student on the review outcomes	In Autumn 2025 the results of the PRES survey were received and reported to College and Doctoral College (Oct 2025). A response to be communicated to the student body including some of the themes above is being prepared through Doctoral College. The results of the IPR and PRES will be discussed at the CMVM Researcher Experience Forum Dec 2025 and College PGR Committee Jan 2025 and key actions points collated in the format suitable for student outreach e.g. video from PGR Dean.			
Year on response only	Any examples of a positive change as a result of the review				