

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2015

Introduction

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is administered by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and runs every two years. The 2015 survey ran in the spring and is the first in which the University has taken part. There were 887 PGR students in the survey population of which 256 responded (29%). The response rate for the sector was 40.4%. Please note that as the survey was self-selecting and had a relatively low response rate, it may not be representative of the PGR population, especially when analysed at school level where the numbers are smaller.

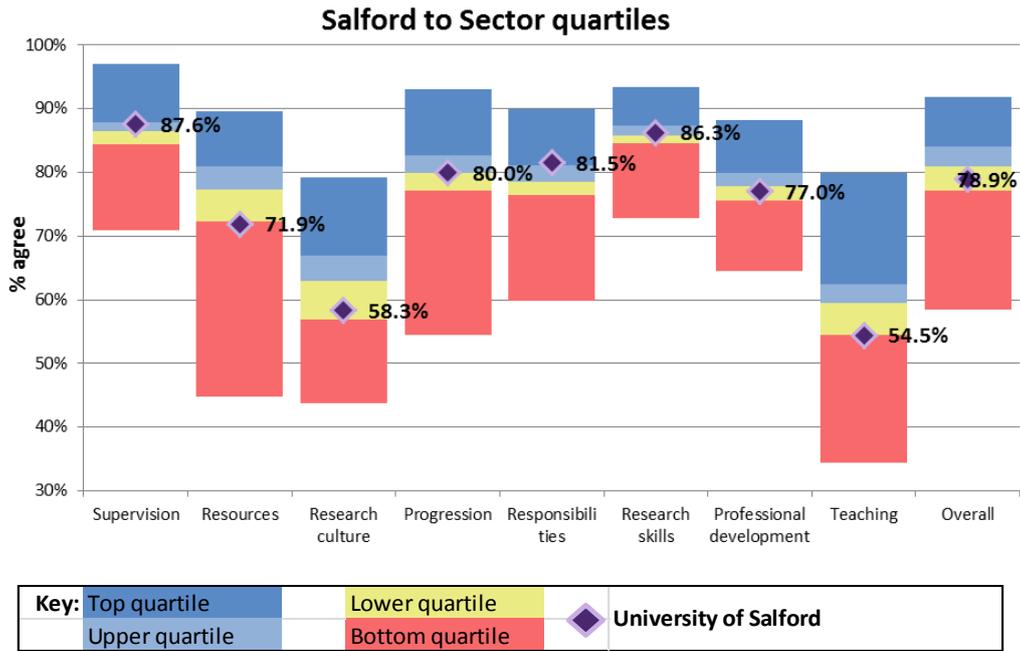
Results for the University and for individual schools are summarised in Appendix 2. Please note that where the number of respondents was less than 10 the numbers have been suppressed. Full response rates across the Schools can be seen in the table below. The PRES questions can be found in Appendix 3 and the verbatim comments in full are in Appendix 4.

School	Population	Completed	Response Rate (%)
Arts & Media	98	23	23.47
Salford Business School	147	62	42.18
Health Sciences	79	24	30.38
NMSW&SS	134	46	34.33
Salford Languages	7	3	42.86
Computing, Science & Engineering	165	39	23.64
Environment & Life Sciences	104	35	33.65
School of the Built Environment	153	24	15.69
Total	887	256	28.86

The results for individual universities participating in the survey are confidential. Therefore we only received our own results and the aggregated results for a number of benchmarking groups. PRES results are not made public and are not used in any external league tables. However we are able to use our own institution's results in marketing and publicity material.

Key Outcomes

- Compared to the rest of the sector, Salford is in either the top or second quartile for Supervision, Progression, Responsibilities and Research Skills. The University falls in either the third or the bottom quartile for the measures of Resources, Research Culture, Professional Development and Support & Guidance for Teaching (please see chart below). In terms of Overall Satisfaction, Salford is in the third quartile with a score of 78.9%, compared with an average of 82% for the sector and 80% for our comparator group.
- In the "Resources" and "Research Culture" categories, the University is 7.5% behind the sector for each and behind the comparator group by 5.9% and 4.5% respectively. In the category of Support & Guidance for Teaching, the University falls 5.1% behind the sector and 4.6% behind the comparator group. Please see Appendix 1 for more detail.



- Across most of the question categories the University outcomes are close to or slightly exceed the sector average.
- In comparison with our University Alliance sub-set comparator group¹, Salford is in the top two quartiles for the measures of Supervision and Responsibilities. For the Responsibilities measure, Salford is only 0.1 of a percentage point away from the top score of this group of institutions. The University falls in the bottom two quartiles for Resources, Research Culture, Progression, Research Skills, Professional Development and Support & Guidance for Teaching, and Overall Satisfaction. Overall Satisfaction for the comparator group is 80% compared to Salford's 78.9%.

Performance highlights

- When broken down by subject, the University's aggregate score across all the measures (not including Overall Satisfaction) is close to both the sector and comparator group averages in most subject areas.
- The University scores an aggregated 82% for Social Studies, ahead of the sector by 9.3% and ahead of the comparator group by 8.9%.
- With an aggregate score of 61%, the University falls short of the sector average for Computer Science by 17.7% and is 19.3% behind the comparator average for this subject.
- At a School level, Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work has the highest aggregated score (83.2%) Computer Science & Engineering has the lowest, with 59.8%. Not including Computer Science & Engineering, the spread of scores for the rest of the schools is not big, with a standard deviation of 4.2.

¹ Coventry, Huddersfield, Hertfordshire, Northumbria, Liverpool John Moores, MMU, Portsmouth, Sheffield Hallam and University of the West of England

Respondent Comments Summary

- A key area of concern is 'Resources', also reflected in the lower % agree outcome for this question group. In particular comments referenced:
 - A lack of online resources is a major issue, specifically the lack of access to many journals. Access to Springerlink has been requested by several respondents.
 - Many respondents express a desire for their own study space and/or better shared space, which is currently viewed as overcrowded.
 - Computing facilities are seen as slow and inadequate.
 - Some respondents have expressed a desire for out-of-hours access to offices.
 - Some respondents are unhappy with the removal of library facilities from Allerton.
- 'Research Culture' is also a key area of concern, and is again reflected in the lower % agree outcome. Overwhelmingly, comments are centred on a desire for more networking and social events. Several respondents report a feeling of isolation.
- Although the majority of comments around supervision are positive, several respondents expressed a desire for more contact and support from the co-supervisor.

A full list of anonymised comments is available and has been provided to the PVC Research, DoPGR and Dean of Students.

Appendix 1: University vs Sector and Comparator Group

Sector comparison

The chart below shows how Salford’s aggregate score across all measures compares with the sector average aggregate score, broken down by subject. Salford is ahead of or close to the sector mean for most subjects. Across all subjects, the university is 1.4% behind the sector.

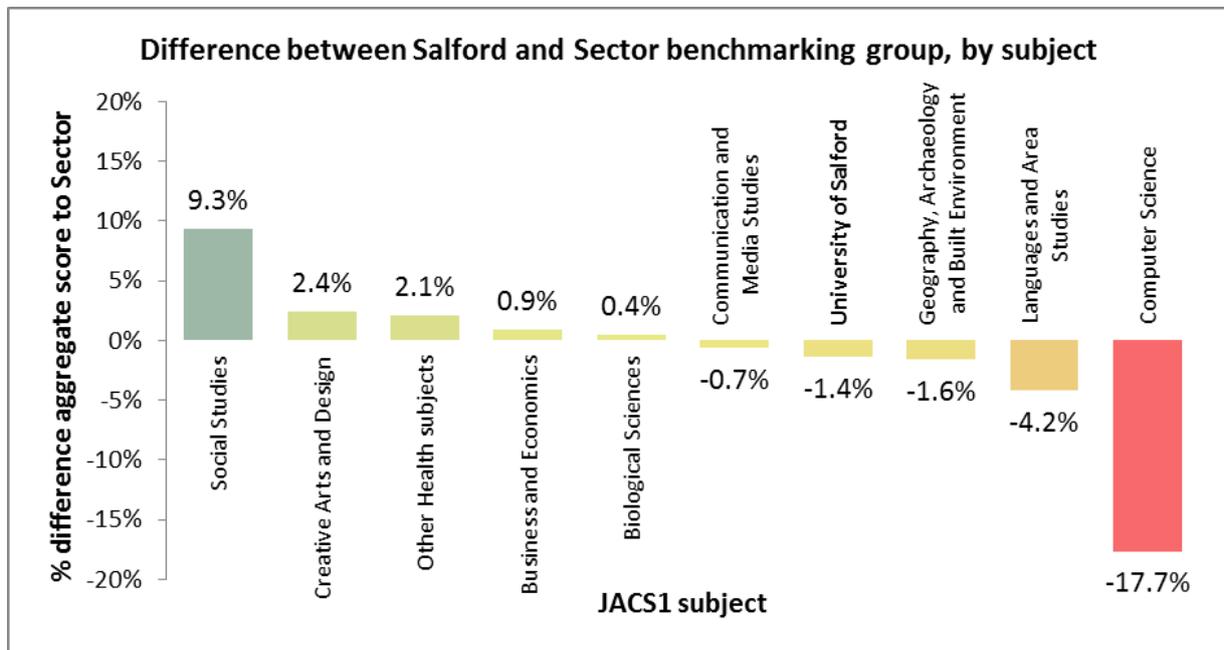


Chart 3: Source: HE Academy - The % difference between Salford and the Sector, by subject.

When comparing Salford’s performance across each measure, it can be seen from the below chart that the University falls close to the sector mean in most areas, although Support & Guidance for Teaching, Resources and Research Culture are behind the sector by 5% or more.

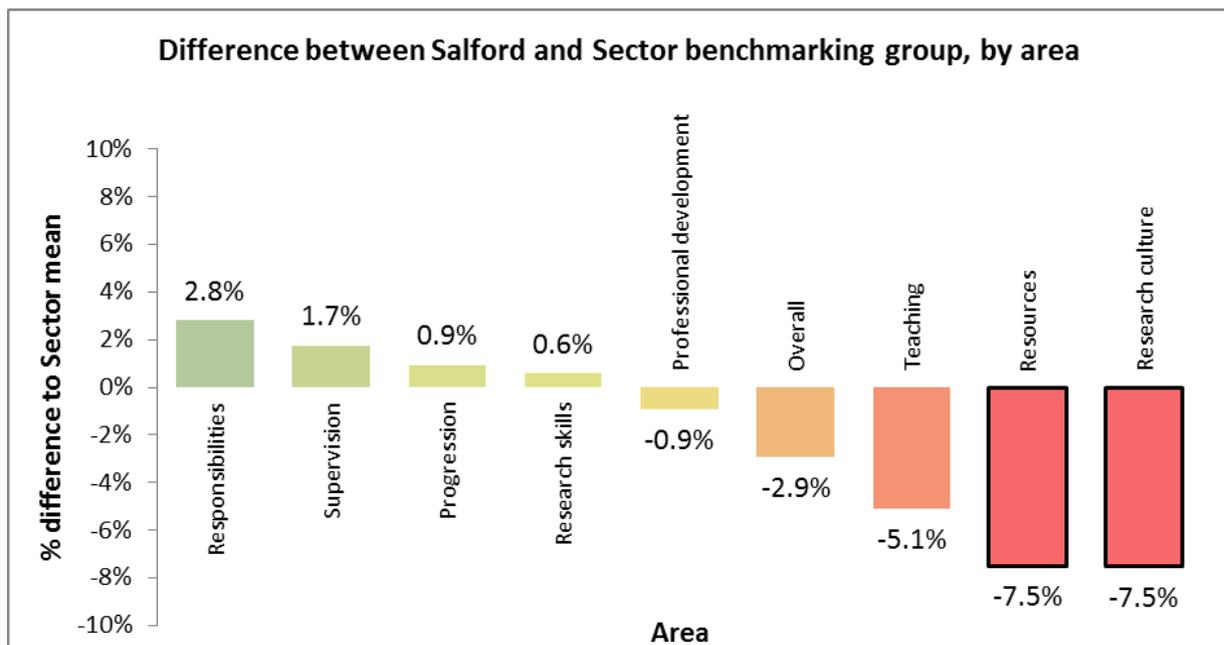


Chart 4: Source: HE Academy - The % difference between Salford and the Sector, by PRES measure.

University Alliance Subset Comparison

In comparison with the University Alliance subset, the difference in aggregate scores shows a similar picture across subjects. Most subjects fall close to the group average, with Salford 8.9% ahead of the comparator group for Social Sciences and 19.3% behind the group average for Computer Science. Across all subjects, Salford is 1.7% behind the comparator group.

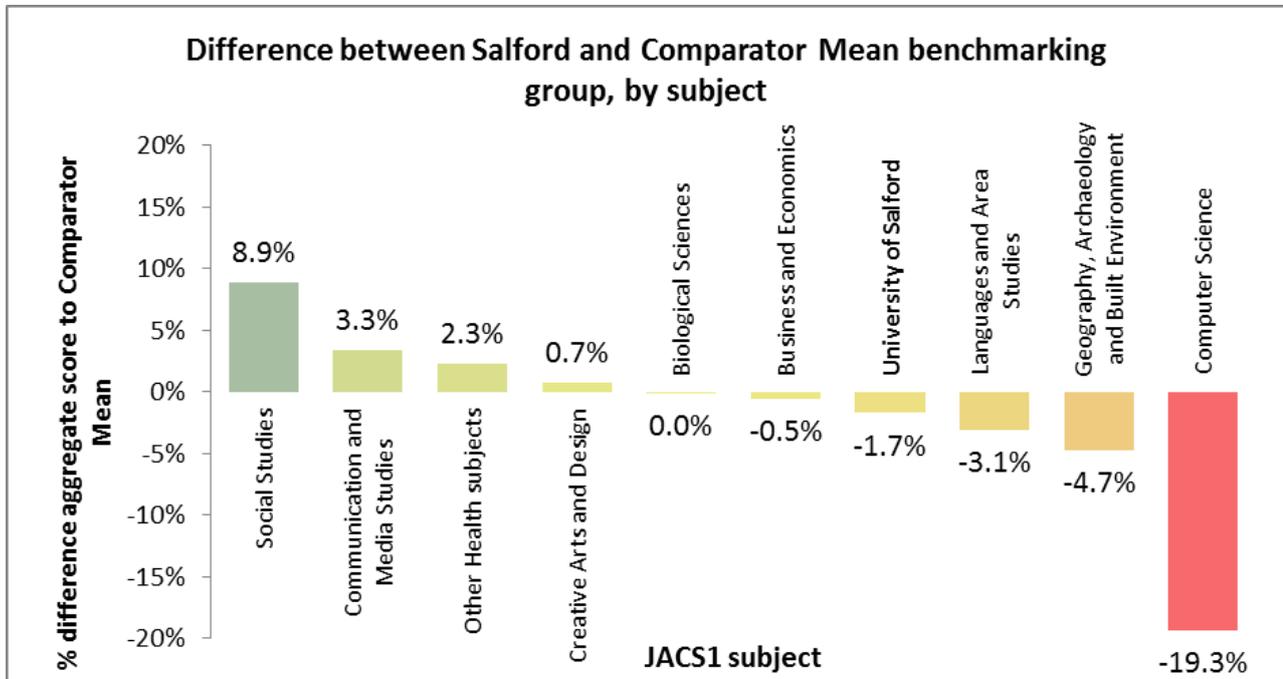


Chart 5: Source: HE Academy - The % difference between Salford and the Comparator Universities, by subject.

Across the measures, the picture is similar to the University's performance against the sector. The University falls close to the comparator average for most measures, but Support & Guidance for Teaching, Resources and Research Culture are under-performing as shown below.

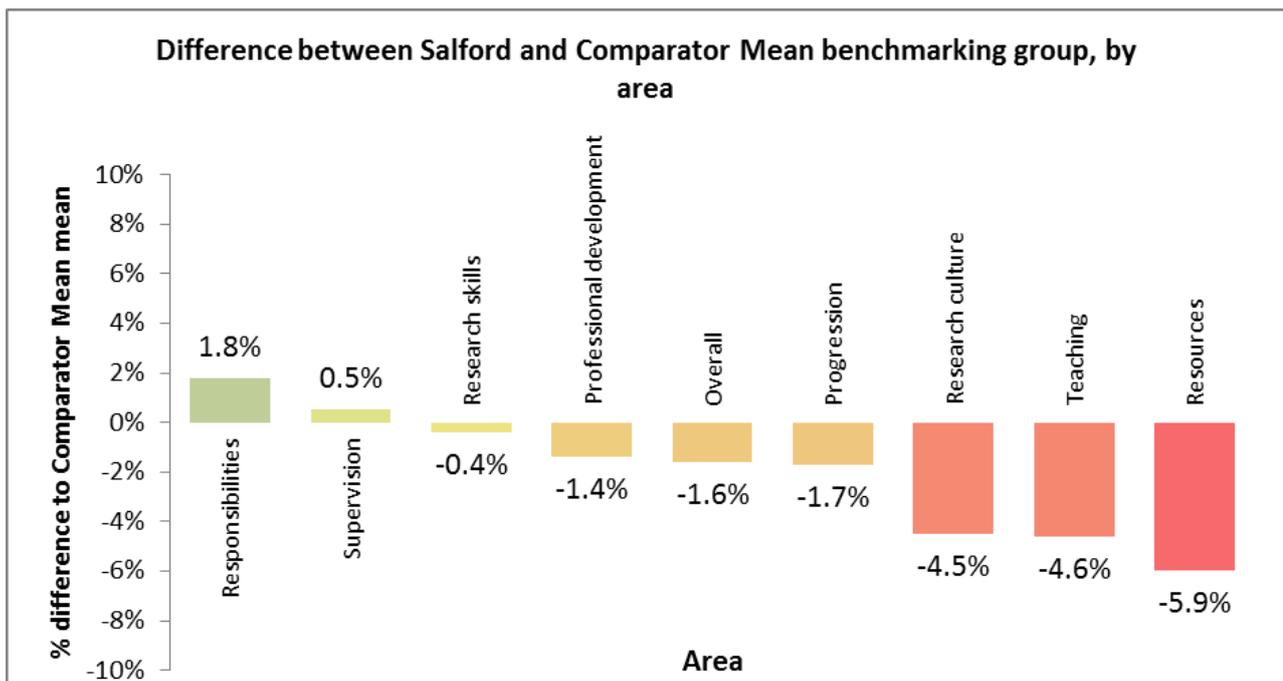


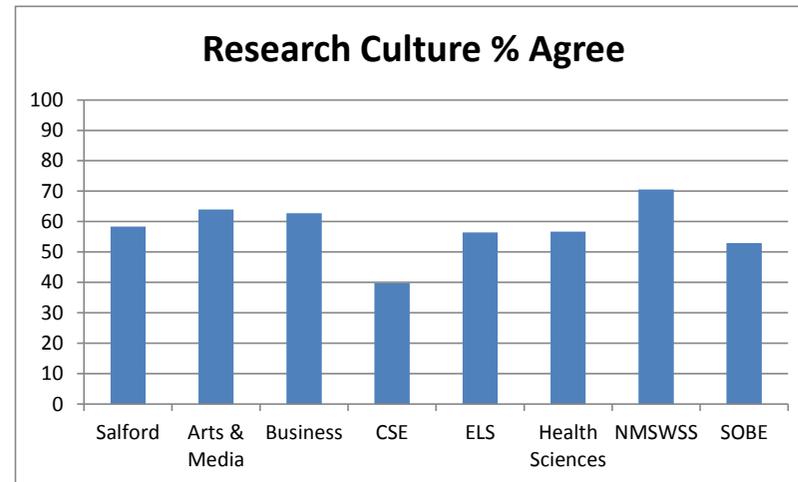
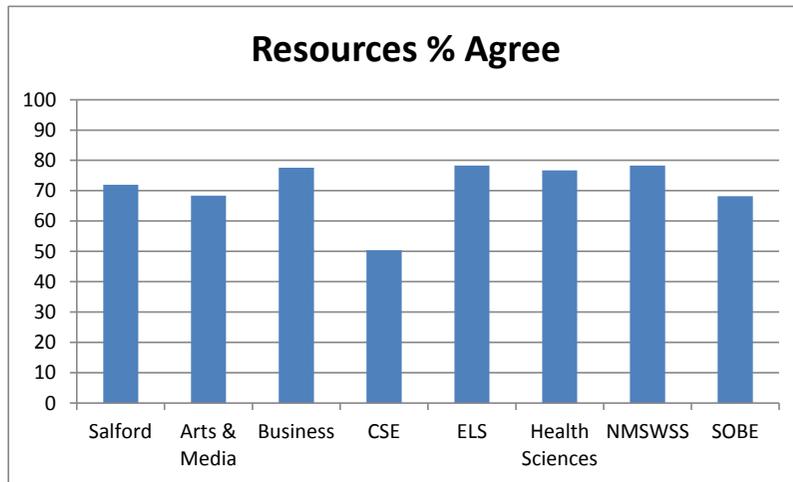
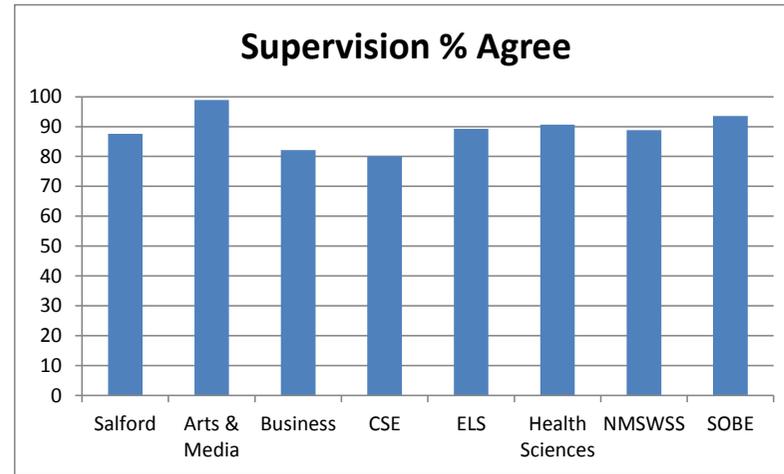
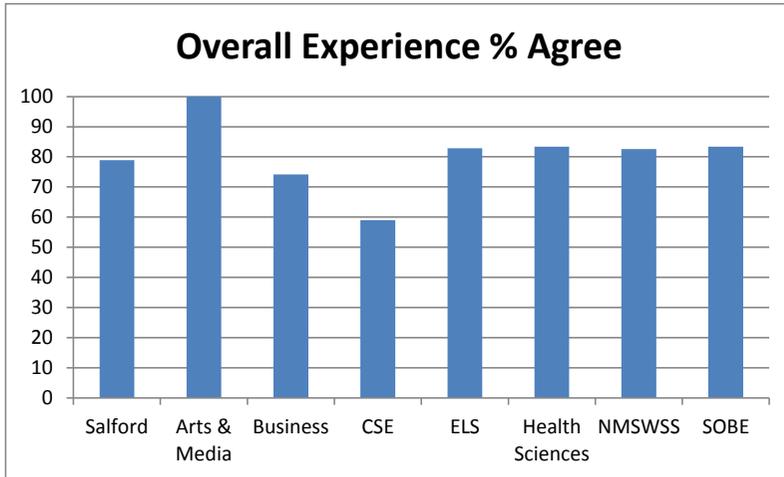
Chart 6: Source: HE Academy - The % difference between Salford and the Comparator Universities, by PRES measure

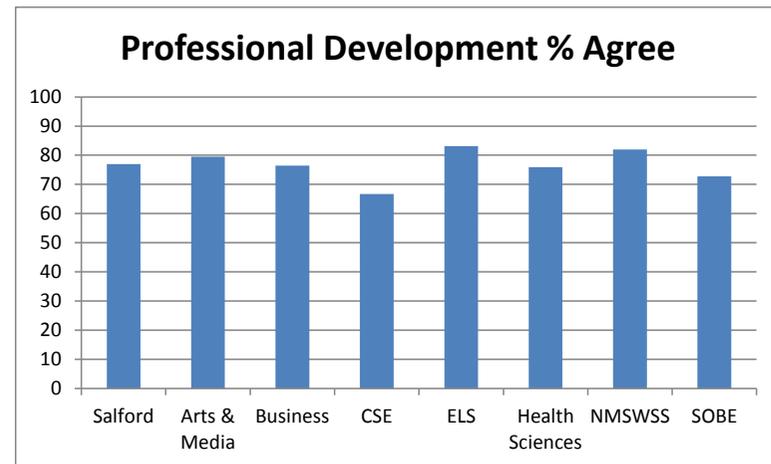
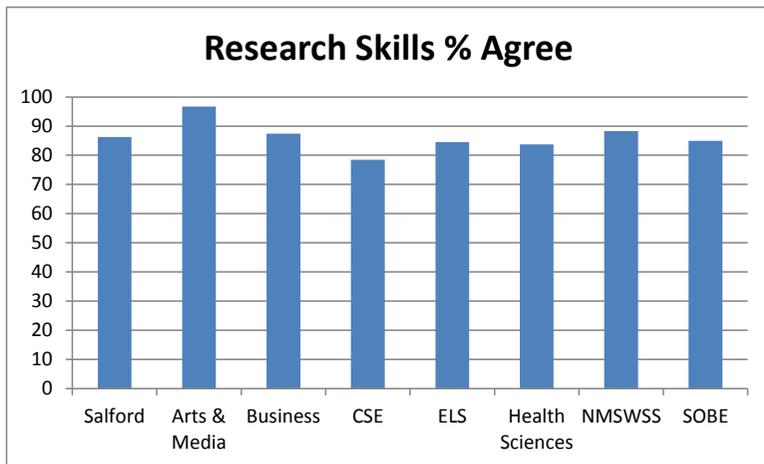
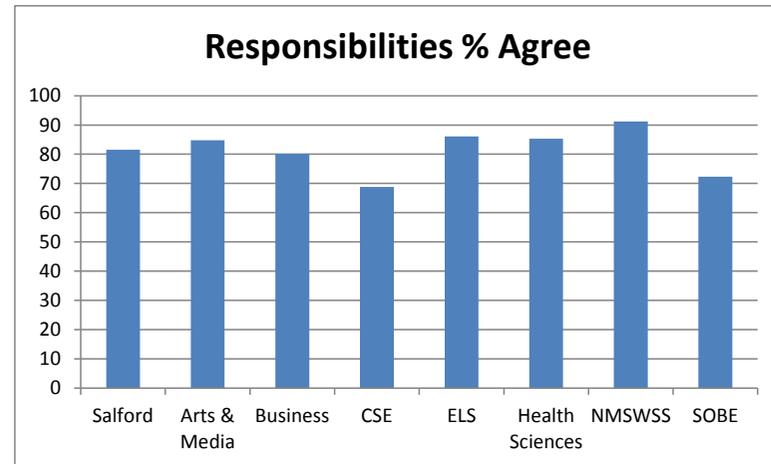
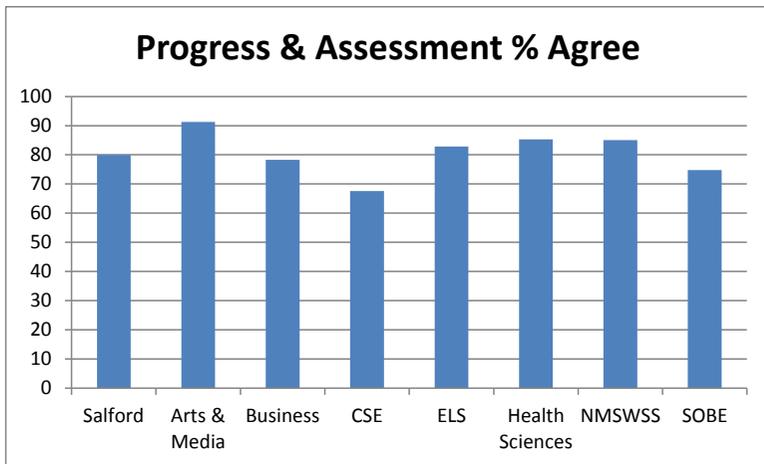
Appendix 2: PRES 2015 - Results by School

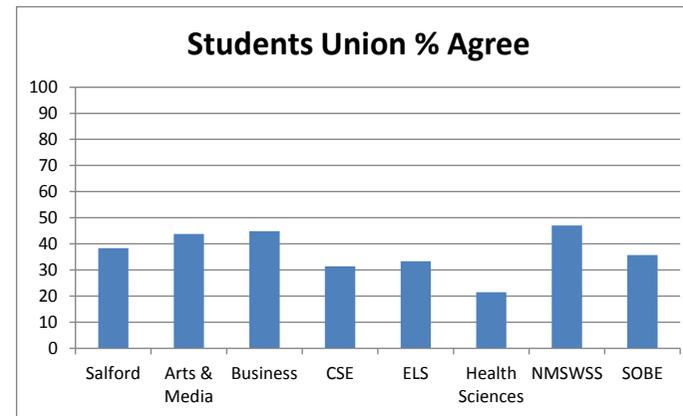
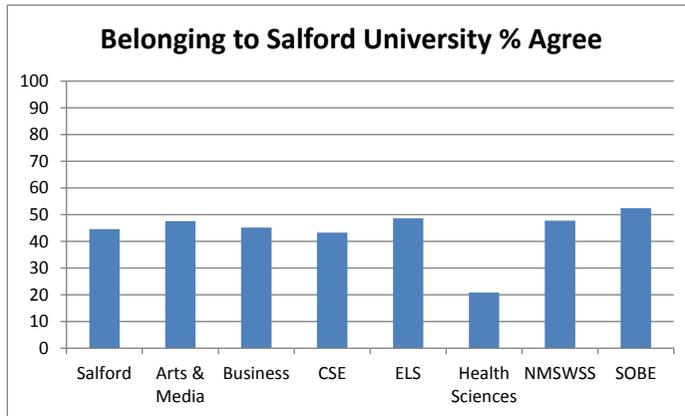
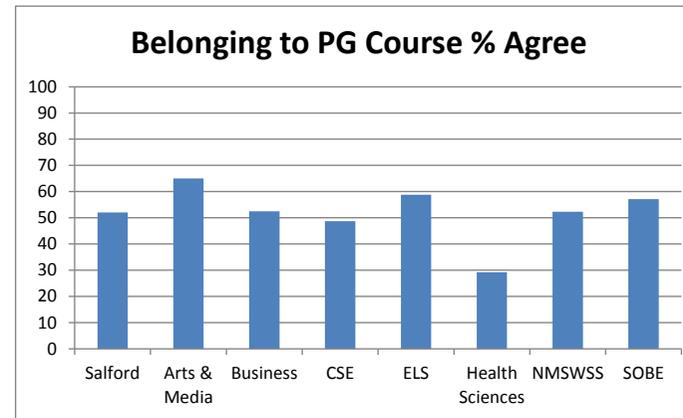
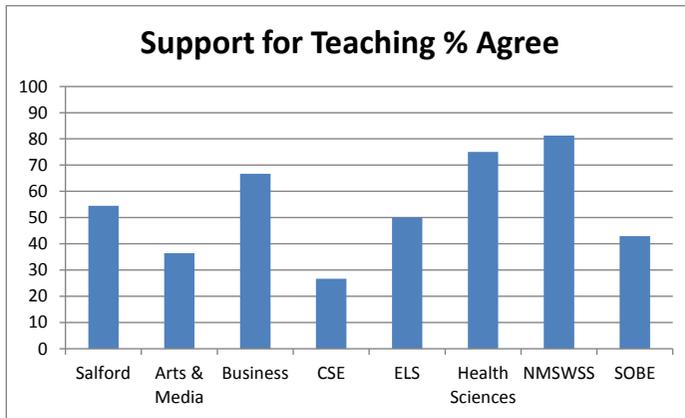
Please note – the figures are suppressed if the number of respondents is 10 or fewer. This particularly affects Salford Languages, which will not appear as a result.

	Supervision	Resources	Research Culture	Progress and Assessment	Responsibilities	Research Skills	Professional Development	Support & Guidance for Teaching	Overall Experience	Belonging to PG Course	Belonging to Salford University	Students Union	Appropriate Support for English Language Needs	Aggregate Score
Salford	88	72	58	80	82	86	77	56	78.9	52	45	38	60	75
Arts & Media	99	68	64	91	85	97	80	40	100	65	48	44		78
Business	82	78	63	78	80	87	76	70	74	52	45	45	60	77
Computing, Science & Environment & Life	80	50	40	68	69	78	67	27	59	49	43	31	46	60
Health Sciences	89	78	56	83	86	85	83	50	83	59	49	33	67	76
Nursing, Midwifery & SOBE	91	77	57	85	85	84	76		83	29	21	21	64	78
	89	78	71	85	91	88	82	87	83	52	48	47	63	84
	94	68	53	75	72	85	73		83	57	52	36	54	70

Table 1: Salford's PRES performance across each question group, shown institutionally and by School







Appendix 3: Questions

Supervision

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about supervision?

- My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research
- I have regular contact with my supervisor/s, appropriate for my needs
- My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities
- My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher
- If you have any additional comments about supervision, please write them in here:

Resources

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about resources?

- I have a suitable working space
- There is adequate provision of computing resources and facilities
- There is adequate provision of library facilities (including physical and online resources)
- I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research
- If you have any additional comments about resources, please write them in here:

Research Culture

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the research culture?
(Note: Where we have used the term 'department' please answer with respect to your centre, school, institute or other unit where you are primarily based or attached for your research).

- My department provides a good seminar programme
- I have frequent opportunities to discuss my research with other research students
- The research ambience in my department or faculty stimulates my work
- I have opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department
- If you have any additional comments about the research culture, please write them in here:

Progress and Assessment

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about induction, progression arrangements and assessment?

- I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme
- I understand the requirements and deadlines for formal monitoring of my progress
- I understand the required standard for my thesis
- The final assessment procedures for my degree are clear to me
- If you have any additional comments about induction, progression arrangements and assessment, please write them in here:

Responsibilities

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about responsibilities?

My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students

- I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student
- I am aware of my supervisors' responsibilities towards me as a research degree student
- Other than my supervisor/s, I know who to approach if I am concerned about any aspect of my degree programme
- If you have any additional comments about feedback mechanisms and student/staff responsibilities, please write them in here:

Research Skills

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about research skills development?

- My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have

developed during my programme

- My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my programme
- My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme
- My understanding of 'research integrity' (e.g. rigour, ethics, transparency, attributing the contribution of others) has developed during my programme
- If you have any additional comments about research skills development please write them in here:

Professional Development

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about professional development?

- My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme
- My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme
- I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme
- I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme
- If you have any additional comments about professional development, please write them in here:

Please indicate whether you have taught (or demonstrated) at your institution during your research degree programme.

- If yes, to what extent do you agree that you have been given appropriate support and guidance for your teaching?

Overall Experience

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your experience?

- Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme
- If you have any additional comments about your experience of your research degree programme, please write them in here. For example, what would further improve your experience?

Belonging

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about belonging?

- I feel a sense of belonging to my Postgraduate Course
- I feel a sense of belonging to the community of the University of Salford

Students' Union

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your Students Union?

- I am satisfied with the Students' Union at my institution?
- I am satisfied with the Students' Union at my institution?

When you started your programme, did you consider yourself to be fluent in English?

- To what extent do you agree or disagree that you have received appropriate support for your English language needs?
- If you have any further comments on the support for your English language needs provided by your institution, please provide them here:

Appendix 4: Verbatim Comments

Arts & Media

SUPERVISION

Even as a part-time PhD student, I have regular and dedicated contact/feedback from my supervisors and feel fully supported and guided.

They are taking care of me very good and also support my everything I need.

The level of support at the University of Salford has surpassed all my expectations. I truly do not feel alone on this journey!

I'm very impressed with the level of support from my supervisors

All my supervisors are very supportive!

RESOURCES

Postgrads research students should have their own personal space for work. this is not fair to just give other course a personal space and some course did not even have their own space. even though salford provides few space, but sometimes, when others came and take our space that is already comfortable for us, it is hard for us to move and to make use of new space. research students need to have own space and his/her own setup in order to write. please, we do need our own space to work. own personal working space until we complete our study. please...

It will help when learning how the physical resources migrating from the Adelphi Library to Clifford Whitworth will be managed. It is a little worrying about the lack of clarity about how the availability of resources might be affected and in what timescale (especially in relation to the all-important summer period).

I am a part time student based at distance from the University

The specialist resources involving with my research have not accessed through in some journals that are important by using the university network.

The removal of library facilities (books) from Allerton was very unhelpful

I had a bad experience with my first office. Noise and a lack of respect for the privacy of my work and workplace.

Not all journals are accessible and they definitely need to upgrade and procure advanced books in specialist areas for PhD students

I work from home therefore do not require any working space/computing facilities

RESEARCH CULTURE

No working space and hardly find own course-mates. with this, no opportunities to discuss my research with other research students.

The opportunities to meet with other PhD students have to do more with my own time (working as a staff member pursuing a PhD) than the opportunities arranged within the school/university. For full-time PhD students, the opportunities are frequent and of quality.

Hoping to be involved in developing a PG self-support forum - regular meetings to share experiences and be critical friends etc

There is a huge gap in communication among PhD students, either for the reasons that they are placed in different buildings, or they work at different times and sheer ignorance! There are not many activities to exchange ideas, collaborative work among peers. On regular intervals there should be some personality development activities such as the one's conducted by the SPORT program for each department.

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

It would be nice to have more examples of 'non-traditional' PhDs available for review (as they are difficult to search/find through SOLAR without previously knowing their titles, topics, etc.)

Research student support officer extremely helpful and knowledgeable, as is both my supervisors

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND STUDENT/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

If one looks at the material available on the university website, the sign-posting is very clear.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

I have received strong support concerning methodologies and ethics both from my supervisors and from departmental seminar discussions.

Despite previous experience and qualifications in research methods, I have been encouraged to access a range of seminars and courses and have found this very helpful

Ongoing process

I believe there should be meetings every fortnight to from the school to discuss an on going ethical/social issues, A case study study discussion perhaps !

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The university have offered very useful training programmes for professional development. However, there has been poor communication in terms of eligibility for accessing HEA accredited courses and as a consequence I have missed an opportunity during my time here.

I've only just started my course, so anticipate development in some of these areas are more likely to happen in the future

SPORT training is very good and helpful, Thanks !

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

Whilst courses are available as a part time student it usually clashes with work commitments

The start dates for language courses are in September, people specially the PhD students join the university at different times, so basically they deprived of the year.

Computing, Science & Engineering

SUPERVISION

Quality of supervision differs greatly between supervisors.

My supervisor is extremely helpful and knowledgeable with regards to my research subject. He is always available to go through my progress and help me, offering to meet more than once a week.

Not much contact with second supervisor

Excellent supervision so far!

My supervisor is the only reason that I am here.

Both my supervisor and co-supervisor are very helpful.

My supervisors are active researchers with different perspectives and I highly value their opinions.

There is a necessity to get fair percentage for the Co-supervisor (at least 30%), in case the supervisor leaves the university or he/ she has a problem with the research student. However, most supervisors in University of Salford give 0% for the Co-supervisor. Another suggestion, all supervisors should provide a plan for their supervision toward any new student, and listing any alternative plan in case the student gets stuck in any point of his/ her research.

Supervisor not available outside the formal meetings even in these final months before phd submission; also was made to submit now because 'it wouldn't be good for the supervisor's career' if we waited any longer, not to mention that at Salford University the final fourth 'writing up' year is not for writing up as you only have the first 6 months as need to have the viva result within the four years - this is absurd

I have just started in the program and I have no experience yet

The regulations explained in the PGR handbook have not been applied. In simple words there is no university policy, instead of that there is a supervisor policy. It is up to the supervisor to decided on when, where, how much he may help you with your research.

I usually meet my supervisor one or two times per month. I am looking to hold a regular weekly meeting with my supervisor.

Absolutely fantastic! I have been supported in an incredible way since the start of my PhD. Both my main and co supervisors have been available and have acted as mentors for me.

I would insist that it is the responsibility of the student to identify training as and when they need it - the supervisor should deliver the appropriate channels to facilitate this training.

I would like the University to adopt a policy of 2 supervisions in a month especially within the first 8 months of commencement of the PhD programme. This is because at this stage, the research needs more frequent guidance to initiate and develop the research study idea

RESOURCES

It would be nice if the engineering PhDs of the School of Computing, Science and Engineering had another room with desks and windows as opposed to the stuffy room we have at the moment on the ground floor next to the structures lab.

Not all Journals available to get papers I would like to read as part of my research.

As a split-site student I had all necessary resources when i was at UoS

I have been provided with an excellent PC dedicated to my own work thanks to the School, for which I am very thankful. Regarding resources, the university library often lets me down with online access to journals.

I am doing a prof doc so don't actually use University resources very often.

My PC taking age for processing data. this may be impediment against the data analysis and get the results for the project, I use my special computing resources for finished most of my work. in addition, the university image window Consumethe most of the PC resources. I think most of the postgraduate students are survived from the same problem and IT, need to do questionnaire to know more about that.

There needs to be some support in the research labs

Purchasing is so slow it hinders effective research and study. If I need a piece of technical equipment (particularly computer related) it can take upto 3 months despite same day approval from a department head. I often buy equipment out of my own money so it will arrive next day.

Reasons for my negative feedback 1-leak of engineering software that are provided freely in other universities such as MATLAB. 2- the computers are very old, slow and incapable of supporting the needs for modern researcher.

IT and library support have been efficient, helpful and friendly.

As a PhD student, I need to get access to my office at the university any time in the week (including weekends); the university can regulate the entrance to researchers building and their offices using their ID cards to provide more security to them and to the building itself. Providing electronic locks for all research students offices (RFID) instead of using the old fashion and easy open locks, which are already abolished in most other universities. I don't have full access to some library's resources (e.g. Springer), and there is not enough licenses for some programs (e.g. OPNET and MATLAB).

Subscription to some more academic journals would be beneficial

Regarding working space, it would be a better idea to give research students a desk and laptop rather than a desktop. This is so that the resources are better utilised since not everyday everyone shows up at the office. With empty desk, students can come with their laptop to do work within university network and sit wherever is empty.

Access to digital library such as Springer is not available.

The university library does not offer access to Springer Link which is important for any computing studies.

The University may have to invest a little more in Simulators. Students are being forced to use GNU distribution. To help those in Computer Networks and Telecommunication, I would recommend the ATDI Telecoms. This would have the effect of giving students an almost on the job experience by the time they leave the University. The students in Data Telecommunications and Networks would benefit immensely from this software and I believe it may be subject of attraction for would-be students.

PCs should be updated more often especially OS

The facilities provided by the university to support the research is very poor, these include: 1. PC: I can't use it for doing my research especially I am in the second year which is considered a crucial year. Please take into your consideration that the current PC specifications are as below: CPU : Intel® Core™ 2 Quad CPU 2.33 GHz, RAM: 2GB, Windows 7 32-bit. Note that the research simulation program that I use it can not setup on it. I am always bringing my laptop to my office; however, my laptop also now is not working properly. So I contacted the ITS to solve my PC issue with Ref: "INC104560" on 20/01/2015. The University IT department viewed the PC and advised me to submit a request with budget code to change the PC. I applied more than one request to change the PC but the request is refused because the budget code could not be provided either by the supervisor, IT or financial department of the school. Just I want to say that I am an International Student and the fees of international students as you know are very high comparing with other students. 2. Research Simulation Software: with regards to my research project, The school does not provide simulation programs that are more suitable and stable in operation. These programs are required a license. In order to provide a simulation program license, the school does not pay for it. Instead, I use open source programs which are not stable in operation, more complex. The second point that I want to mention that, my research requires that a cloud computing infrastructure should be installed in one of the school's laboratories. I do not know when it will be done especially I am in the second half of second year Ph.D study.

More information from subject librarian e.g. emails or blog with important info about resources or open source information

Oftentimes, it is difficult gaining access to protocols and techniques needed for experiments. A technician who can assist if need arises will be okay.

I will appreciate if the University Management can provide more study rooms for PhD students as most other Universities in the country do allocate private study offices. Even the general study rooms offered to the PhD students in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Care in Mary Seacole building are grossly inadequate and with just few computers in there while one of the rooms in Level 1 doesn't even have a single computer installed

In terms of laboratory works, there are needs to have strong link between related departments so that researchers will be having a quick response if they need to work in other labs within the university.

THE RESEARCH CULTURE

We have help from the Geographers and other people within the school who were not involved before. Everyone is keen, friendly and helpful.

I am not sure about seminar programmes, most of them seem to be tailored around "getting a job" or "turning physics into a job" instead of actually about physics. I can discuss my work with any and all of my officemates at any time, which boosts all of our creativity, and my supervisor is very well-connected in the research community around Europe.

Isolated. No idea who is researching what. No postgrad rooms to meet other postgrads in. Social interaction is essential to good research in order to exchange ideas and there is precisely no opportunity here. In two years of PhD I have interacted with exactly 5 other PhD researchers.

I suggest that the university can make a group communities to include most research students with other students from other universities how share the same research work. There might be a cooperation and site-visits to some industries and companies of same field or interest.

It would be great to have a seminar or forum once in three months for students with research in the same area. This is so that we could discuss our work as well as keep updated with each other's work. During this session, we could offer feedback and help to each other.

Although many other researchers are working in similar areas, no information sharing is allowed. There are no workshops or training courses or even a licences for a software to do the research.

More inter disciplinary seminars would be beneficial

There is a big push to instigate a research culture at the start of the year (as far as GTS students are concerned). Perhaps intermediate social events should be implicated to allow the PG community to meet at regular intervals. (I attend 'the burlington society' for Manchester University/MMU PG/PD students who meet on a regular basis, this works really well!).

Unlike my previous University, the research ambience does not stimulate my work. Researchers in research groups other than the one I belong oftentimes would not want to be associated with members of other research groups. Oftentimes, it is difficult to even share ideas with them. Oftentimes, some will say things like "i'm sorry I can't give the protocol I have to you because you are not in my research group" and related comments, even if such protocol is a general protocol. I think this can be overcome by suggesting to supervisors to encourage inter-research group relationships.

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

The induction we had took place about 5 weeks after I had started. We were not emailed about the induction I just found it on the website and told everyone about it. Because the induction took place so long after we had started I had already attended a training course which explained everything that the induction session did so it was a bit pointless. Also we have never been given the opportunity to meet other postgraduate students who started at the same time as us.

I think that the university should give split site students a chance to participate for induction courses, so that to be aware of their responsibility, necessary tasks, an appropriate period to get their guide on the right

path, those are in order not to get in mazes and waste of time. in my case, as am a split site student, once I registered, due to visa expiry there were not time to take any induction courses to; introduce regulations and policy of the university, guides for new students and completing the learning agreement form and to amend the proposal In order to have a clear goal.

I started in the January and registration took a while, as did sorting a desk and a computer.

I would like to receive personalized emails with the content of deadlines and requirements! That would really help me as a split -side student

Mostly not applicable.

I have undertaken an Msc by research and I am now going onto my PhD the progression and assessment for the PhD is explained well but during my Msc I did not have any guidance about what was required for my assessments and progression and this made the process very stressful.

I have noted from talking to more recent PhD starters that inductions seem much improved.

I really enjoyed the induction and the research milestones have been made very clear from the outset (pre-interview). The PGR website is very informative and staff have been supportive.

As opposed to other universities at Salford University the final fourth so-called 'writing up' year is not for writing up as you only have the first 6 months as need to have the viva result within the four years rather than write up and 'just' submit within this time, I feel this is inadequate, negatively affects progress and should be in line with other HE institutions

I would have liked better clarity regarding the write-up period for a PhD. However I'm wanting to finish early anyway as a standard. This comes from the ambitious nature of the existing students within my department - it would be good to pass this on and possibly increase completion percentage.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND STUDENT/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

I know who to approach if I am concerned, but would most likely approach another academic over a member of administrative staff. This is mostly related to my answer to the first question regarding the university's response to feedback, of which I have had very little.

As a GTS there is no forum for our feedback and I attended the PGR student/staff meeting and no progress seems to have been made on any of the point that were brought up

I have responded 'neither agree nor disagree' simply because I assume they value my feedback but I don't really know for sure.

I haven't had any contact with my personal tutor, but I know they are there if I need them.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

I have been working mostly independently and with an expert guide to set up and run our lab here in Salford.

The Sports programme is great for improving on research skills. Some form of statistic's programme for PGR students would be good to have.

There seems to be a moderate to high bias towards discouraging innovation in favour of safe and easy research.

I have responded 'mostly agree' only because I am not yet at the stage where I need to have learnt exactly how to analyse and evaluate my data. I have training coming up though.

Yes to all of the above but this is mainly due to my hard work

I have just started

I wouldn't associate my progression with any form of training, I've adapted to the skills I've needed 'on the job' so to speak after a well taught UG course.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No support available. Self development only.

I already have had opportunity in my career to communicate with diverse audiences and yet I feel that later stages of my research will further develop these skills.

It is preferred to make a regular exhibitions on-campus and calling other professional companies to show their products and make a rigid relationships between them and all interested students.

I'd like to expand my professional development to include more of the university's SPoRT courses, however they seem too uninteresting. Perhaps these should be made mandatory? Or condensed into a day course with refresher courses each year.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS

As international students, I think we need to more discussion cafe from time to time.in addition to some extended courses in speaking and academic writing

I did joined a LEAP Higher class last year where we had the same members for the weekly classes and the instructor taught us according to our pace and problems faced. This means that every week all of us will agree on what we should learn the following week. I think this is a good idea and should be continued because during all those weeks, we developed friendship and trust with each other thus building our confidence in speaking English as well as letting others in the group know our weaknesses.

Environment & Life Sciences

SUPERVISION

The supervisor must know about the resources available for all the research students. For eg., we have just got one micropipette available in our lab.

My supervisor is outstanding. Supportive and critical. I feel very fortunate.

I was allocated a primary supervisor in my first year who was professor in my department. She was a quantitative researcher with little subject knowledge in my area. My project is qualitative and no one in my supervision team had methodological expertise, though they had qualitative experience. I found this very difficult during the first year as my main supervisor did not appear to understand the basic tenants of qualitative research which lead to my first year being less productive than I felt it should be. I was told I couldn't change supervisor. Fortunately my other supervisors were great and my main supervisor has now left.

My first supervisor changed last year. It is difficult for the new supervisor to get into my research fully. I'm not blaming my supervisor, it's just a fact.

They have been very support, helpful and available

RESOURCES

I have a horrible computer in my desk in Newton Building and the university is not allowing me to buy a good laptop for my work with the resource of my bench fee provided by my sponsor.

The resources available for the research is very limited and there is not enough back available. In my case I am in my last year and my instrument broke down just at start of third year and yet not fixed. So I have to share other instrument on timely basis which definitely had affected my productive and same for the other student with whom I share the instruments.

I mostly work from home, as the commute to university is too expensive for a daily basis. When I am in the department I have no allocated space which can make it difficult when trying to integrate with the teaching team. As I am on a teaching studentship this would make it easier. The physical library has some good resources but needs updating. The online resources can be very difficult to access and I prefer real books, I am not able to access all journals I need.

I cannot get access to many of specialized journal articles that I need for my research (looks like our university is not subscribing to the journals that I am interested in). So I have to ask somebody from another university to get the articles through their system.

Greater access to online journals would have been useful.

We could do with greater access to higher impact journals e.g. nature, JACS etc

Lab facilities are too limited to do high quality aquatic research

The journals subscribed by the University and available books is quite limited for my research area.

It took over a year before I had a desk to sit at. The environment is unsuitable to my needs both personal and professional. Necessary software is not available. Necessary equipment is not particularly easy to find or to borrow, if it exists. There is a great disparity in the equipment and provisions made to students (in my group alone), as some would report no problems at all and others are chronically under provided for.

Lack of quiet space e.g. for phone calls or Skype. We are very cramped in and desk space is limited, as well as requests for locked data storage facilities going unmet.

More students have been packed into the same space. Good idea for discussions between students but in practice creates a cramped working area with inadequate space for storage of materials, no room to work efficiently in and a complete lack of secure storage for materials or equipment. Concerns have already been raised about equipment being stolen in a number of areas. Kitchen facilities in some working areas are of poor standard (bordering on unhygienic) and often students are having to band together to purchase standard things such as kettles. This last point could be accepted by PhD students if the kitchen facilities were not frequently overrun by undergraduate or masters students waiting for lectures. Computing resources are ok however the current method of connecting to wireless networks is highly annoying. Nine times out of ten the University does not have access to journals that I require leading me to hope that I can source it by "other" means (outside funders). There is the library service however this takes a lot of time for what may not be a useful journal. I don't have access to specialist resources from this University as there are few students in my field. What is available is currently broken. Thankfully I have access to facilities through external funders

RESEARCH CULTURE

There are no research projects going on in my department at the moment other than Phd studies and small personal collaborative projects. I have brought this up at meetings but no one is research active in the department and the majority of staffs time is with teaching and associated activities.

I cannot attend seminars since it coincides with the teaching that I have to do.

Classes are not made available at times where I can attend due to work this maybe should be considered

My department is quite isolated from others, and the work I do is quite isolated from the department, so there is little opportunity to become involved outside of the department at Salford - I was able to become involved with other universities however. Our group is quite small so our seminar programme is quite unfocused. Few people seem proactive enough to get involved in the research of others

Noone shares my academic background as my discipline and area of study is very different from those around me and there is little capacity to interact with other schools e.g. as a GTS to teach in the subjects that I have experience and knowledge of but are in other schools

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

I am a Postgraduate college representative, so I am aware of the regulations and deadlines the University requires - probably more so than non-rep students

As I am only 6 months in to a 5 year research degree it is difficult to answer these questions

As I have gained a greater understanding of these areas my skills have grown.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Coming from a professional background I feel I already possessed some of these skills, I have developed contacts during my own personal networks and knowledge bases.

This is all through supervisors and external sources, not the University itself.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

No comments.

Health Sciences

SUPERVISION

The supervision was to high extent satisfactory to me

A number of additional contacts have been suggested by my supervisory team from both within and outside of the school - shows clear and effective interdisciplinary approach to developing PGR's.

My first supervisor has gone above and beyond in all aspects.

One supervisor has no subject knowledge, one has quite a bit

Main supervisor fine, have met my second supervisor once in 2 1/2 years!

Three way supervision between myself and two supervisors was very helpful- both supportive and challenging.

RESOURCES

I hope that the university broaden the subscription of electronic resources compared with the available now.

There could be a wider range of book and online journal available, the charge of £2.50 each time you do a interlibrary loan is expensive.

There is plenty of access to computers and a reasonable selection of books in the library (it's fantastic that the library will order books on request if they're not already available). The access to online journals can be a little disappointing though.

As I am only a part time student i never seem to be able to find any spare computers available in either of the postgraduate rooms. i understand that the universities priorities are for full time students but surely there must be a way to allow spare computers if I'm off from work and would like to work at uni instead of home, other than attempting to find a computer within the libraries.

The PGR spaces are not great. The room in Maxwell is antiquated (the computers are not fit for purpose) and the facilities are terrible. The room in Adelphi is better but there's no windows and little space (I understand this building will be decommissioned soon too, so we'll lose this room). The lockers in both rooms aren't

worth bothering with - too small to store anything you might not want to carry to and from campus. The libraries are fine, but not extensive.

Don't always have access to journals, especially latest year

I could complain about the slow computers etc, but it's an annoyance rather than anything serious. However, not being able to access articles from the last 12 months in some important journals (at least, important to my area of study) is a fairly regular difficulty. If we are supposed to be doing 'cutting edge' research, surely we need to be able to be right up to date with the research that is coming out? I understand there are budgets and journal subscriptions rates are scandalous, but it has had an impact on my work - I can sometimes get the articles eventually via other routes, but wastes a lot of time and does not always work.

The library move to Clifford Whitworth was inconvenient, adding time to my visits to the site as a distance learner. The library was more accessible when at the Allerton Building, on the site where I met my supervisors and attended workshops.

RESEARCH CULTURE

Would be nice to see more qualitative seminar programmes around the school

Although there are plenty of extra course and material available which could aid me in my PhD, the vast majority seem to be focused around people that are free during the mornings and afternoons. Although I have attended some extra classes in the evening I sometimes feel as though I am left out from the community because I can not come to the vast majority of the extra classes which are usually only available in the morning and afternoon. Would it not be possible to have certain classes run two times so all PhD students have the opportunity to come, 1 class in the morning/afternoon and 1 in the evening.

I have only met four other PhD students while at Salford. Events never seemed geared towards us making connections, or presenting our research. Having said this, this is my first year and opportunities may present themselves later.

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

The induction program was long but the content was not really interesting

The administration aspects of the programme were often unclear.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND STUDENT/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Apart from my supervisors and *****, I have not met any of the Postgrad team at Salford.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

I have definitely developed as an academic during my time at Salford.

I am just beginning so some things I can see are to develop

Not always as a result of Salford; I have used a network of resources to help with my analysis in particular (lack of skills at Salford to understand the complexity needed)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No comments.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

No comments.

Nursing, Midwifery, Social Work & Social Sciences

SUPERVISION

My supervisor is not interested in my topic

There seems to be very different approaches by different supervisors - some provide exact week by week goals and seems to lead the project very closely, others provide limited guidance and so it is much more up to the student. Some consistency might be good so that students feel they are being given a similar level of help and therefore not being left behind/neglected. This is obviously supervisor dependent, but consistency on guidance would be good - it is after all the students project and it seems some supervisors are much more influential/controlling.

I like my supervisor

He is so supportive and helpful

***** has been excellent - reliable, knowledgeable and provides good advice.

He is cooperative and supportive

My supervisor my challenges as an international students.

Excellent supervision and direction.

I have never receive any written feedback from my supervisor. There is no evidence that he reads my work prior our meetings. Am utterly disappointed.

I fell that I should be joined to some workshops and/or conferences about my field of study in or outside the UK. This is my second year without any kind of such training!

The co-supervisor should do their role in the supervision. If the university doesn't have supervisor in the student's field. They can cooperate with other universities and even via video conference if not possible in person.

My primary supervisor changed 2 years into my PhD, therefore these comments are relevant to my current supervisor, who has been excellent

RESOURCES

there is no private office for the PHD students

The office is often over-crowded and noisy - it's a very distracting environment. The computer is old and boots and operates very slowly. Programmes very often stop responding which is incredibly frustrating. I called ITS to look at it but the problems have not been resolved.

Certain journals have the University listed as having access, but then when you look for individual articles access isn't available.

There are issues with Journal access and the limited/no access to some journals

Specialist resources would ideally include historical research librarians who could read old mss. Computing in our university is mainly PC's although lots of students use Macs off campus

Part-time students have not been provided with personal laptop computers to use. I think it will go a long way to help if they are treated the same way in this respect just as the full time students. We are all involved in the experiential teaching and learning process with the same learning outcomes.

The working space in the Mary seacole is sufficient, however, given there are no open windows and central heater sometimes it is hard to find comfortable temperature

I find it very difficult to access the library at Clifford Whitworth. It was much easier when sited in the Allerton building.

I utilise Trust library facilities and university online library. I work from home or in the Trust library out of convenience.

I work from home mostly so my working space tends to be my own office. I use the post grad facilities very rarely

Excellent facilities!

We don't have full access for some databases such as Springer link and Proquest

I need a dedicated table to work on my research.

but the working space not that much suitable for Phd students, i mean we need more quite area to focus during writing and reading , also we need printer in each room

Probation Journal not available via SOLAR.

RESEARCH CULTURE

Research culture definitely needs to develop. I have had opportunities to become involved in the wider work of the School but these have been fortuitous rather than there being a mechanism for this to happen. I suggested that a 'PGR opportunities' page could be added to Blackboard but did not receive a response to the email.

After one whole year I have started to get to know three other PhD students. This is not for want of trying....

As I am on the Prof Doctorate I enjoyed the 2 years with the group but very difficult to keep that communication in 3 research years so becomes a stark contrast and I feel has led to a lot of my fellow students not continuing

Due to working full time and nearing the end of the doctorate it is difficult to fully embrace meeting peers on the programme, which is a shame as the group has lost touch.

As a part time student with a full time job (member of academic staff), some aspects of being immersed in post grad student life is extremely difficult. There is limited understanding and support from colleagues who know you are undertaking PhD. PhD unfortunately has to be prioritised after a very heavy workload which does not facilitate on time completion.

Although the department provides research training, but the quality and intensity of the training are poor. Far below my expectations. The trainings are grossly inadequate.

After more than 15 months of my research, I do not joined to any external workshop or conference! The university doesn't do any role in motivating student to contribute or attend conferences or workshops. Which will make the researcher more interactive with other researchers from different universities.

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

The induction seems to be much more focused on Nursing, however it is the school of health sciences and I feel the induction could be more general and therefore more applicable to other course in the school

Unfortunately, I did not realise about the formal meetings that I should have had with the University of Salford. I have been in regular touch with my supervisor and assumed that as long as we were meeting regularly and progressing, this would be satisfactory. I have not submitted anything formal to the university until a recent meeting, where this was highlighted and the issue rectified.

Now as I am at the end of Prof Doc I understand but when I came to the interim assessment there was no guidance provided as to what was expected or any discussion about this requirement until shortly before the interim was due.

The induction to my programme was 5 years ago. I'm afraid I can't recall the details of what took place.

We should have a very clear induction session to explain that. And that event should conduct by professional staff.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND STUDENT/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Unfortunately I don't feel that PG students are well-regarded by the institution on the whole. This attitude is made evident by late bursary payments, poor computing and office facilities, lack of communication and lack of access to PGCAP training.

Personel changed roles quite a lot during the Prof Doc so not always clear who to contact also problems with one supervisor who didnt have a good understanding of the university processes and expectations

We should have a clear document states the responsibilities of both the researcher and the supervisor. And that should be monitored by the university.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

I depend on myself of acquiring this knowledge. The university doesn't have any oriented sessions or workshop to help researchers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Part time in the second year -so all these are only beginning to take shape at present

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

The style of the survey is confusing. moving from agree to disagree position at the start / end is not userfriendly and I am left hoping I have not scored incorrectly. I have had one of the best experience and my school and supervisor have been fantastic in providing support and guidance.

Excessive and Exclusive english courses for Phd students only

Salford Business School

SUPERVISION

The University should provide a more supportive platform in situations where supervisors leave the University and there is a need for a change. The university should do more to help as a scaffold and not just leave the students to figure out things themselves. In this instance the university can do more.

Supervision has been incredible in terms of knowledge, support and encouragement provided - first rate and excellent.

My first supervisor is engaged with my research, supportive and constructive. He provides extremely helpful feedback in a way that is easy for me to understand. However, his workload appears to be too high and I therefore find it hard to get time in his diary.

Albeit providing guidance in the area of research, I had some challenging times emotionally having gone through two tragic death of individuals very close to me. The support from my supervisor was particularly overwhelming and did get me back to work early.

Very happy with supervision

My supervisors have excellent contacts at other research institutions, research facilities and industry.

Very poor supervision throughout - supervisors generally just not interested

I can sometimes feel intimidated by my supervisor and the workload. I am unsure whether the quantity of work expected of me by my supervisor is more than usual. It would be good to have an understanding of how much work is expected as I get the impression that some of my colleagues do not have as large a workload. I don't feel my supervisor helps when I am struggling like others seem to.

I'm very satisfied with my supervisor, its not just about his knowledge, but I feel that I can go to him if I have any problem at university, unlike my personal tutor!

I feel my supervisor personally has an interest in my professional and university life, to support all aspects of my life

My supervisor has made me feel like I can contact him at anytime and know he will respond as soon as he can.

Throughout my undergraduate and now during my postgraduate studies at the University of Salford my supervisors/lecturers have always supported and encouraged my work. They have gone out their way to make sure things needed to carry out my project are available and have provided endless guidance and constructive criticism.

I enjoy excellent support from my supervisors. They are there for me when I need them. They are wonderful professionals and academics.

Always available when needed Constructive and added-value guideline normally provided

Just started my research this January. Just been in touch twice with my supervisor!

My supervisors have been excellent. They have gone above and beyond what I would have expected and I have no issues at all.

I had very little contact with my supervisor during the first year and I take full responsibility for this. However, I have had great difficulty contacting him since Christmas by telephone or email. I had no support during registration for my second year. I don't know for sure if my learning agreement has been signed and I have left two voice messages in the last fortnight which remain unanswered.

Lack of development as an academic and with a view to academic careers is an issue.

I think supervisors do not have enough time in this school because they are over engaged.

My supervisors have been great, very approachable and supportive. I know I've been very lucky as many of my peers have a much harder time with their supervisors.

My supervisor always gives me his best. He is very passionate about his student's progress. I am grateful to get a supervisor as such.

I meet my supervisor every week and I think it is really good

I hope Salford business school have more supervisor like ***** who actually work for the sake of his students.

RESOURCES

In terms of the specialist resources, efforts can be made to enable access to such resources.

I am a member of staff, so I have got additional access to computing resources, but my view is that the facilities are perfectly adequate.

Really appreciate if the PGR is given access to enter the premise / workstation during weekend as sometime there is urgency to use workstation.

The subscription level for Datastream is not full and the University do not subscribe to Bloomberg resources which is necessary for research in Economics, Finance and Accounting

The biggest problem with resources for me is the lack of 24/7 IT support. For students who work in the evenings or weekends, the lack of IT support is a huge problem. I have had issues with Blackboard that are not resolved for 3 days, and then the resolution is entirely unhelpful. The University must upgrade their IT support for students as a matter of urgency.

Happy with the general computing facilities, however require the use of a server for large data analysis so struggling until this is up and running and it was initially supposed to be ready by October so behind with my work

ITS policy is almost a complete obstruction to research in the university. I do lab based research but we have no support for maintenance or the equipment or the facilities (no technicians). I waste an enormous amount of my time dealing with sourcing and purchasing supplies / maintenance of equipment and facilities. (This isn't the job of a research student in any other university I've come across) The library recently disposed of loads of the old books because they hadn't been checked out for a number of years. Many of these were valuable in both information and in cost. The fact that they hadn't been checked out doesn't mean that they weren't taken off the shelves in the library itself. AND - the basic function of the library is to hold books that student's won't want to / be able to buy a copy of themselves. The sorts of books that occasionally a research student needs to find. These are inherently the sorts of rare and expensive books that were thrown out due to this policy. A good research library specifically aims to hold books that are old, rare and not taken out very often.

Resources sought from other institutions as relevant resources not available via Salford

Some important and useful resources are not open access and this is a big problem because it is not cheap. I also suffering when I want to read and access the resources from my home I mean when I'm out of the Univ. campus.

The university does not provide matlab for researchers, which a large number of us require. We have been provided with new computers, however they have been installed with 32 bit for some reason. We are provided with very minimal storage which is backed up by the university and are unable to use outlook on our computers, only the online version which does not allow Calendar sharing. Additionally I do not have access to a large number of key papers and am having to access these through my previous university which does not specialise in my area, however has better access to journals than salford which does specialise. My building closes on the dot at 7pm, as I am involved in a lot of university extracurricular activities which begin

at 8pm I would be keen to keep working later yet am unable to as some of the software I have installed on my office computer is not available elsewhere. On a number of occasions I have been close to losing work in the rush to get out whilst halfway through running matlab codes, and the fact that I have unfinished work throws the balance for the next mornings work. The flexibility to stay another 10 minutes would make my work life a lot less stressful. At my previous university you were free to complete work before you left for the evening.

Shifting from permanent desks to hot desks thing gave me the feeling of instability ..

Faulty PC in office - unable to work - IT services have not managed to fix the problem on several attempts and refuse to replace the PC

The university laptop provided was a great help to me

I would like to see the university having greater access to newspapers as the Nexus business system for newspapers only allows for text and not photographs.

Access to more journals, particularly scientific journals is needed. The limited access we have definitely has an effect the amount of research that can be carried out.

Everything is excellent-good facilities BUT the toilets in the main library can be clean better. Cleaning a toilet is not just pouring water, it is using chemicals and brushing to get the dirt off. This is the area I am disappointed in. I know these are public toilets but still they can be cleaned better than what we have at the moment.

Some students do not understand that the working space should be quiet and only used for their research. Phones ringing and talking loudly are main issues

- I am in a big post graduate office (13 students) with a lot of different nationalities (which is positive), unfortunately common rules (mobile phone on silent, silent speaking with other student) is not respected although after an official email to all of us students to respect the working space as a quiet area. It would be quite helpful if this in a specific form can be told to every starting PhD student as well as signs or other to remind students that this is a study place not a social meeting space. - Really slow computer, if I need to run a programming tool it takes a lot of time - Some journals are not available or are only available for a specific years (e.g., Journal of electromyography and kinesiology only from year 1991 available)

All the facilities are adequate for my research. However, there is software which would be very useful for processing pressure data (for EMed and Pedar systems) that my colleagues and I would greatly benefit from. However the department doesn't have the funds for it and it's difficult to process the data without knowing MatLab coding - I have to get other students and staff to write me codes which is not convenient. Since we have the pressure systems, it would make sense for the department to purchase the software to accompany it.

Support from Library staff has been very good, but access to the online resources has not been satisfactory due to technical issues with passwords and login details.

If there is a pantry for PhD student (i.e., those who currently have their own working place in room assigned), this would be better since some of us bring our own lunch box and need to reheat, etc.

I don't have a desk I can use at university anymore. When I did use a shared office it wasn't ideal - disruption from other researchers and unreliable IT facilities.

If I need to order a specific book which is important for my research, the library orders it for us. which is fantastic. It will be great if the same can be done for journal articles as we need to pay £2.50 per article, if the library did not store the article. As the university holds the 3rd ranking in UK for accounting and finance. The university should put aside some resources towards improving its accounting and finance databases. This will help increase quality publications and improve the ranking of the university further. Thank you

The computer is really bad. I am using 2.4 GHz dual core with only 2 GB of ram. Even my old laptop that I bought in 2010 is much more better than the computer I used for working.

I started my PhD in July 2011, and then year by year Salford Business school decided to reduce the quality and quantity of facilities for the International PhD students. For example Top up printer credit was reduced from £200 to £100. and we had to go and ask for it, whereas it used to be an automatic top up every year. gradually they moved us from room *** where we had our own desk and computer to hot desking area and now we are given a low quality room in *** where most computers are slow!

RESEARCH CULTURE

As a member of staff, I perhaps have an advantage in my access to other staff and departments. The seminar programme has been incredibly useful and well thought out. The delivery is engaging, interesting and highly useful. Beyond these, there perhaps could be more opportunities for engagement with other students, but things like SPARC and the symposium should provide these.

While Salford Business School provides a more structured and comprehensive PhD seminar programme than the other Schools at the University, it still falls short of what is offered at the higher ranked Business Schools. There is only one annual event to present our research to other SBS PhD students, and one other University-wide PhD conference. Membership of the NARTI programme and the opportunity to attend Manchester-wide training events is useful. The training and research events on offer at Salford falls far short of what is offered at, for example, the University of Manchester.

The NARTI research network which Salford PGR subscribed to provides robust environment for researchers to network and gain valuable insights into their research work.

I actually feel quite isolated in my research at the university. And I'm in one of the larger research groups. I don't feel that the university values its research students (or research programmes). It certainly doesn't do anywhere near enough to support them. I have no idea who else is doing research in the university. I know several other PhD students at Salford who each have a vague idea about the work of the others in their office but are completely isolated beyond that. When people from our department have given talks at the internal conference (SPARC) only other members of our department have attended, making it almost completely pointless.

There are formal groups to attend to meet other students and there is the postgraduate room however nobody is ever in the room that has no PC's so it can feel a bit empty

I have not done a huge amount of networking with other researchers outside of the University in the past few years. Once, I have finished my PhD studies, I would like the opportunity to present my work at a scientific conference.

There is no research community amongst students and I am not included within the 'grown ups' research community of my subject area.

We generally have no idea what other researchers are working on and don't have any opportunities to collaborate.

It would be great if we can have a good balance of quantitative and qualitative research seminars. NARTI and SPARK conference are all important learning curves and getting this opportunity is great. The university is doing its utmost best to create a research ambience through seminars, conference, supervision support, grant support etc which is good. The inclusion of more quantitative databases will be great.

I think the best research culture is the one which tries to give justice to different topics and see the value and insight in each and every PhD student research. It encourage participation of PhD students in running projects so that they could be part of a bigger picture. Lack of budget has always been a nice excuse to exclude majority of invaluable studies! a good research culture is the one which is less political!

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

I received no induction into my research degree programme, beyond an initial meeting with my supervisor and a University-wide 2-hour induction, which consisted of short, superficial introductions from the Library and other departments. It was left up to me to book myself onto Library and other training. The required standard for my thesis as expected by my supervisor is clear, although other supervisors take a different approach and I dread my supervisor leaving, and being given a different supervisor. Other students who have changed supervisor have had to significantly re-write their work, which implies that SBS does not apply a consistent standard for the PhD thesis.

Mostly understand however at the beginning of my course so not looked into it too deeply yet

Each progression point seems to involve a mountain of almost completely pointless paperwork that only exists due to a "one size fits all departments" attitude towards research. Dates for progression points (and the guidance for what is required) are vague. The paperwork that is supposed to explain things appears to be the result of years of additions and alterations to an original set of documents that have been designed to cover all types of research. I understand what I need to submit as my 'thesis' but I'm completely expecting to be bombarded with requests for apparently pointless (and previously unmentioned) secondary paperwork when I get to that point.

Staff appear to not understand the University procedures, protocol or levels expected

I found the induction overly long and simplified, it did not go into the detail that I would have liked and was mostly common sense. Yet at the same time it seemed some other researchers didn't understand it. I would have expected that for the large majority of students who have gained university funding the content was fairly common sense. Yet we found that when it actually came to filling in things like the learning agreement we would have liked more support than was provided in the sport lectures.

I like the idea of every year assessment .. helps to set my timeframe

I think the forms for monitoring attendance are a bit of a waste of time which I could be spending on my research. However, I do understand why the university requires me to do it to cover themselves from complaints about not having enough time with the supervisor.

Although there was an induction, we were not all notified about it and therefore I missed it. Better communication would be appreciated particularly at the beginning of the PhD. The first few weeks are crucial for settling down and getting used to the nature of a PhD.

A lot of forms to fill out in general. Also for trips related to the study. Can be quite time consuming and irritating.

Mainly have had to rely on information passed on the grapevine via other students.

The induction programme should encourage 3rd year students to give their views and opinions, where they can guide new students better in terms of giving their views when questions are being asked and also when it comes to sharing their decisions and thought patterns as they are more matured with the process and the goal.

Requirements for submission of a thesis, binding etc is on the website. I wish it could be written down in a simple way, A, B, C, D.....I wish we do not have to do another research to understand what are the requirements

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND STUDENT/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Salford Business School has a caring and conscientious leader of *** programmes: *****, who works extremely hard to encourage and respond to feedback. He is also extremely approachable if students wish to contact him with concerns about the degree programme. The University more widely seems to have little interest in their PhD students, or their concerns with their study programme.

I kind of know who to speak to when I have issues but there's a dizzying array of people that have responsibility for different things. It's not at all obvious who should be responsible for a lot of things (purchasing is a minefield!). It often seems to require the involvement of 10 people to complete a task that could easily be done by one.

I really don't know what are the exact responsibilities of my supervisors towards me, I wish if you can send it to me to go through it, and I also don't know if I have any concern for whom I should approach, these two points very important to me and I hope you can explain to me.

I don't believe there is any real recourse if you don't get adequate supervision.

Providing a personal tutor to each student is great thinking. Handling and defusing situations when they are reported by students is not easy. Therefore, providing staff with processes on handling these situations and communicating the process to students will be great.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

More training on the use of theory in research will be appreciated

Applying for Approved Researcher status has also improved my understanding of research integrity.

I feel that the general atmosphere around research at Salford doesn't encourage creativity or independent thinking.

All of the above is because of my supervisor

I am still in my early stages so have not yet developed some of these skills further however I know that this will come and am not concerned.

As I am in my first year all my answers are based around my limited experience so far.

Although my skills and confidence to carry out research is definitely improving throughout the course, the lack of funding and equipment is hindering the research.

The SPoRT training programme is very good, but could be better attended and improved (i.e. more on research methodologies).

As I am still in my first year, I am unable to answer the questions above to my best ability. I am sorry.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Coming from a business background, I am surprised by how little we are expected to demonstrate the value of our research to the business community. We are also not encouraged to share our work beyond a very small academic community.

The University of Salford PGR fund provides funding for PGR professional development.

I am at the beginning of my course so this section isn't very applicable yet

If I had not been proactive my thesis would never have been written

I have not yet reached a point where I can put these areas into practice

As before this is based on my limited experience so far.

There is no professional development provided, any acquired has been outwith UoS

I am still in my first year, therefore, I am unable to comment. Sorry.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

The academic writing lectures should be made a continuous process by including it on the Doctoral Training Programme.

I was enrolled in the English language centre in the Univ. of Salford and I didn't receive any useful improvement to my English, on the opposite my English became regressive when I was in the English course because of their unsuitable planning and programs and their policy of stretching the course without developing the ability of the students.

I need one to one English communication teacher. It is currently not provided. I really need to learn to speak fluently and with confidence. It will help me during my study.

Salford Languages

SUPERVISION

No comments.

RESOURCES

No comments.

RESEARCH CULTURE

No comments.

ABOUT INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

No comments.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

No comments.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

No comments.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

I think the university should find appropriate methods to help research students to develop their language (spoken and written)

School of the Built Environment

SUPERVISION

Supervisor irregular response to my email.

My supervisor don't have enough time to meet me because the university gave him 16 student. I have recently undergone a change of Supervisor. The transition process was well-handled.

My primary supervisor is keen on my progress and offers both academic and motivational support.

The feedback from my supervision meetings is excellent and supports my motivation and research. supervisor is always there at the end of the phone or email if I need them

My supervisor is very invested in my research and provides a great deal of assistance to my research goals.

RESOURCES

The computers in our office are unbelievably slow. Journal access is often difficult or there is no access to the journal articles I need. The wifi in our allocated office room also often doesn't work.

I am based down at the MediaCityUK campus where facilities for everyone - staff and students - is limited. Consequently, I tend to do most of my work online and in a variety of locations. The availability of the printanywhere facility has made working with my own laptop much easier.

Unfortunately university's agreement for some e resources are very old Computers are not useful

The university provided me with specialist software which enhanced my research.

My research is out of the region and I have found local resources for regional data.

RESEARCH CULTURE

I have no idea for the most part what research other colleagues in the department are doing. I hear a lot about midwifery and nursing research but this doesn't relate to me in sociology. I asked to be part of the teaching teams in social policy as this relates to my research, but was told that they had their own PhD students. I was also allowed to help teaching on modules that would be good for my career and were related to my research, but then was told at the last minute that I could not do that and had to teach on criminology modules which have no link to my research or educational background.

There is lots going on in my research centre but I don't tend to engage much with it - this is not because of the quality of what is on offer, but for personal reasons - I am unable to spend a lot of time on campus.

I have found the seminar programme to be comprehensive and accessible despite my part time off campus status.

INDUCTION, PROGRESSION ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

I received no formal induction. I was not told about any of the regulations. I was not told about the learning agreement until about 6 months in. We then moved schools and now I feel I know more about the assessment procedures, but even the school didn't adhere to these procedures when I did. For example, I submitted for my I.E early, but was let down by the assessor and was asked to find another and wait for three months until assessment, whereby my bursary was delayed through no fault of my own.

Online regulations and guidelines are excellent.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND STUDENT/STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

I made a complaint to the head of GTAs in my original school regarding the guidelines for GTA students and how they were being contravened, I received no help with this complaint, it was basically ignored. Every year I have struggled to gain information in a decent time for preparing for teaching and arranging my childcare, every year I have been let down with this and given information at the very last minute. I have no idea who I can make complaints to as they are always ignored be it by the head of the GTAs, the phd representative, the teaching staff. That's how it feels to me. Further, I don't want to complain and make things more difficult for my own career, so as a PhD student I don't feel I have any power whatsoever.

I have no idea what feedback post-graduates have given in the past and how this has been responded to.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The above has been augmented with the comprehensive seminar programme that the university provides.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I don't think I have engaged as much with this aspect of the process as I might have. Perhaps this is because I am a member of staff.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

Although not totally relevant to the question I must give praise to the WordScope course that I attended. It was excellent to say the least.

I would ask for a more direct instructions on how to write an academic essay including the arguments. Also, I would prefer to spread the awareness for the existance of Wordscope program to improve the writing skills.