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PRES 2021

College Action Plan, developed by the PRES 2021 Task and Finish Group and approved by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee
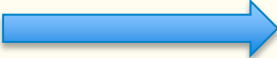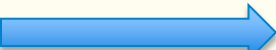
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- **1843** respondents to PRES 2021

- **Overall student satisfaction was 79%**, which is the same as the global benchmark (79%)

- The College scored in the **highest quartile** for questions relating to Support (79%), Resources (81%) and Research Culture (62%)

- The College scored in the **lowest quartile** for questions relating to Supervision (85%), Progression (76%) and Responsibilities (77%).

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- The following slides provide a summary of key themes raised by students as points of concern or development for the College and actions that have/will be taken in response.

- The slides are divided up into 8 categories, reflecting each section of questions the PRES.

- For each category there is a summary of student feedback, followed by agreed actions.

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Concerns highlighted by students:

- **busy workloads** of supervisors and impact of this on time available to supervise students.

- **Variation in quality of supervision** between supervisors within the same team.

- **Lack of research direction** provided by supervisors to students.

- Lack of support from supervisors for students to **undertake personal and professional development**.

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Actions taken in response:

- At a College level, work is underway to **review Workload Allocation.**

- Actions taken in response to PRES 2019 need time to take effect.

- Graduate School to **launch new Cornerstone Programme** (training and development programme for supervisors). → Graduate School, by April 22

- Graduate School to work with departments to deliver a "**tailored package" of supervisor support and development.** → Graduate School, Oct 22
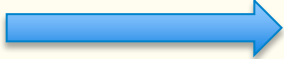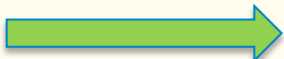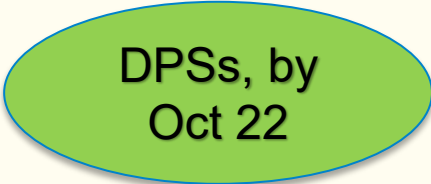
Concerns highlighted by students:

- **Lack of formal induction**, especially for students who did not start in October.

- Poor quality departmental **PGR handbooks and websites**.

- Lack of clarity about what is **expected of students to progress.**

- Lack of supervisor **engagement with milestones**.

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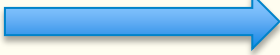
Actions taken in response:
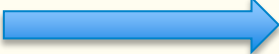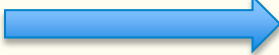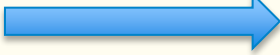
- [Online Supervisors' Guidebook](#) to contain a **tool-kit of resources for supervisor induction**.
- Graduate School to establish a new PGR Community and Visibility Working Group to review the College's PGR Welcome.
- Departments to make use of the [PGR Handbook checklist and templates,](#) developed by the Registry.

- The College's PhD regulations have been reviewed to provide clarity on what is expected for each milestone and timings.
- Embedding the milestones within the PGR Milestones section of MyImperial will require supervisors to engage.

Graduate School, by Oct 22

DPSs, by Oct 22

Registry, by Oct 23

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Concerns highlighted by students:

- **Poor supervision** was not addressed by the College.

- Students **do not feel safe** reporting cases of poor supervision.

- Lack of clarity about where students can **access support**.

- Lack of clarity about **expectations for the student-supervisor partnership**.

- **Student feedback** was not listed to, or valued

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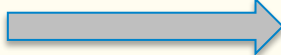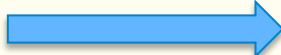
Actions taken in response:

- Exploration of **6 monthly confidential reports** embedded within MyImperial & implementation of **Project Rescue Framework (PReF)**.

  → Graduate School, by June 23

- The **Imperial Values** to be embedded within the Cornerstone Programme

  → Graduate School, by Apr 22

- PGR Community and Visibility Working Group to ensure that the **mutual expectations** document is featured as part of the College **PGR Welcome**.

  → Graduate School, by Oct 22

- DPSs to encourage supervisors and students to **review the mutual expectations document annually.**

  → DPSs, by Oct 22

- Communication strategy for the PRES 2021 Action Plan to be developed.

  → Graduate School, by May 22

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Concerns highlighted by students:

- **Poor communication** from the College.

- Poor support for **remote working**.

- **Automatic registration extensions** were deemed not long enough to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

- **Stipend extensions** should be available to students who were in their **first year** at the time of the disruption.

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Actions taken in response:

- The timing of PRES was such that the College had not been able to respond to certain covid-19 related matters at that time.

- A new Unified Access solution **for consistent, seamless, secure access from any device in any location**.

ICT, by Mar 22

- The Graduate School to work with Registry and the Research Office to **provide guidance to departments on the management of registration and stipend extensions**, moving forward.

Graduate School, by Oct 22

- The College's Research Committee has adjusted the College stipend extension scheme so that students with funding end dates of 01 October 2022 – 31 March 2023 (inclusive) who were in their first year at the time of disruption can apply for a stipend extension. This will take effect for the 6th Wave of the College's Stipend Extension Scheme.

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Concerns highlighted by students:

- Concern raised with respect to **waiting times to see counsellors.**

Actions taken in response:

- The Counselling service **reviews waiting times and triages new clients** to ensure that urgent matters are addressed appropriately.
- In addition to these existing approaches, the service is **recruiting new posts** which will promote earlier intervention.

Student Services, by Oct 22
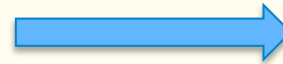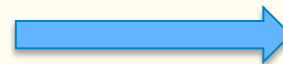
Concerns highlighted by students:

- **Low satisfaction levels** within <u>the sector</u> for **career** development.

- **Reduced opportunity to network**, compounded by the Pandemic.

- **Lack of awareness** about the Graduate School's **professional skills** training programme and other provision.

- More support needed for students **experiencing imposture syndrome and lack of confidence**

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Actions taken in response:

- **Comprehensive programme of career development** in place via dedicated Careers Service.

- PGR Community and Visibility Working group to develop a new **strategy for supporting PGR community development** and promoting Graduate School provision to both supervisors and students.

  Graduate School, by Dec 22

- Graduate School to **increase the number of trained coaches** available to support students and update the website to make it clear that coaching can develop confidence and support students with imposture syndrome.

  Graduate School, by Jul 23

- Graduate School to r**eview and highlight** which of its professional skills workshops specifically **support students to develop their confidence**
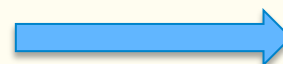
  Graduate School, by Oct 22

Concerns highlighted by students:

- Concern with
  - HPC service
  - PC renewal service
  - VLE useability
  - ICT Service management

- Access to software.

- Access to **physical library resources** and facilities.

- Access to **online library resources.**

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Response from ICT:

- ICT have published a new strategy for Service Improvement

- Research Computing Services has published a new strategy to deliver change in service and support across RCS and appointed an academic leadership team.

- Imperial ASK helpdesk to ensure all issues can be identified and resolved.

- Ongoing Office for Students funded initiative for a rolling plan of renewals for machines that are 5 Years old

- Initiative to bring all College owned machines up to Windows 10.

- At the moment Departments are responsible for any machine renewals that are not Office for Students funded rather than ICT.

- ICT will carry out a VLE review during the 2022 academic session

- Access to software available via cluster machines or via the [Software Hub](#),

- Where software is not available, students can request via the Service Desk

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Response from the Library:

- As the country went into lockdown in March 2020 the physical library closed with a fully remote library service provided.

- The Library buildings reopened in September 2020, but with a much-reduced capacity, due to Covid restriction.

- The newly opened GoStudy spaces on levels 4 and 5 in the Chemistry Building on the South Kensington campus offer more study space.

- As we come out of the pandemic in 2022 we hope to be able to return to full pre-COVID capacity across all our libraries

- Whilst not all books and resources are we seek to get core reading list materials in an online format wherever possible.

- We encourage all users to use the resource suggestion form to suggest additions to our collection and to talk to their dedicated subject librarian about material not currently available through Imperial (more details here).

Concerns highlighted by students:

- Lack of opportunity for **PGR students to network**, both internally and externally.

- Requests for a **centralised research seminar listing** website where students could find out what seminars were being held outside of their department.

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Actions taken in response:

- The Union will explore **departmental and Faculty level support** for PGR community development, including funding.

  Union, by Jul 22

- PGR Community and Visibility Working group to develop a new strategy for supporting **PGR community development at a College level**.

  Graduate School, by Dec 22

- Both the Union and Graduate School in their work will consider the variation in opportunity between students who are part of a cohort, those working in isolation or small groups and staff undertaking a research degree.

- PGR Community and Visibility Group will also **review the impact of the College's Research Seminar Listings website**

  Graduate School, by Dec 22