Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2019

Summary

City, University of London is participating in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) in 2019, having last participated in 2017. The survey, administered by Advance HE, is now offered on an annual basis but City, in common with many universities, has opted to retain a biennial frequency. This reflects the longer duration of study of a research degree in to avoid over surveying and allow enhancements in response to survey data to take hold before surveying.

The survey launched on Friday, 14th February, and in common with the other student surveys will be open until the end of April. The response rate across City for PRES in 2017 was 41%, so a response rate of 50% is targeted.

The survey is available at [www.city.ac.uk/feedback](http://www.city.ac.uk/feedback) (full link: [https://city.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/postgraduate-research-experience-survey-pres-2019](https://city.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/postgraduate-research-experience-survey-pres-2019)) - students should use their Registration Number as their username with the final three digits as the password. The survey is broadly unchanged to 2017 (see Appendix), with the addition of a new Wellbeing section.

The survey is part of the wider City Student Surveys campaign, including the National Student Survey and Your Voice surveys. The surveys webpages at [https://studenthub.city.ac.uk/student-administration/student-survey](https://studenthub.city.ac.uk/student-administration/student-survey) have been updated to provide information on changes made in response to student feedback at School and Graduate School level since 2019.

In common with all surveys, students will be entitled to a free hot drink as a thank you for completing the survey – vouchers will be available from their Course Officer. Course Officers have also been provided with some additional incentives e.g. Graduate School mugs for students taking part in PRES.

Staff can find resources relating to the survey at [https://cityuni.sharepoint.com/sites/wo_Annual_Student_Survey](https://cityuni.sharepoint.com/sites/wo_Annual_Student_Survey) - this includes posters, email templates, email signatures and guidance on increasing response rates. There will be little communication from the ‘centre’ relating to PRES; it is considered that students are more likely to respond to personal emails from their Senior Tutor/Supervisors, so Schools are encouraged to do this and follow up with students who are yet to respond.

Response rate updates are provided to Deans, Associate Deans and Heads of Academic Services on a weekly basis – response rates for PRES are not available yet at the time of writing.

Staff and students can contact the Student Voice team via surveys@city.ac.uk with any questions they have regarding the surveys.
Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2019

Welcome
This survey asks about your experiences of your postgraduate research programme. Your responses will be combined with those of others to help improve future support.

Many thanks for your participation.

Data Protection
Your institution takes responsibility for the lawful, fair and transparent use of the data you submit through this questionnaire.

Before you start the survey, please read this [privacy statement] which tells you how any personal data you submit with your responses to this survey will be utilised and protected, and the rights you have in relation to it.

[Institution to insert above and below a hyperlink to your institution’s privacy statement. We suggest that you seek advice in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation as the data controller]

Your participation in this questionnaire is voluntary and you can stop at any point without your responses being included in the dataset.

1. If you are happy to continue, please tick the box below to confirm that you consent to any personal data you provide being used in the way described (if you do not consent then please close this browser window to exit the survey):

☐ I give my consent for my responses to this questionnaire to be used as described in the [privacy statement]

You can withdraw your consent at any time in the future by contacting [Institution to insert appropriate contact details]

Notes for completion
The questionnaire should take around fifteen minutes to complete.

Where “programme” is used in the questionnaire, this refers to your whole programme of study at your institution, for example MRes in Sociology, PhD in Physics, etc.

After each section you may be asked for any further comments on the issues covered, to enable staff to gain a better understanding of what has gone well and what has worked less well. Please do not identify yourself or other individuals (including staff) in your comments. If you have a complaint or need support with any of the issues raised within the survey, please contact [the relevant service at your institution].
### Supervision

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about supervision?

Note: Please note, all the scales in the survey range from Definitely disagree on the left-hand side to Definitely agree and N/A on the right-hand side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I have regular contact with my supervisor/s, appropriate for my needs</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. If you have any additional comments about supervision, please write them in here:

### Resources

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I have a suitable working space</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. There is adequate provision of computing resources and facilities</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. There is adequate provision of library facilities (including physical and online resources)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. If you have any additional comments about resources, please write them in here:
### 6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the research culture?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I have access to a good seminar programme in my research area</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I have frequent opportunities to discuss my research with other researchers including research students</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The research community in my research area stimulates my work</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I am aware of opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. If you have any additional comments about the research culture, please write them in here:
Progress and Assessment

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I received an appropriate induction to research degree programme</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I understand the requirements and deadlines for formal monitoring of my progress</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I understand the required standard for my thesis</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The final assessment procedures for my degree are clear to me</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. If you have any additional comments about induction, progression arrangements and assessment, please write them in here:

Responsibilities

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I understand my responsibilities as a research degree student</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I am aware of my supervisors’ responsibilities towards me as a research degree student</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other than my supervisor/s, I know who to approach if I am concerned about any aspect of my degree programme</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. If you have any additional comments about feedback mechanisms and student/staff responsibilities, please write them in here:
## Research Skills

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. My skills in applying appropriate research methodologies, tools and techniques have developed during my programme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. My skills in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results have developed during my programme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. My confidence to be creative or innovative has developed during my programme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. My understanding of 'research integrity' (e.g. rigour, ethics, transparency, attributing the contribution of others) has developed during my programme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. If you have any additional comments about research skills development please write them in here:
14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about professional development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. My ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during my programme</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I have developed contacts or professional networks during my programme</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I have increasingly managed my own professional development during my programme</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. If you have any additional comments about professional development, please write them in here:
Opportunities

16. Please indicate which of the following opportunities you have experienced during your research degree programme (select all that apply):

- Agreeing a personal training or development plan
- Receiving training to develop my research skills
- Receiving training to develop my transferable skills
- Receiving advice on career options
- Taking part in a placement or internship
- Attending an academic research conference
- Presenting a paper or poster at an academic research conference
- Submitting a paper for publication in an academic journal or book
- Communicating your research to a non-academic audience
- Engagement with non-academic partners – e.g. in industry or elsewhere

17. Please indicate whether you have undertaken paid (or equivalent) teaching work at your institution during your research degree programme (e.g. as a Graduate Teaching Assistant or Graduate Demonstrator)?

- Yes
- No (go to question 17)

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

- Definitely disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly agree
- Definitely agree
- N/A

17 b. Did you receive formal training for your teaching? (e.g. teacher/lecturer training schemes or staff development classes run by your institution; a PG Cert. course)

- Yes
- No
- N/A
18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme within my institution's expected timescale</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. What, if anything, has been the one most positive aspect of your research degree programme so far?

20. What, if anything, is the one top area in which your experience of your research degree programme so far could be improved?

21. Running ‘Wellbeing’ section? (defaults to ‘No’) **hidden question**
   Yes
   No
# Wellbeing

## 22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Overall how happy did you feel yesterday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Overall to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 23. If you have any additional comments about how your institution may be able to help their Postgraduate Researchers with their wellbeing, please write them in here.

If you have any concerns about the issues raised in this, or any, section of the questionnaire, details of support services are given at the end of the survey.
Motivations

24. The main motivation for me pursuing a research degree programme was:

- My interest in the subject
- Improving my career prospects for an academic/research career
- Improving my career prospects outside of an academic/research career
- I was encouraged by a former academic tutor/supervisor
- The funding was available
- It felt like a natural step for me
- I felt inspired to work with a particular academic
- Professional development or training
- Other (Please specify) .................................................................

25. What type of career do you have in mind for when you complete your research degree?

- Academic career in higher education (either research and teaching, or teaching only)
- Research career in higher education
- Research career outside higher education (e.g. in a private research organisation, a charity or in an industrial environment)
- Teaching (at a level below higher education)
- Returning to or remaining with employer who is sponsoring your degree
- Returning to or remaining with employer who is not sponsoring your degree
- Self-employment (including setting up own business)
- Any other professional career
- Not sure or not decided yet
- Other (Please specify) .................................................................

26. To what extent do you agree or disagree that…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definitely disagree</th>
<th>Mostly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Mostly agree</th>
<th>Definitely agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. As a result of my research degree programme I feel better prepared for my future career</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You and your programme

27. I am currently registered as doing:
   - PhD (including DPhil)
   - Professional doctorate (e.g. EdD, EngD, MD, DBA)
   - PhD by published work
   - New Route PhD
   - MPhil with transfer to PhD
   - MPhil
   - Master by research
   - Other (Please specify)………………………………………………………………………………
27 b. If you are a doctoral student, is your training programme provided through a Doctoral Training Centre, a Doctoral Training Partnership or a Centre for Doctoral Training?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

About yourself

28. I am:

- 25 years old or younger
- 26-30 years old
- 31-35 years old
- 36-40 years old
- 41-45 years old
- 46-50 years old
- 51-55 years old
- 56 years old or older
- Prefer not to say

29. I am:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other

30. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

30 a. If yes, please indicate which of the following apply (select all that apply):

- A social/communication impairment such as Asperger’s syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder
- Blind or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- Deaf or serious hearing impairment
- A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- A mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or ADHD
- A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- A disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above
- Prefer not to say
31. Please select which of the following most closely matches your primary discipline:

- Clinical Medicine
- Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
- Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
- Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
- Biological Sciences
- Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science
- Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Mathematical Sciences
- Computer Science and Informatics
- Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering
- Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials
- Civil and Construction Engineering
- General Engineering
- Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
- Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
- Economics and Econometrics
- Business and Management Studies
- Law
- Politics and International Studies
- Social Work and Social Policy
- Sociology
- Anthropology and Development Studies
- Education
- Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism
- Area Studies
- Modern Languages and Linguistics
- English Language and Literature
- History
- Classics
- Philosophy
- Theology and Religious Studies
- Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
- Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
- Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

32. I am currently registered as studying:

- Full-time
- Part-time

33. What year of your research degree programme are you in?

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Year 5
- Year 6
- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Other (please specify) ..................................
34. I currently:

- Am in the taught stage of programme
- Am planning or doing my research
- Am writing up my thesis
- Have submitted my thesis and I am awaiting my viva
- Am making amendments to my thesis following my viva
- Am awaiting to graduate
- Have graduated
- Other (Please specify) ..........................................................

35. I am:

- Primarily a face-to-face learner (for example: based at my institution)
- Primarily a distance learner (for example: work-based learner, online learner)

36. When you started your programme, did you consider yourself to be fluent in the language you are taught in?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

36a. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you have received appropriate support for your language needs

- Definitely disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly agree
- Definitely agree
- Not applicable

36ai. If you have any further comments on the support for your English language needs provided by your institution, please provide them here:

37. Where do you consider to be your permanent home? [Domicile list drawn from HESA domicile field]
38. What is your ethnic group? (Please choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background):

- White
- White: Gypsy or Traveller
- Black or Black British: Caribbean
- Black or Black British: African
- Any other Black background
- Asian or Asian British: Indian
- Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background
- Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed: White and Black African
- Mixed: White and Asian
- Mixed: Any other Mixed background
- Arab
- Any other ethnic background
- Prefer not to say

39. Are you currently in paid employment?

- Yes
- No

39 a: If yes, how many hours of paid employment do you undertake in a typical week (term time)?

- 1-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- 21-30 hours
- More than 30 hours

40. How do you fund your tuition fees?:

- Self-funded (including family or other personal contributions or loans)
- Part self-funded, part externally funded
- Externally funded (including funding body, university, employer, government)
41. Have you considered, for any reason, leaving your postgraduate research degree?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

41.a If yes, what was the main (or most recent) reason that led you to consider leaving?

- Difficulty balancing research and other commitments
- Financial difficulties
- Family, health or personal problems
- There is not enough support for personal issues
- There is not enough support for my research
- There is too much work
- I have found this level of research difficult
- I feel unsupported by my fellow researchers
- The degree programme is not what I expected
- I might have chosen the wrong research degree
- I might have chosen the wrong institution
- Postgraduate research might not have been the right choice for me
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Thank you

Thank you very much for your time in completing this questionnaire. If you have a complaint or need support with any of the issues raised within the survey, please contact [the relevant service at your institution].

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