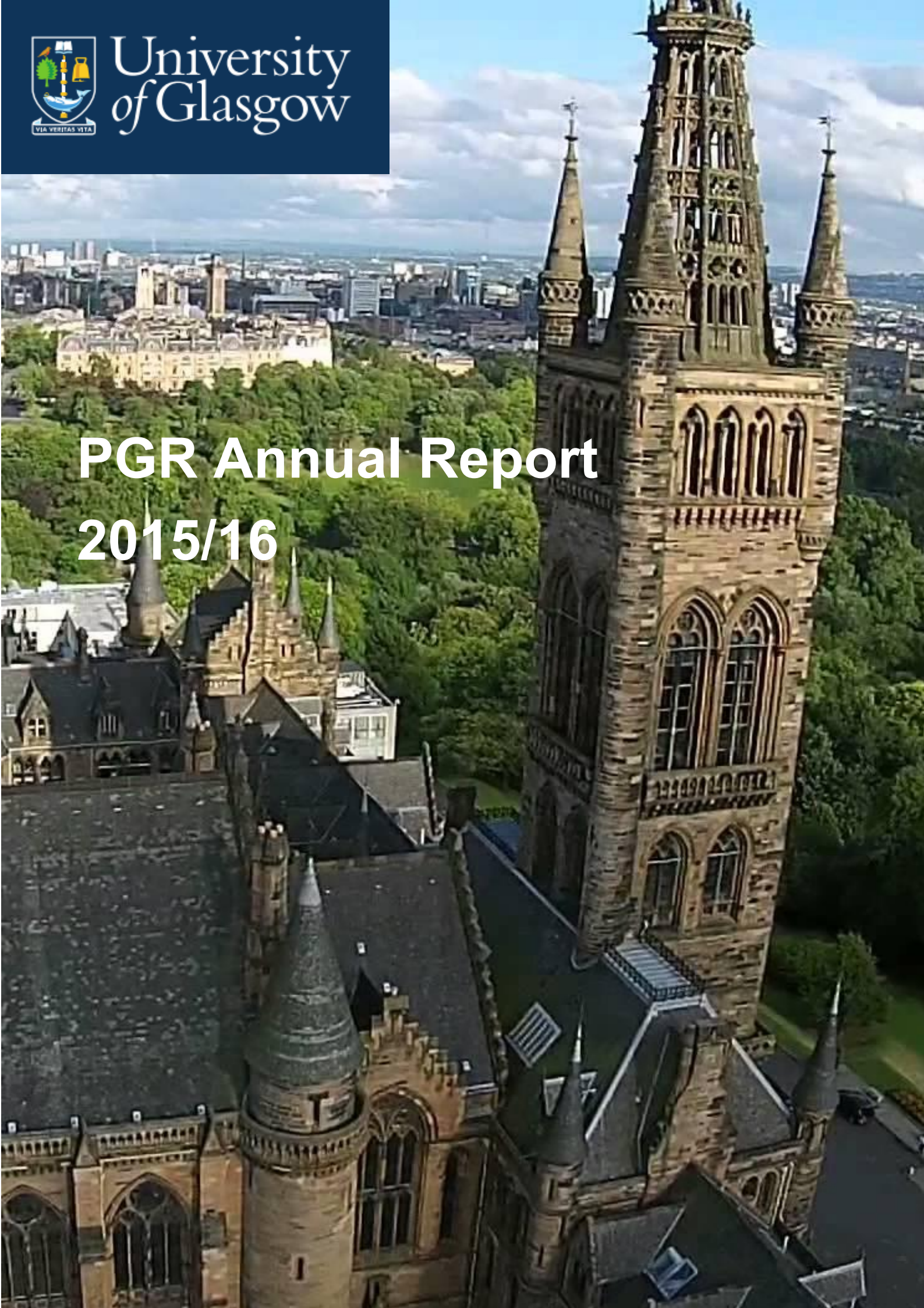# University of Glasgow

PGR Annual Report
2015/16

Deans of Graduate Studies Committee
Annual Committee Report 15/16

Restructuring Committee Business
- The Committee met formally 5 times during 2015/16.
- It was agreed at the start of the year that in order to better focus the business of the Committee, there would be a 'PGR Operations Group' comprised of the Graduate School Administrators and colleagues from relevant Services, as well as a Dean's Strategy Group that included the VP (Research), Head of Research Policy and Researcher Development Manager. This would enable more detailed discussion in the Operations Group as well as more strategic discussions in the Dean's group. Minutes of each meeting are reported to the full Committee and, where needed, decisions are ratified by the full Committee.
- References to PGT in the Committee remit were discussed. While PGT fell broadly into the remit of Graduate Schools, the contribution of the Committee to discussions about PGT matters was limited. It was noted that there was no clear alternative for where this business would be discussed and therefore it would remain in the remit. It was agreed to amend the remit to remove reference to the creation of cross-university PGT provision as the Committee felt that this was clearly outside the remit.

Committee Consultation
- Lone Study Procedures from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing service
- Researchfish and collection of data from students about research outcomes
- HEA Survey on PRES
- Vitae membership
- Academic Collaborations Unit on proposed process changes
- DOGS were invited to a special meeting of RPSC where PGR matters were discussed and an external speak invited to address the group

Guests:
- Dr Catherine Bovill, Learning and Teaching Centre – to discuss the 'Developing Effective Supervisor Practices' course
- Dr Mary Donald, Research Data Management Office
- Counselling and Psychological Services were invited to discuss their current provision as well as matters of concern to Committee members about student mental health.

Strategic Matters:
- Current Graduate School Strategies were reviewed and compared.
- A PGR Strategy Statement was drafted, discussed and agreed across several meetings. This has been agreed and is now available from the PGR Service website.
- A range of issues were raised and discussed in the Deans' Strategy Group including the ongoing development of strategies at College / Graduate School level, the emphasis on submission / completion rates for external reporting, funding matters including strategies for winning more DTP/CDT bids, and recruitment strategy.

Quality Assurance

- Each Graduate School and the PGR Service tabled an Annual Report that covered 2014/15. This was agreed as an annual exercise and will be repeated for the 2015/16 year for January 2017. It was also agreed that the process of pulling these together and sharing these was useful for colleagues.
- Students studying 'at a distance' from Glasgow were discussed. The Committee agreed that there was no desire to be overly prescriptive about this but that there were potentially more issues with supporting students who were not based close to Glasgow. Additional text was agreed for inclusion in the Code of Practice to clarify additional support requirements and that this should be discussed at the point of admission to the University where possible.
- Each Graduate School produced some information about PGT/PGR links within their College in order to build up a picture of an overall postgraduate experience. This was collated and summarised for the Committee which were pleased that a picture emerged of effective operational and administrative links across the University. While these varied between Colleges, it was noted that structures have emerged which were suitable to each area.
- Each Graduate School provided a copy of the job description currently used for PG Convenors in their Colleges. A paper comparing these was tabled for review and discussion by the Committee as these have evolved and diverged over time.
- The Committee considered whether plagiarism checking software should be used when theses are submitted. This was rejected by the Committee.
- The documentation for the Graduate School Review self-evaluation questionnaire was reviewed and changes agreed to reflect current practice. Graduate School roles with regard to admissions have change significantly since the form was written. The questions about Equality and Diversity which appeared in multiple sections of the document were reviewed with a view to consolidating these. The section on destinations was removed.

Policy Matters

- An interim policy for Shared Parental Leave was agreed. It is expected that there will be further advice from RCUK and that this would inform a future version of the policy.
- The Committee agreed that students should submit a declaration of originality bound into their soft bound thesis. A series of statements from other institutions was reviewed and a statement drafted and agreed for Glasgow.
- It was noted that the student parental leave policy did not specify what should happen in the event that a student did not return from maternity leave when they had been being paid a stipend during this period. It was agreed that 'normally' the stipend would be recovered if the student did not return for at least 3 months.
- Research Data Management was discussed in terms of how it was addressed on the 'intention to submit' form' as well as how it should appear the PGR Code of Practice. Text was drafted and agreed for both.
- A change was agreed to the PGR Code of Practice to clarify that while a part time PhD is notionally at 50% of full time, student trajectories vary and students may need to be registered for longer than the minimum period.

- Three proposals for research degrees were considered by the Committee: a PhD with Integrated Study in Mathematics and Statistics, a revision to the Music PhD regulations and a new pathway from the MLitt to the MFA(R). These were agreed.
- The Committee discussed their role in relation to the approval of research degrees. It was agreed that DOGS was the most appropriate venue for this discussion as detailed scrutiny happened at College level but that the Committee was in a position to review these in greater detail than they could be discussed at RPSC.
- Amended wording for the statement about 'International Performance Criteria' was agreed after having been rejected the previous year.
- Alternative Format Theses were discussed with a comparison of the Russell Group being provided to the Committee. It was agreed that this should be considered in more detail during 16/17 with a view to setting out a regulation or other guidance in this area.
- Student Mental Health and Wellbeing was raised by a number of Committee members as an area of concern. It was agreed that a working group would be held during 16/17 to review current practice and develop an action plan for the future.

Operational Issues
- The LKAS scholarship programme and the selection timetable for this year's round were discussed. It was agreed that the consumables budget for each student would be lowered to create a contingency fund for parental leave. Supervisors could make an appeal for the higher amount of funding to support their projects in their applications as it was noted that research costs in some areas are unavoidably higher.
- Discussion continued this year about a PgCert for transferable skills (or similar). There has been no broad agreement about whether the significant amount of work involved in setting this up was appropriate or desirable at this point. This was also discussed at the Dean's strategy group. Ideally a single university wide programme would be developed but not all Colleges were in a position to commit to this. COSS agreed to pursue discussion on this within their College as it was closely related to internal discussions about how best to meet the requirements of the ESRC doctoral training funding.
- The possibility of developing an online progress review system suitable for Arts, COSE, and COSS was discussed. MVLS currently has a system to support this and it was this system which was considered and costed. The outcome for 15/16 is that the development costs were too high and other options are being considered.
- The Head of Admissions from MaRIO attended three times during the year to present information and statistics related to recruitment matters.
- The Disability Service tabled a paper to highlight PGR issues that had been brought to their attention. They were keen that each College appoint disability coordinators for PGR students. These were already in place or under consideration in each College.
- The PGR Operations Group met 4 times during the year. Meetings were attended by all 4 Graduate Schools, Registry, SLSD, Planning and BI and the Library.
  - The status of students on Leave of Absence and whether they could maintain their access rights to resources such as the Library and email addresses was discussed. This was agreed by the Chief Advisor's Subcommittee to the Student

Support and Development Committee as a measure to be put in place for all students. While this has been agreed and a number of issues discussed, development work is required in MyCampus in order to implement this. A business case is being prepared to support this.

- The use of a 'distance learning flag' to better identify students working away from the University but not necessarily on a distance learning programme was agreed as useful. This is being discussed with SLSD and the Library.

- Data management practicalities were discussed with consideration given to using a data management milestone in MyCampus. It was agreed to set up a milestone but noted that this was a mechanism for recording information and had no power to trigger particular actions. It was agreed that a statement about data management would be added to the 'intention to submit' form as a reminder to students that this needed their attention and that reminders and confirmation of data deposit would be added to 'final steps' communications and award processes.

- Registry raised the issue of unregistered students. Graduate Schools work very hard to minimise these numbers. Some of the situations which lead to a lack of timely registration are intractable, such as getting visiting students to register.

- Planning and BI informed the group that a new field required would be required for HESA reporting about collaborative provision. Practical issues were discussed with some issues remaining unresolved.

- Fees for PGRs who have withdrawn but were funded by Research Councils were discussed. It was agreed that it was not suitable for the University to keep funding associated with Research Council doctoral training funding and it was preferred that PGR fees for these students were charged on a pro-rata basis in terms of refunding these back to Graduate Schools. This is able to be managed via a 'reason for withdrawal' that will trigger an over-ride that will permit a refund of the fees.

- Graduate Schools agreed to add a field for the funder 'grant reference' to the thesis access declaration form. This was to highlight to students that they needed to acknowledge their funder in their published thesis.

- Planning and BI tabled a paper which raised a number of data quality issues that were currently under discussion as well as some planned changes.

- A discussion of the use of the 'actual end date' field in MyCampus was held. This data in this field was not an 'actual end date' but rather the expected submission date or, post-submission, the actual submission date. The group agreed that this was not an end date for students and interpreting it as such was misleading. The data in this field can also be incorrect as it is pulled from elsewhere and it would not be obvious that it was not up to date where there were delays in data input. What data was required, the point at which a student was at the end of their engagement with the university as a student and what additional fields were required was discussed but not fully agreed.

Research Development Committee Report

Progress against researcher development themes 2015/16

Research integrity training	20 workshops were offered to PGRs (including at Garscube and in the early evening), with evaluation data being shared with Graduate Schools, RDC and Research Integrity Advisers and Champions. Workshops are mandatory for new PGRs and were attended by 404 researchers over 21 workshops (October – June). 310 first year students attended - 36% of the first year population. A new system has been put in place through My Campus to allow easier tracking of attendance and send automated reminders to PGRs not yet enrolled in a workshop, indicating they are expected to complete this by the end of their second year. 2016/17 will see investigation of other formats (including a Dumfries session, webinars and tailored sessions for researchers undertaking 'practice as research). Staff workshops continue to be provided through Employee and Organisational Development.
Enterprise training	An Entrepreneurship Task Force has been established in the University, with researcher development input, to look at how we integrate and promote Enterprise and Entrepreneurship across the University. 2015 saw the introduction of a suite of high profile activities during Global Entrepreneurship Week (including the pop-up Makerspace led by COSE Graduate School). Uncertainties with funding and the launch of the task force mean that we will not be participating in GEW 2016 but instead will renew efforts in this area after a strategy has been agreed. Glasgow contributed to the Universities Scotland report on 'creating an entrepreneurial culture in HEIs'. MVLS have launched a Science Den competition for 2016 (13 teams entered).
University of Glasgow Crucible	76 researchers applied for 30 places on UofG Crucible for early-career staff, which takes place Sept-Nov 2016, with themes of creativity, career development, knowledge exchange, leadership and communication. We hope that the increase in applications this year (from 42 in 2015) is a result of word-of-mouth promotion.
Research Staff Conference	This half day event took place in March 2016, with 129 sign-ups (79 MVLS; 32 COSE, 7 COSS, 11 Arts) with a good turn out and feedback.
Supporting ECRs to apply for independent funding and understand academic career routes (and challenges) at an early stage	Hard copies of the University's Fellowship application resource were distributed at events. The COSE Fellowship peer-review group (established in 2014) has become an annual programme and, for 2016, late-stage PGRs will be invited to attend the lecture elements of this. A series of academic career case studies were produced for the web, based on Glasgow alumni or academic staff (see **Careers report** for further information, including the newly introduced 'Getting the First Lecturing Job' workshop). The 2016 Research Staff Conference included a 'Fellowships' session.
Oversight of PGR training environment, to ensure consistent	Graduate Schools provide a spending plan at the start of each year, to ensure sharing of best practice and consistency of approach. Overall, the number of opportunities open to PGRs has increased over the past few years, with greater emphasis on structure of the PhD.

high quality and innovation to meet changing environment and student / funder needs	Key figures for 2015/16: • 3600 sign-ups[1] at PGR transferable skills workshops (+100 from the previous year) across 93 distinct 'transferable skills' course codes[2]. 30 of these courses are coordinated by RSIO, with the remainder being specific to a Graduate School. This figure does not capture ad-hoc events such as the PhD comics talk or publication lecture from Elsevier. • 50% of PGRs attended at least one transferable skills workshop during the year; 63% of international PGRs attended at least one workshop; 48% of male researchers and 52% of female researchers attended at least one workshop • 42% of sign-ups to transferable skills workshops come from international PGRs (who make up ~30% of the PGR population). This varies across the workshop topic with 56% of sign-ups to writing workshops being international PGRs, compared with only 17% of the 3 Minute Thesis entrants. • 140 cross-College workshops / events were coordinated by RSIO (compared with 100 in 2014/15), in addition to Graduate School events (the number and variety of which has also increased, in response to student feedback). This included 35 distinct cross-university offerings, ranging from half day workshops and large scale seminars (with up to 130 students) to multi-day residential programmes. The main increase in cross-university provision comes from the requirement for all researchers to undertake research integrity workshops, the introduction of data management workshops and increased activity / new events taking place as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week. • 2015 saw the pilot of an 'insights to social enterprise' programme with 12 researchers working in cross-disciplinary groups on a problem pitched by a local social enterprise, visiting the enterprise and sharing their solutions at the final event. • 35 PGRs were successful in gaining a CMI L3 Award in First Line Management (48 in 2014/15) and 20 with the CMI L3 Award in Project Management (25 in 2014/15) • 11 researcher-led bids were awarded (See Appendix 2, compared with 10 in 2014/15). • 40 PGRs participated in the 3 Minute Thesis competition (37 in 2015 and 38 in 2014). 78% of 3MT participants were female and only 17% were international. • 25 researchers attended the Scotland-wide 'part time researcher' conference
Employer Engagement	Each Graduate School now has at least one event annually with employers from outside of academia. The COSE Graduate School has established a Strategic Advisory Board with employers and is providing funding / support for a researcher-led careers event in October 2016.
Promotions / P&DR transparency of process	HR will update on new promotions guidance and P&DR over the coming year.
Career trajectories of researchers >6 years	A project is ongoing within the University to look at job families and promotions criteria for specialist staff, which will include some staff on research-only contracts.
Researcher	RDC requested a 'one-stop shop' for training opportunities. A university-wide project of this nature is now underway, expected at the end of 2016.

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[1] Note that this is 'sign-ups' as lack of resource means that attendance tracking and recording is not possible in all cases.

[2] Defined as workshops offered in skills areas from domains B, C and D in the researcher development framework

Development Portal – improving communication	This project has also established a network and email list of research support and other services or individuals engaged with researcher training.
Increased engagement in researcher training	RDC expressed a desire to better understand the motivating and enabling factors for researchers to attend training (and opportunities for sharing practice in this area). Tony Bromley (University of Leeds) presented on evaluation of researcher development at the COSE supervisor training session (to which RDC and other colleagues were invited).
Teaching opportunities for RAs and PGRs	Availability and visibility of teaching opportunities for RAs and PGRs as well as getting a better understanding of what has prompted low levels of satisfaction with opportunities in CROS 2015. Opportunity to review any policies in this area or shed light on what is already in contracts or considered good practice. Bristol Policy.
Induction	Graduate Schools have worked on PGR inductions (in line with PRES action plans) and a new PGR induction blog will launch in November 2016. Members of the University's Postdoctoral Researcher Forum have raised induction as an area for improvement.

College of Arts

Graduate School PGR Report 2015/2016

1. Introduction / Summary Statement

2016 has been a year of excellent measurable achievement for the College of Arts Graduate School. Recruitment in both home/EU and international categories has increased: our total PGR headcount for 2015/16 rose to 546 (107 of these international, and 157 new starts), compared to a 2014/15 total of 490 (88 of these international, and 124 new starts). The completion rate for our PhD students supported by our primary external funder, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, rose to 100%. We ran a very successful College of Arts international interdisciplinary conference on the theme 'Difference: Fear, Fascination and Foreignness' in May 2016, in addition to numerous School-based PGR symposia and special events showcasing PG research. Our students engaged well with a range of community-building initiatives, including both School events and a College-wide trip to Abbotsford House in March. A School of Humanities student, Ruth Turner in History, won the Three Minute Thesis competition. An award of £50,000 from the AHRC Cultural Engagement Fund allowed us to support six paid 3-month internships with Glasgow Life for students who had just completed their thesis. Four projects were centred around the history and collections of the Burrell, and the two others related to the history of Kelvingrove House and the Kelvinhall. These internships, conducted in close collaboration with curatorial staff, gave the participants direct experience of using their research skills in a non-academic context, and left a legacy including catalogues, reports, new ideas and successful public engagement activities. In addition to this outward-facing work we have invested considerable effort in further refining internal policies and procedures, particularly in relation to APR, induction, examinations and PGR training.

2. Summary Report from Graduate School Board or PG Committee Business

In addition to the regular business of the Graduate School Board, the following topics were a particular focus of attention during the year:

1. Strategy for Maximizing AHRC PhD Grant Capture: As we approached the third year of our participation in the AHRC DTP, it was noted that our consortium competitors had already substantially improved their performance in year 2 of the competition, and that considerable effort would be needed to sustain Glasgow's very good record of grant capture. A series of internal deadlines was agreed to give Schools adequate time to work individually with candidates on their applications and to allow a College-wide committee to review and provide concrete feedback on all paperwork before it was submitted to the competition.

2. Record of Postgraduate Supervision: The importance of keeping a centrally logged record of each supervision session was highlighted at supervisor training, not simply to assist in the context of complaints / appeals, but as a useful repository of information on agreed actions and targets to be checked periodically. Practice had varied across the College, and even when students completed the form there had been a problem with some supervisors taking too long to sign it off. A new version of a previously used template was therefore created, which used a simpler format and did not require supervisor sign-off. It was agreed that completed forms would be sent by the student direct to both the supervisor(s) and the School administrator. Supervisors should check the form and need only intervene if something had been omitted / misunderstood. The new template was successfully piloted across the College in 2015-16 and formally adopted at the end of the session.

3. PhD Viva Panels: With a view to ensuring best practice at vivas, it was agreed that the Graduate School would henceforth insist on at least one of the examiners having

substantial experience of PhD examining in the UK HEI context. The nomination form for examiners would ask subjects to quantify each examiner's experience. This met at first with resistance from some colleague who were reluctant to go back to external colleagues and ask how many PhDs they had examined, but gradually gained acceptance as it was acknowledged that requesting this information was now the norm in many UK HEIs.

4. <u>PGR Recruitment to Modern Languages:</u> Concern had been expressed following two years of very poor recruitment to Modern Languages across the entire consortium in the AHRC DTP competition. Given the strategic importance of Modern Languages to graduate careers in Europe and the rest of the world, this subject group was identified as a priority area and plans were put in place to work collaboratively with our DTP partners to consider strategies for training and environment to improve Scotland's (and therefore also Glasgow's) attractiveness as a destination for PhD study in this area.

5. <u>Practice as Research:</u> In view of the increasing number of Arts PGR students working in this mode (in Music, Film and Television Studies, Theology and Religious Studies, Creative Writing), instead of producing a traditional thesis, the Board felt that greater communication was needed across disciplines about the way in which creative practice was defined, supervised and evaluated. An interdisciplinary group of academics working in creative practice was convened to facilitate ongoing discussion of this issue.

6. <u>PGR Induction:</u> In response to feedback highlighting a degree of overlap between Subject/School and College PGR induction, it was decided to investigate exactly what was covered at different induction/welcome events and distinguish clearly between these to avoid repetition or even potential contradiction.

7. <u>PG Advisers' Role and Remit:</u> It was noted that no formal role description existed for PG advisers. While their role was central in answering inquiries and acting as a sympathetic point of contact for students with personal, financial or health problems, sensitivities pertaining to university staff, such as a breakdown in the relationship with a supervisor, should be referred to the Dean. A formal role description was agreed.

8. <u>Community Building:</u> Following the last year's activities which had been successful but somewhat piecemeal and patchy in their coverage, it was agreed that each School be given responsibility (and financial support) to organize an excursion or larger event which would be both social and educational, and as inclusive as possible. One day-trip to Abbotsford House, the home of Walter Scott in the Scottish Borders, was run by the School of Critical Studies and proved very popular, but a later trip planned to Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute was cancelled due to insufficient uptake of places. Consultation with students revealed that they appreciated these efforts, but because of multiple demands on their time might prefer smaller-scale local events which only took up part of the day.

3. Summaries of feedback from other mechanisms

In addition to feedback received via PRES, we engage with students' views and suggestions in four other ways:

1. <u>PG Staff-Student Liaison Committees:</u> These meet twice per semester at Subject, School and College level, and the agenda is normally set by the students. Almost all queries / problems are resolved at Subject or School level, allowing the College-level meetings to serve as a forum for discussion of strategic topics. Engagement has been good, and in general students have been happy with the effectiveness of communication and with the willingness of staff to address any problems raised. There are issues around the availability of PGR study spaces and the quality of student PCs (which tend to be older machines previously used by staff). Where there have been specific complaints, the Arts IT team has followed these up and upgraded PCs as necessary.

2. <u>Meetings with College interns:</u> The Dean holds periodic meetings with the College interns to solicit feedback on their experience and check that the scheme is functioning well as a skills development opportunity. There are currently 21 College interns, each of whom completes 4 hours of duties per week. Everyone has reported positively on the quality of their experience this year, following the expression of a small element of dissatisfaction last year from a couple of PGRs who had been asked to carry out rather mundane administrative activities, rather than being involved in meaningful projects which allowed them to develop useful skills.

3. <u>Feedback on Training Provision:</u> Feedback sheets are completed by students on all training workshops and the results collated by the Deputy Dean for discussion at the Graduate School Board. On the whole students have a positive attitude to the skills development programme and have responded appreciatively to the content of the sessions, many of which are run by external providers. Negative feedback, where it exists, tends to come from distance-learning or part-time students who struggle to attend the scheduled sessions and would like customised arrangements.

4. <u>Feedback via the Annual Progress Review system:</u> This year the Dean again sat in on a random selection of APR interviews, covering seven subjects, which enabled her to report back to the Graduate School Board on examples of good practice, as well as on aspects which could be improved. Feedback from students in these reviews revealed that some were juggling quite a lot of paid work with full-time student status, and that some were not engaging as fully as might be desired with the skills development programme if they did not see it as relevant, especially if they were studying for a PhD in later life.

4. Issues arising / New Initiatives

See Introduction on AHRC-funded PGR internships with Glasgow Life.

The Deputy Dean worked again this year on training students for involvement in a Public Humanities initiative. The purpose of this was to encourage the PGR students to think beyond dissemination strategies and move towards more collaborative work with others, and to help the students to see how their research, no matter how specialist or obscure, could contribute more widely to society. These projects were providing very valuable experience, and some students who had taken part in the previous year were still actively involved with colleagues in Knowledge Exchange activities.

The College ran its annual 'Careers Focus' series in semester 2, a range of workshops on CV preparation and interview skills. The mock interview event for non-academic jobs was a particular success, involving employers from the heritage, education and media sectors.

The Graduate School Board held a strategy session on 26 April 2016, at which the following priorities were agreed for the coming session.

1. **<u>Induction</u>**
   Streamline Induction, to facilitate clarity and avoid overlap, by
   - undertaking a review of current induction activity in College/Schools/Subject Areas to identify aspects for improvement;
   - considering how best to communicate induction information, for example greater use of on-line resources.

   Lead: BB/AC/HM   Timeline: Summer 2016

PRES indicator	Arts	UoG
I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme	69%	76%

2. **<u>Student Support</u>**

Introduce a 'pop-up' PGR reception desk in foyer of 6 University Gdns at pre-announced times, to increase visibility of Graduate School and help with communication, by
- providing drop-in advice sessions in two-hour blocks over the first few weeks of session;
- staffing the desk with a mix of Graduate School staff, current students, PG Conveners and PG Advisers;
- advertising as widely as possible to encourage uptake.

Lead: BB/AC, with input from all members of GSB   Timeline: 14 September 2016

PRES indicator	Arts	UoG
I received an appropriate level of non-academic support on arrival	49%	60%

3. **Interdisciplinarity**

Conduct mapping activity of interdisciplinary PGR events in each Subject/School, with a view to bringing interested students together College-wide, by
- listing current activity in Subjects/Schools which works well and has the potential for being rolled out to others;
- exploring any interdisciplinary activity/themes resulting from the 2016 Graduate School conference.

Lead: School PG Conveners   Timeline (mapping): end October 2016
                                             Timeline (event(s)): late 2016/early 2017

PRES indicator	Arts	UoG
My institution facilitates useful inter-disciplinary activities and events	62%	59%

4. **Training**

Review and refresh College training programme in order to ensure that what is offered to students is still current and addressing perceived needs, by:
- reviewing student feedback on all courses
- liaising with external providers
- recruiting new internal providers as appropriate
- conducting information campaign about courses on offer.

Lead: Deputy Dean   Timeline: Spring 2017

5. **Marketing**

Investigate creating PGR videos to feed into the Arts-specific side of a university PGR blog, by
- liaising with RCMO regarding themed blogs of relevance to Arts students.

Lead: BB/HM/AC   Timeline: Spring 2017

5. PRES Action Plans / Updates

Introductions / Comments re Key Performance Indicators or areas of special interest

The College of Arts was very encouraged by the 'overall satisfaction' result of 90% in PRES 2015, a substantial uplift from 84% in 2013, the highest figure in the University, and well above the Russell Group average. Three of our four Schools scored above this. There are, however, key areas where there is room for improvement.

Key Area 1: Supervision

We are pleased to see the generally high scores in this crucial area, particularly in relation to supervisors' skills, regular contact and feedback. In two out of four Schools supervisors are

clearly helping students to identify their training needs, while improvement is needed in the other two. To address this, the College has been stressing the importance of regularly updating the TNA, and this is also a key point at Supervisor Training.

Key Area 2: Resources

The key issue here is PGR desk space. Only 64% in Arts responded that they had a suitable working space (cf. 83% UofG and 79% RG). Some additional dedicated desks have been provided this year, and further addition to our provision is planned for early 2017. Schools are doing all they can to reconfigure space and accommodate as many students as possible close to their subject community.

Key Area 3: Research Culture

Satisfaction in Arts with Induction (69%) was well improved on the 2013 result, but remains lower than the UoG and RG average (76%). Some improvements were introduced in Oct 2015, and see 4.2 above for further initiative on this.

All Schools have regular seminar programmes in which PGRs are actively involved and which are appreciated by students for both social and academic reasons. While they are open to all, and while students' perception that they have access to the wider research community beyond their own subject at 69% is higher than the UoG and RG scores of 65% and 63% respectively, strategies for disseminating information continue to be developed as students may not receive automatic notification of events outwith their own School. A College intern has been appointed to work on communication via social media.

Key Area 4: Progress, assessment and understanding of roles and responsibilities

College of Arts scores are broadly in line with RG averages in this area, although there is still scope for improvement. There is a link here to induction which is being addressed. Annual Progress Review procedures have recently been the focus of scrutiny across the College, and further guidance was disseminated in 2016-16.

Key Area 5: Research Skills and Professional Development

In most questions related to this key area there has been an improvement for Arts PGRs from 2013, though confidence in communication skills sits disappointingly a couple of points below the RG average. This may be explained by the relative isolation of Arts PGRs compared to their UG experience when they frequently make presentations. New subject-specific training sessions have been developed by Schools to complement more generic College provision.

Key Area 6: Teaching opportunities

Results vary across the College. Although we score above the UoG and RG averages, the figure of 61% could be substantially improved. The new GTA policy guidelines implemented in 2015 should go some way to addressing this.

Conclusions or Summary Points

All four Schools in Arts are actively addressing the key areas outlined above in consultation with students. Improvements and best practice are discussed regularly at GSB.

6. Graduate School Review Action Update

Not applicable. The last review was held in May 2014 and all five recommendations arising from this have been actively addressed.

University of Glasgow
College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences
<u>**Graduate School Report**</u>

1. Introduction

Over the past year the Graduate School has worked to maintain the University's reputation as being at the forefront of graduate education and research and to enhance the student experience through offering the finest environment for personal and academic development. Significant areas have been the successful BBSRC Collaborative Training Partnership bid with Glasgow having been awarded two partnerships. The first was with Astra Zeneca and the University of Exeter the second being a pan-Scotland partnership.

Significant investment has been channelled into a number of key events with the Science Den being the most prominent in terms of providing student teams with the opportunity to compete to design a biological tool with the winners receiving £10K to facilitate development of the original idea. The Science Den featured in the Campus e-News:
 http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/news/archives/2017/february/headline_515001_en.html

Online distance learning has benefited from considerable investment from the College to grow the existing PGT online programme portfolio in addition to the development of open access taster courses via an external Moodle site.

A robust marketing strategy has been underpinned by the establishment of a PGR recruitment working group to focus on PGR recruitment through a range of activities such as encouraging PGT to PGR transition, engaging academics on international travel recruitment and promoting industrial partnership PhD (IPPs) opportunities.

Other notable achievements had been:

- The introduction of the PGR Den, which is a dedicated online space to support the student through the PGR journey featuring sites on building skills, connecting with peers and accessing support services. Concurrently there will be a supervisor space which will provide details on a range of activities and resources to support research supervisors to develop and maintain the highest standards in doctoral supervision.
- In response to student and supervisor feedback 6 new MVLS research skills training courses have been introduced to the existing portfolio of training offerings.
- The research training programme and progress review system have undergone some developments to provide enhanced functionality.
- In response to student representation it is now possible to auto generate a training credit transcript which is provided routinely to students simultaneously with degree award documentation as verification for both sponsors and future employers.
- In addition to the introduction of a supervisor online resource, the Supervisor Den, training activities will include interactive group discussions, an online quiz which will focus on newly appointed supervisors and activities for the more experienced supervisor.
- An Industrial Partnership (IPP) workshop was held to promote the benefits of this scheme which has resulted in a number of new links with industry and recruitment of high calibre PhD students. This workshop will form part of the Graduate School's calendar of activities going forward in anticipation of further successful partnerings.

- The digital programme portfolio continues to grow with targets for recruitment having been achieved with the introduction of January starts in 2016/17. Further expansion into blended learning continues with a number of programmes being offered both through online and classroom based options.
- In addition to the Science Den a social programme has been introduced to foster a sense of community within the PGR and PGT communities. A summer barbeque, Halloween ball and ceilidh have been well received with more events planned throughout the academic year.
- Opportunities for international recruitment have been targeted at a number of in country visits by academic colleagues including an expansion into Thailand and China.
- Recruitment pathways between Glasgow International College and PGT have been established with over 20 programmes across a number of disciplines offering admission via this route.

2. **Summary Report from Graduate School Board**

2.1 The Graduate School Board ratified a proposal to cap bench fee rates to a maximum rate of £12k and £5k for wet lab and dry lab projects respectively. In doing so it is anticipated that this will provide a more structured and standardised approach to calculating actual project costs.

2.2 The MRC DTP in Precision Medicine in collaboration with University of Edinburgh was noted as one of the key achievements of the Graduate School's funding awards. This significant programme would support research training at the interfaces between biological, clinical and computational systems and would focus on training PhD students in key MRC skills priorities.

2.3 The Graduate School has recently launched a series of seminars and events throughout the year. The seminar programme will feature speakers from a range of sectors and will focus on career progression amongst other subjects.

2.4 Work continues to ensure good signposting is in place to facilitate disability welfare issues. The GSB supported an initiative to engage with the Scottish Mental Health First Aid training which provides bespoke first aid training to assist staff in developing skills to identify the signs and symptoms of a student who is experiencing mental health issues

2.5 The Board endorsed the policy that a candidate who is a member of staff at the time of examination but not at the date of submission of thesis they be considered in the same way as any other student with the examining committee comprising of 1 internal and 1 external examiner. However, where a student does have a staff appointment prior to the submission of the thesis, the examination committee must comprise of 2 external examiners and 1 internal examiner.

2.6 A revised job description for the role of postgraduate convenor (PGC) was approved. It was agreed that this provided a better description of the remit of the role, with PGT representation being considered as a distinct and separate role.

2.7 Graduate School Board provides College Management Group with a tailored Dean's Report which captures highlighted news and briefings on key areas such as marketing, internationalisation, digital learning and DTP activities.

2.8 Accommodation had been identified to house the integrated Graduate School; which, following the centralisation of PGT administration will be a central facility for all PG administration.

2.9 A PGR Working Group was established to consider initiatives to promote recruitment and conversion.

3. Summaries of Feedback from other Mechanisms

As in previous years one of the significant areas which provides students with the opportunity to deliver feedback is through the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES).

The annual progress review, in addition to being a formal method of tracking progress, gives students the opportunity to engage in dialogue about their research and explore ideas with other academics. To ensure that students are given a number of opportunities to discuss issues with their supervisory team an early point review takes place within the first three months of registration in each year of study. This provides an opportunity for students to identify issues in the initial stages of their research.

The Graduate School works closely with the student representatives who provide formal feedback from the student community to the Graduate School Board. A number of initiatives have resulted directly from this dialogue including the Graduate School's commitment to participate in the Scottish Mental Health First Aid Certificate training.

4. Issues arising/New Initiatives

The Graduate School has introduced the PGR Den which is a new online forum to support students through their postgraduate journey. This initiative provides useful resources and tools to assist in giving the student an opportunity to reflect on their skills, connect online with each other and other students in a cross-disciplinary fashion whilst accessing key support services. This enterprise will continue to develop into a fully interactive platform to include a supervisor space which will provide online training elements including a quiz and sources of advice and support.

A Postgraduate Convenor Away Day was hosted at the Learning and Teaching Centre in the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in March 2016. The programme included a mixture of operational issues such as the credit system, website and supervisor revalidation and strategic developments including how to maximise marketing and recruitment opportunities, promoting linkages between the PGT and PGR communities and the PGC role and how this links with the Graduate School's strategic vision.

To improve international sponsor reporting, which has been historically a time-consuming and inefficient process, the Graduate School have worked closely with colleagues in MaRIO to develop an in-house online proforma which will prepopulate much of the information and provide a mechanism to better manage the information that supports the processing of these reports. In discussion with MaRIO it is suggested that this initiative could be adopted cross university.

Cohort building activities continue to be a focal point in bringing together the postgraduate community. In addition to the DTP activities a social calendar has been introduced. These events have both a social and cohort building aspect with the objectives being to help students to develop meaningful connections with colleagues in different but related departments, develop a social community and facilitate ongoing networking and collaborative opportunities between individuals.
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5. PRES Action Plans/Update

The Graduate School continues to consider the 2015 PRES results and with this in mind is keen to continue to actively contribute to the improvement of the student experience in those areas which were identified as requiring attention. Whilst there were areas which clearly generated high satisfaction rates such as supervisory support and working space there were other areas such as

access to teaching opportunities and how to access institution wide policies on discrimination, bullying and harassment which had fared less well.

Key Area 1: Supervision
This was one of the strongest areas with high scores across most areas. However to build upon the successes achieved thus far it has been important to ensure that the supervisory training provided by the Graduate School adapts to meet the supervisors' needs both in terms of practical issues and their continuing professional development. To supplement the bi-annual supervisor development workshops an online platform called the Supervisor Den will provide an online training and information resource which will include interactive elements based on a scenario-based online quiz. Dedicated space will be available for advice on mental health and wellbeing from the supervisor's perspective to equip them to identify student mental health issues.   Less experienced supervisors will also be required to attend face to face workshops.

Key area 2: Resources
Workspace allocation continues to be an issue which is addressed at local level, with the Graduate School having limited involvement with this aspect of student life. The PGR Den has been developed in a fashion to provide students with information on what resources are available to them and with the establishment of a seminar series based on career pathways this is a further resource open to all students across the disciplines.

Key area 3: Research Culture
Cohort building activities continue to be at the forefront of the Graduate School's research culture. With the establishment of an active social programme of events, both staff and student led, it is anticipated that this will be a mechanism for providing a supportive, stimulating collegiate environment. The Science Den was a key example of cross-disciplinary collaborations where students from diverse research areas worked in teams to pitch for a £10k award to design a biological tool.

The DTP programme continues to develop themed events with staff engagement to provide a strong sense of identify within the cohort.

Key area 4: Progress, Assessment and Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities
The Graduate School's online progress system has undergone some further enhancements to provide both students and supervisors the opportunity to provide consistent feedback at appropriate contact points throughout the student journey. Additional functionality includes the ability to print a student transcript from the student training record which interfaces directly with the research training programme.   The redesign of the progress review webpage has created a more informative site focussing on content and in a more simplistic design format. Feedback from both students and staff on the redesigned site has been positive.

The supervisory team's role and responsibilities continues to form a major component of the supervisor development workshops, and with the creation of a space for supervisors on the PGR Den it is intended that this will be an additional platform to provide supervisors with access to newsfeeds, guidelines and other useful content. The Graduate School will work with the academic community to help to develop this facility.

Key area 5: Research Skills
As in previous years the Graduate School has introduced a number of new courses to the suite of professional skills training courses. Funding awards of £11k to date for period 2016/17 were made to

student led training activities which has proved to be a successful mechanism for further enhancement of transferable skills opportunities.

Key area 6: Teaching Opportunities
Teaching opportunities through the Graduate Teaching Assistant programme continue to be advertised through the biannual induction sessions.   The PGR Den features a link to the Developing as a Teacher programme.

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13 03 2017
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Graduate School PGR Report – Science and Engineering 15/16

1. Introduction / Summary Statement
(a short statement about progress, achievements, notable events or changes for the Graduate School during the previous year)

In 2015/16 the CSE Graduate School built on existing successes. PGR numbers increased from 611 to 630 and PGR participation in University and Graduate School-level training increased from 1630 to 1770.

The Graduate School Residential was again a success (as evidenced by participant feedback), which is crucially important as it helps build the PGR community. We continued to improve local procedure and developed new events this year which aim to continue the focus of building a community, including a science lecture/ceilidh and a science writing competition, which augmented long-standing activities such as the Science Slam. It is also of note that we increased our social media twitter account to over 700 users. This is used to promote events and update students on training opportunities and is an important mechanism in developing a sense of community.

Notable events/achievements (in addition to those highlighted under section 4) included: the highest number of applications to the Graduate School Mobility fund received since the scheme commenced, a PhD student publishing in Nature, a successful recruitment event for PGT students which provided information on PhD study, and the introduction of a new supervisor seminar pilot programme.

2. Summary Report from Graduate School Board or PG Committee Business
(a summary of business items, key decisions, etc.)

Business Items included the following:

- Annual progress review panel meetings debrief to align procedures between Schools (except where strong discipline-related reasons exist).
- The EPSRC Review – this was a significant undertaking, with a positive outcome for the GS.
- The Dean visited all Schools to explain the purpose of the Graduate School and to help staff understand the context and drivers which affect supervision interaction (the meetings were part of our 2015 supervisor development programme). These meetings provided an overview of the challenges faced by the Graduate School and by the Schools, allowing school feedback to be scheduled into Graduate School planning / business.
- A review of student recruitment and sources of funding. From this it is clear that the College invests considerable support in PGR funding (an average of 38 students per year over the last four year, excluding the College Industry Fund).
- The collection of information on student achievements in a consistent and systematic way and to share this information via, for example, the College newsletter.
- It was agreed that a CDT 'pipeline' process be established in order to support staff to write better CDT bids, whether these be cross School or cross College.

3. Summaries of feedback from other mechanisms

(other internal mechanisms, progress review highlights, other surveys that collect feedback from PGRs)

- A survey on the Graduate School residential (96% of participants would recommend the residential to other students).
- Student representation at the Graduate School Board meetings and through the Student Liaison Group who review current provision and generate ideas for developing the Graduate School community, for example, the idea for holding a lecture/ceilidh event came from discussions at a Student Liaison Group meeting.
- Since the progress review process relies on the submission of word documents, it is difficult to analyse the potentially useful feedback provided therein. It is hoped that this information can be more fully utilised in future years.
- Our Dean is also a champion for research integrity and has an open door policy for PGR students to approach her with any concerns about research integrity and so grassroots feedback in available by this means.

4. Issues arising / New Initiatives
(enhancements, developments, collaborations, events, funding successes)

Enhancements, developments and events for this period include:

- Pop-Up makerspace

This event ran during Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2015 and attracted over 400 attendees. It was open to all staff and students from the University but the main audience was Science and Engineering PGR students. Visitors were given the opportunity to make something using new technology in a temporary 'pop-up' space at the south front entrance of the campus. In view of the success of this event, a further fully interdisciplinary event is planned for session 2016 (the Graduate School has been successful in obtaining Chancellor's Funding to support this event).

- Social media

In 2015, the GS increased its social media footprint – the Graduate School twitter account has over 700 users and regularly sees over 1000 engagements for scholarship postings.

- Supervisor development programme

In this year, the Graduate School piloted its new approach to supervisor development through the provision of three lunchtime training sessions on: transferable skills training, UKVI requirements, and recruitment. The latter was the most popular with circa 50 supervisors attending. Other sessions were less well-attended, and so subject School conveners were asked to consult with their colleagues to help develop the 2016/17 programme.

- Revisions to PGR training programme

Additions to the training programme included science policy training, a revised statistics course and mental health first aid.

- Involvement with the Glasgow TEDx event

The Graduate School worked with Strategic Marketing to deliver a mini 'Makerspace' event which included researchers from Engineering and Geographical and Earth Sciences. The TEDx audience were given the opportunity to learn about leading research in gravitational waves, robotic skin and bendable electronics and creative Geographic Information Systems and to make bags and observe 3D holographs.

Examples of new funding successes are:

- Obtaining over £200,000 in industry funding as part of a matched College-funding/industry scheme (partner companies include Rolls Royce, Total Gas and the Aircraft Research Association).
- A further two students funded by the IAPETUS Centre for Doctoral Training.
- Funding from the European Commission for an Innovative Training Network studentship.
- Three students were selected for Carnegie Scholarship awards (this is a particularly good result when only 15 students are selected in total from across Scotland).

5. PRES Action Plans / Updates
(Updated action plans to scores broken down by 'key areas')

Introductions / Comments re Key Performance Indicators or areas of special interest

As previously reported, the overall satisfaction rating for Science and Engineering students increased from 82% in 2013 to 89% in 2015.

The percentage satisfaction ratings improved in every category for students and in all but two categories ratings are higher than the Russell Group (RG) average.

The following aspects have shown the greatest improvement since the 2013 Survey:

- Suitable induction (from 60% to 72%)
- Understanding deadlines for formal monitoring (71% to 87%)
- Valuing and responding to feedback (55% to 65%)
- Awareness of supervisor's responsibilities towards themselves (81% to 91%)

Updates on actions are provided below.

Key Area 1: Supervision

- In order to update supervisors on policy/procedural aspects, and on transferable skills training all-School meetings chaired by the Dean took place in January/February 2015 and included information on the training agenda. These meetings were well received.
- Dr Tony Bromley from the University of Leeds was invited to speak at a supervisor training session as part of a short series of lunchtime seminars for supervisors.
- It was intended that useful resources for supervisors be collated. This took place, but outside of the reporting period.

Key Area 2: Resources

The School of Chemistry hoped to establish a PGR social space but this matter is ongoing in view of campus redevelopment work and space challenges within the Joseph Black Building.

Key Area 3: Research Culture

- The Graduate School and Schools attempts to provide greater clarity on the purpose of the Graduate School/School inductions.
- Additional efforts to ensure that School inductions align in terms of content will be made in 2016.
- An information/advice event was held in order to enhance induction by removing the amount of information which is provided on the day.
- Discussions on the provision of information about non-academic support took place with the Student Liaison Group and how best to provide this information will be considered further in 2016.
- Schools have taken considerable steps to improve their seminar programmes and seminars are now publicised on the Graduate School web pages.

Key Area 4: Progress, assessment and understanding of roles and responsibilities

- Schools held meetings for all students in January 2016 to clarify progression requirements. This is in advance of progression in the summer, so allows students time to engage with the process and understand what is needed.
- The mechanisms for students to provide feedback were reiterated by School conveners, by the Dean via induction, and by the Graduate School Manager through email communications, social media and at Student Liaison Group meetings.
- The Code of practice where roles and responsibilities are outlined is reviewed annually and the updated version sent to staff and students.

Key Area 5: Research Skills and Professional Development

- This area was not highlighted for development following PRES, although it is considered that each year the programme is enhanced. Examples of such changes are outlined in section 4 (for both staff and students)

Key Area 6: Teaching opportunities

Satisfaction in this area has increased to 65% but we would like this to be higher. An audit of School-level provision was proposed and this is being undertaken in conjunction with the College Learning and Teaching Committee.

6. Graduate School Review Action Update
(where this is relevant and a review has been reasonably recent)

NA