



Postgraduate Student Survey Outcomes 2024/25

In the table below, you will see a summary of overall suggested actions which emerged from the 2024-25 survey, as well as a summary of what has been done so far and plans currently in place for 2025-26 and beyond.

	You Said...	We Did...	During 2026-27, we plan to....
1.	The department induction schedule is information heavy and overwhelming, leading to student disengagement.	• In 2025 we shortened the induction to one day in the Department and limited each session to 45 minutes.	• Deliver a half-day, morning induction in the Department. • Where possible, pre-record content and upload it to Moodle for students to access independently. • Stagger induction content across Michaelmas Term 2026 to reduce information overload.
2.	Key processes were unclear, with information fragmented across emails and web pages.	• Provided talks and briefings on the First Year Report (FYR), which students found helpful in reducing stress. • Shared deadlines and timelines for formal processes. • Produced guidance summary and sent to all students completing the FYR.	• Review webpage content annually to ensure FAQs are clear and up to date. • Send an annual FYR information email. • Continue in-person departmental FYR training (typically in Easter Term).
3.	Strong need for clearer support for careers beyond academia, including industry engagement and alumni insight	• Offered career related talks and events, which students found valuable. • Supported postgraduate led initiatives and careers discussions where possible. • Signposted to careers support sessions outside of the Department in the wider University.	• Expand career focused workshops (industry, consulting, startups, academic pathways). • Improve communication of career support and signpost to external opportunities.



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4.	Clearer Lab Expectations - uniformity in the lab expectations documents and clear maintenance of shared responsibilities	• Sample lab expectations documents were shared with academic staff to share good practice. • Lab expectation document 'good examples' were shared with and approved at the Postgraduate Education Committee,	• Continue updating and sharing relevant guidance annually with academic staff ahead of Michaelmas Term.
5.	Opportunities to display and present posters for longer	• Alongside the compulsory Showcase Day for each Research Interest Group (RIG), the PG Team hosted an annual social poster event.	• Expand on existing events offered in the Department where students can showcase their work. • Circulate and share any University wide opportunities where students are able to present posters via the weekly digest email.
6.	Departmental travel bursary amount is not enough to cover a conference trip outside of Europe.	• PG team presented this feedback at the Postgraduate Education Committee and it was agreed the amount of this bursary should be increased. • Going forward in 25/26 the Department bursary will increase from £500 to £750	• Review the amount of the bursary annually looking at student's previous claim amounts and taking into consideration increasing costs of travel globally.
7.	Various concerns regarding equipment in the department (e.g analytical services and office)	• Have raised and passed on concerns to the senior management team	• Will continue to explore and be open to conversations and further improvement on a case-by-case basis. • Ask that individual students please contact PG Team if conditions are significantly impacting the progression of their research.



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8.	There is a desire for a stronger sense of cohort identity and collaboration.	- PG team have dedicated a social event for each month usually tied to a theme of celebration or activity. - Undertaken focus group sessions to discuss PG provision and how best to improve socials and engagement from researchers in the department.	- Invite students to revive a Department Social Network group which can run social events by students for students with a small, allocated budget. - Encourage the QiCN to be revived in the Department if any students would like to take this on.
9.	There are concerns about project support in some research groups.	Continued to offer support on a case by case where it has been raised with the PG Team.	Work closely with senior management to promote adherence to the Code of Practice and support positive supervisory relationships.
10.	Research Culture in the Department is lacking	- The PG team has secured funding from the <i>University of Cambridge Enhancing Research Culture Fund</i>. - Phase 1 of the project involves assessing the current research culture in the Department through focus groups, identifying areas of strength and areas that need addressing. This phase is currently underway, aiming to be completed by the start of the 2026-27 academic year.	- Facilitate Phase 2 of the project. - This will build on the insights from Phase 1, aiming to foster a better research/working culture in the Department.
11.	There is no clear mechanism for students to provide feedback to Postgraduate Education Committee representatives.	- PG student representatives created an online feedback form to be shared with all PG students. - PG team created feedback poster, displayed this on office board as well as on the Cybercafe screens. - Provided printed copies of the poster to student reps to distribute/display.	Review effectiveness of this mechanism with student representatives and continue promoting it regularly.



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12.	The role of the academic mentor is not clear	• The PG Team clarified the role via a paper approved by the Postgraduate Education Committee and updated the website. • Examples of what the academic mentor can be used for and what it is not for also was included on the webpage guidance. • A coffee morning was held in Easter Term to introduce mentors and mentees.	• Review the webpage annually and evaluate the mentor introduction event to ensure it remains useful and appropriately timed.