**LONDON'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY**

**UCL**

*GOS ICH*
**STAFF STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**
**Meeting to be held on**

**Monday 14th June 2021 at 12.00noon**
**Virtual – via Microsoft TEAMS**

**Minutes**

**Present:**    Claudiu Cozmescu – Lead RSR, GGM, Year 2 – Chair
Prof Claire Thorne, Departmental Graduate Tutor (Research) - Co-Chair
Annie Murphy, Research Degrees Administrator – (Minutes)
Dr Frederique Liegeois, PG Research Tutor,
Developmental Neurosciences (DN)
Dr Andrew Stoker, Postgraduate Tutor,
Developmental Biology & Cancer (DBC)
Dr Mona Bajaj-Elliott, Postgraduate Research Tutor,
Infection, Immunity, Inflammation (III)
Prof Hannah Mitchison, Postgraduate Research Tutor, Genetics and Genomic
Medicine (GGM)
Sophie Bennett, RTDR, Population, Policy and Practice (PPP)
Jennie Chandler, RTDR, Developmental Biology & Cancer (DBC)
Rosie Marshall, RTDR, Developmental Biology & Cancer (DBC)
Jeshmi Jeyabalan Srikaran, RTDR, Genetics and Genomic Medicine (GGM)
Raj Rajeev, RTDR, Infection, Immunity, Inflammation (III)
Natasha Schoeler, RTDR, Developmental Neurosciences (DN)

**Student Representation (RSRs):**
Farah Alam, RSR, DBC, Year 1
Raasib Mahmood, RSR, DBC, Year 2
Nicole Filipow, RSR, III, Year 2
Fatimah Almousawi, RSR, GGM, Year 1
Ivan Doykov, RSR, GGM, Year 3
Machaela Palor, RSR, III, Year 1
Renuka Kadirkamanathan, RSR, III, Year 1
Antonio Greco, RSR, III, Year 1
Alice Burleigh, RSR, III, Year 2
Georgia Stimpson, RSR, DN, Year 1
Clarissa Sorger, RSR, DN, Year 2/3
Amanda Clery, RSR, PPP, Year 1
Lucy Karwatowska, RSR, PPP, Year 2
Gabriela Toledo, RSR, PPP, Year 2
Emeline Rougeaux, RSR, PPP, Year 3
Tahmina Aktar, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion RSR, Year 1
Reem Alkharji, Postgraduate Society RSR, Year 2

**Apologies:**     Stella Fusco, Senior Research Degrees Administrator
Prof Mary Fewtrell, Postgraduate Research Tutor, Population, Policy and Practice (PPP)
Kerry-Anne Kite, RSR, III, Year 3
Remi Looi-Somoye, RSR, DBC, Year 3
Diana Rosenthal, RSR, PPP, Year 3

| 1 | **Welcome and introductions** |
|---|---|
| | CC and CT introduced the new committee members who have recently joined as RSRs. |
| | - Reem Alkharji, Year 2 PhD Student – Postgraduate Society RSR |
| | - Tahmina Aktar, Year 1 PhD Student – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion RSR |
| 2 | **Minutes of the previous meeting 9th November 2020** |
| | Minutes agreed and approved |
| 3 | **Matters Arising from the minutes** |
| | To be addressed via the Agenda |
| 4 | **Student Mentor Meetings – Oral reports by Mentors** |
| | All departments reported that student mentor meetings had taken place or were about to take place for the summer term. Students are looking forward to more face-to-face events. Concerns noted were mainly related to the pandemic and there were no other major issues to report. PPP reps will meet with students in July and update on their survey results at a later date. No student representatives were available to report from DBC, but annual monitoring meetings have not flagged any major problems within the department. AS thanked the RSRs for continuing mentor meetings at this late stage in the year when regular contact usually fades under normal circumstances. |
| 5 | **Recent developments for attention of research students** |
| | a) Funding extensions and other Doctoral School activities |
| | i) UCL Stipend Extension Scheme |
| | The UCL Doctoral School submitted a proposal for a funding package to cover stipend extensions of up to 3 months for students who are entering into their final year with effect from 31st March 2021. This second round of the scheme has now been rolled out for eligible students to apply. Students have been notified about the application process via email and the application form and eligibility criteria can also be found on the UCL Doctoral School webpage (https://www.grad.ucl.ac.uk/support-and-advice/response-plan-to-coronavirus.html#funding). The application process remains the same as last year; students will be required to provide justification for the extension request, subject to supervisor approval, and supervisors will need to provide evidence to the department that the funders are not able to provide any further funding. The funding extensions will cover the stipend only; students will be expected to transfer into CRS at the usual time so tuition fees will not be charged beyond this point. Once the RDO has given approval based on the funding information provided, applications will be forwarded onto the UCL Doctoral School, who will assess the final outcome and will notify students and supervisors accordingly. |
| | ii) UKRI funded students |

The UKRI Phase 2a funding extensions have been processed by central UCL and students should have now been notified of the outcome of their application.

iii)     CHR CIO funded students (GOS ICH PhD Studentship Scheme)

A funding bid has been submitted to the Board of Trustees to allow CIO-funded students to apply for up to 3 months additional funding. This is in addition to the 3 months approved for first- and second-year students in April 2020. The department is awaiting official notification of the outcome before notifying students and supervisors, but it is understood that the funding bid has been received well by the Trustees.

**ACTION: Communication to the CIO-funded students and supervisors once CIO Trustee meeting decisions have been communicated to the RDO.**

Post-meeting update:
The CHR-CIO has agreed to fund short stipend extensions (of 1 to 3 months) for second- and third-year students who are currently funded by the Trust and whose studies have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and supervisors have been notified by email about the eligibility criteria and how to apply.

b)  Research Log and Inkpath Integration

Inkpath is now fully integrated into the Research Log. RSRs confirmed that skills points for courses are now added automatically and have also been backdated successfully on the Research Log.

Prior complaints regarding Inkpath have been forwarded onto the team for action and developments on system functionality are ongoing. It was clarified that the course feedback is more of an internal assessment for the Inkpath team and is not consistent across courses, so it was advised that students should not refer to these ratings for course recommendations. AS will follow up with the Doctoral School and Inkpath team, and students will be updated regarding any developments.

c)  IRIS profiles

The pilot of IRIS profiles for PhD students is currently being tested at the Institute of Education. The Doctoral School are aiming to roll out IRIS profiles to other Institutes in waves of 1000 profiles per week, so that all research students will have a profile by the start of the next academic year. It is anticipated that students will have scope to develop their own research profiles; further details about how this will managed will be provided once the details have been confirmed. The department will continue to follow up with the Doctoral School on the progress of this and students will be kept informed of any developments.

**ACTION: Email communication to students and supervisors about IRIS profiles once an update is available from the Doctoral School (RDO).**

| 6 | **Thesis Committees and Annual Monitoring process - Update and changes to process for 2021-22** |
| | |
| | RECEIVED APPENDIX A: Division of responsibility (TCs vs PG Tutors) |
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| | The proposed changes to the annual monitoring process to take effect from the next academic year were summarised. Since Thesis Committees have been introduced to focus on academic progress, the PG tutor role will transition into more of a personal tutor role focusing on pastoral care. The annual monitoring process will be streamlined further in line with TCs, such that new students will meet with their postgraduate tutor around 4 months after registration to ensure that |

they are settling in well at the Institute. This opportunity for students to meet with their postgraduate tutor in the early stages of their registration should help students to build a personal relationship with their tutor. It was suggested that the PG tutors should send a gentle reminder to reinstate the open-door policy, although it was noted that every effort is made to mention this in each student workshop. Based on the proposed changes, annual monitoring will now take place in two batches per year, with the timing of annual meetings dependent on the student registration start date.

It was acknowledged that TC meetings have been slow to get off the ground under the current circumstances and that a hybrid system between the TC and PG Tutor roles may be necessary for the start of the next academic year to ensure that no students slip through the net. TC membership is approved for each student at the stage of registration, however, occurrence of meetings is not heavily monitored at departmental or faculty level. It was agreed that it would be impractical for the RDO or DGT to manage a tracking system for TC meetings. Instead, it was agreed that secondary supervisors, as members of the TC, should ensure that students have the required support to arrange TC meetings. Stronger emphasis should also be placed on the benefit of the TC meetings for students. It was noted that the elog provides a place to record TC meetings, and annual monitoring would flag up where these have not taken place, albeit sometimes retrospectively.

It was requested whether there could be further clarification about the division of responsibilities for the TC reports and where these should be uploaded on the elog. It was noted that the Faculty TC guidance is due to be updated in response to feedback received to date. However, it was confirmed that the process will remain the same; TC Chairs are required to provide a written report for circulation to the committee, and it is the student's responsibility to upload the final approved copy of the report to their elog. It was clarified there is no requirement to submit the TC reports to the RDO. It was agreed that a reminder email should be sent to supervisors to clarify the responsibilities for TC Chairs. It was agreed that for further clarification, Document B should be amended to state where each form/report should be submitted and/or uploaded with hyperlinks to the online forms (where applicable). As discussed in previous meetings, it was noted that a TC agenda checklist and report template would be beneficial for TC meetings going forwards.

**ACTIONS:**

- **Email reminder to students about the departmental open-door policy (PG tutors).**

- **Updated Faculty TC guidance to be forwarded onto RSRs for feedback once available (AS).**

- **Document B to be revised with details of where reports should be submitted and/or uploaded with hyperlinks to online forms, where applicable, and revised version to be circulated to students and supervisors once finalised (SF, RDO).**

- **Email reminder to supervisors to clarify that TC Chairs should send meeting reports directly to TC members for approval, and it is the responsibility of the student to upload the final copy, approved by the committee, to their elog (SF, RDO).**

| 7 | **PGR feedback, including COVID-19-related issues:** |
|---|---|

a) Supervisory support, remote working issues, wellbeing

No further feedback was provided on supervisory support, or remote working issues, and it was agreed that the initial issues experienced with remote working are likely to have now been resolved.

RSRs requested whether there is funding available to be allocated for student well-being events. It was confirmed that the department would be very happy to support wellbeing focused events in the current climate. However, it was noted that the PGR budget has been cut for the next financial year and funding for the proposed events would be subject to approval by the DGT-R. It was suggested that the RSRs contact the EDI Wellbeing Focus Group for advice on their experience of running similar events.

Post meeting update: SF confirmed there are funds available to cover student-related events from the GOS ICH Postgraduate Society budget. Each financial year, 1st August-31st July, £800 is ringfenced for academic/social events. Therefore, sufficient funding is likely to be available to cover the proposed student wellbeing events, if the events were to take place, for example, on a termly basis.

**ACTIONS:**

- **GOS ICH PG Society budget available for student wellbeing events to be confirmed (SF).**

- **PG Society to contact the EDI Wellbeing Focus Group for advice on running wellbeing events (RSRs).**

- **PG Society to provide SF with a proposal of student events with an indication of whether they are academic, social, or a mix of both, as well as an estimate of cost per event (RSRs).**

b) Preliminary papers received on student survey feedback

i) RECEIVED APPENDIX B: Student feedback on auditing MSc courses

Results were presented from a student survey about auditing MSc modules and subsequent student recommendations.

The GOS ICH PhD Roadmap states that research students may "audit" Masters modules provided at the Institute and wider Faculty. However, RSRs have reported ongoing issues around permission to audit MSc courses and access to the relevant materials on Moodle. It was agreed that a clear definition for MSc auditing is required for transparency to Module Leads about the purpose of PhD students attending courses. It was requested that, at a minimum, students should be granted access to Moodle materials, where rooms have reached capacity. In some cases, positive feedback has been received about PhD student participation in MSc module group discussions and activities. However, auditing access levels may need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to address concerns from Module Leads over room capacity, and PhD students dominating participation in teaching and assessed activities. It was noted that asynchronous materials now available from remote teaching should help to alleviate the issues by facilitating a hybrid approach for auditing access. Concerns were noted about the open sharing of online teaching resources. However, it was acknowledged that, in most cases, teaching staff would value the wider dispersal of their teaching material. It was suggested that an online resource should be created to provide PhD students with an overview of the MSc modules available for auditing and the level of access permitted for each module. It was noted that the IGH auditing database has been primarily designed for MSc students, and therefore, PhD students should be aware that Module Leads may be dealing with two different cohorts of "auditors".

It was confirmed that a role has now been assigned on Moodle for students to access materials as an 'auditor'. It was clarified that it had not been possible for the term 'auditor' to be changed in Moodle and this terminology is not likely to change across UCL in

the near future. Nevertheless, the Institute has the scope to use their own terminology to define the auditor role in communication to students and Module Leads, and it was agreed that the terminology used within the Institute and wider Faculty does need to be reviewed.

**ACTION:**
**Survey feedback to be shared with the Directors of Education and Mike Rowson for their input on the next steps (CT, AS).**

ii) RECEIVED APPENDIX C: Student feedback on Incorporating publications into PhD theses

Results were presented from a student survey about incorporating publications into PhD theses and subsequent student recommendations.

The UCL Doctoral School handbook advises students that if they wish to include their own publication in their thesis, it must be re-written in order to be included in the main body of the text. If students wish to include the original publication, the PDF must be included within the appendices. PhD candidates at many other UK universities (e.g. King's College London, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the University of Southampton) are given the choice to incorporate publications in the main body when formatting their thesis, with universities requiring students to submit a declaration with their thesis stating the contributions of any other authors (e.g. supervisors, co-authors on included papers). Subsequently, many ICH students feel that not being able to include publications in their PhD theses is unfair, and some feel disadvantaged by choosing not to publish because they do not have time to write publications as well as rewrite their chapters during their PhD. Additionally, with the shift of students publishing more papers during their PhD, students believe that not being able to include these publications in their theses negatively impacts on their chance of securing post-doctoral positions and later career prospects.

Concerns previously discussed were raised around self-plagiarism and how this is phrased in the UCL Doctoral School Handbook. RSRs suggested that the issues around self-plagiarism could be addressed more explicitly in student induction events. The committee were reminded that the issue relates more widely to copyright permissions for publishing in journals. It was acknowledged that the approval process to permit reproduction of content may vary by publisher and the [guidance](#) for BMJ was shared as an example. It was agreed that further clarity is needed regarding the process of seeking approval by publishers and the distinction in approval processes between open and closed access journals.

**ACTIONS:**

- **Online survey to be made available for sharing more widely across the Faculty (LW), and Chloe Li, Faculty Research Student Representative, to be contacted to facilitate circulation of the student survey to other Institutes (CC).**

- **Student feedback on incorporating publications into PhD theses to be discussed with the Doctoral School and raised at UCL RDC (AS).**

- **An open letter to be drafted for circulation to supervisors, subject to approval by CT, to gauge whether senior staff agree that students should be able to include their own publications in the main body of their thesis, and to gather insights about their experience of this issue in other universities (RSRs).**

- **Clarity to be sought about the process at LSHTM for including text verbatim in main body of thesis, and the distinction in approval processes between open and closed access journals (LW).**

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| | i)      RECEIVED APPENDIX D: Student feedback on payment for teaching support<br><br>Results were presented from a student survey about payment for teaching support and subsequent student recommendations.<br><br>The PGTA Code of Practice was introduced in September 2020, which sets out the guidelines for payment of teaching support. Survey results showed that most PhD students who have taught, both before and after September 2020, were not satisfied with the advertising and payment processing for the teaching they had undertaken. The majority of students who had never taught at ICH before said it was because they had not found appropriate opportunities. Since the introduction of the PGTA Code of Practice, no students were paid at Grade 6 as stated, however they were all paid above London Living Wage. Students who undertook unpaid roles were unaware that the opportunity was unpaid at the time of accepting because the advertisement did not mention payment. Students who were offered prior payment information were paid less than agreed, which may suggest that additional costs (e.g. commission, holiday pay) have not been considered when the payment has been submitted through Unitemps. Student also reported issues around timely processing of payments with the majority believing that the current timeframe for payment defined by UCL guidelines is too slow.<br><br>It was confirmed that arrangements for some of the student recommendations are already in progress; admin teams have been advised on the correct payment processing procedure and arrangements have been made to backdate payments to any students who have been underpaid for their teaching support since September 2020. A standard template, to include payment information, is also in the process of being developed for use by module leads when advertising PhD teaching opportunities.<br><br>Concerns were raised about the recognition of informal teaching support which is unpaid (e.g. supporting laboratory-based MSc students). A document has been developed with the Faculty Tutor for Medical Sciences to set out guidance for PhD students to continue to support MSc students. It was reiterated that this type of support work is not considered formal teaching and therefore will not be paid but can be recognised in other forms such as skills points. It was noted that most guidance available is aimed at PGTA roles, and RSRs requested whether guidance could be developed for other roles undertaken by PhD students (e.g. data analysis support). It was clarified that there may be some confusion caused by postdocs accepting PGTA roles, as they are contracted to provide teaching support and therefore are not entitled to receive additional payment. RSRs requested that advertisements are explicit about whether the post is a PGTA or Teaching Associate (TA) role to help students distinguish between paid versus unpaid opportunities. It was confirmed that PhD students should be paid for PGTA and TA roles; any students who have not received payment should follow this up with the Directors of Education. |
| 8 | **Cohort Building - Academic and Social Events:**<br><br>i)      Skill Exchange Programme<br><br>The first 3 sessions of the Skill Exchange Programme are scheduled to take place in the Autumn term in the following format:<br><br>• 20-minute Introductory talk on a specific skill by a Postdoc<br>• 10-minute talk on skill-related techniques by 2 PhD students (2nd and 3rd year)<br>• Networking and Q&A<br><br>RSRs requested feedback on whether the programme should be piloted within DBC in the Autumn term before it is rolled out more widely across ICH. It was suggested that RSRs |

contact Claire Smith to avoid duplication of the online skills sessions run for MSc students. It was reiterated that the main aim of the Skill Exchange Programme is to facilitate networking between PhD students and Postdocs.

**ACTION: RSRs/RTDRS to arrange a meeting with Claire Smith to find out further information about the content and format of the online skills sessions run for MSc students (CC, JC).**

ii)     3MT

It was confirmed that the winner of the Faculty 3MTcompetition (Emma Walker, IEHC) and runner up (Fanis Michailidis, GOSICH) will be going through to the UCL final on 17th June.

It has been observed that there is strong under-representation of male contestants at GOS ICH. It acknowledged that some Research and Teaching Departments have few male students, and therefore, it is worth bearing in mind other factors such as subjects studied. Personality and cultural differences were also acknowledged as possible contributing factors.

The committee were invited to feedback any suggestions on how to improve male engagement in the 3MT competition, as well as ideas for improving gender balance in other areas across the Institute.

iii)     Postgraduate Society

Reem Alkharji has been recently appointed as the 'Postgraduate Society Representative' and will be organising upcoming student social events with the help of 1 RSR from each department. Events are currently planned to take place twice a month (one morning and one evening event) and each event will be attended by at least one RSR.

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| 9 | **GOS ICH Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Student Focus Group update**<br><br>EDI Committee (JC)<br>Jon Clayden introduced himself as the new Chair of the EDI Committee. Vania de Toledo has also been recently appointed as Co-Chair. Staff and students were thanked for their responses to the EDI Committee survey. A summary of the covid-related findings was presented at the recent GOS ICH Town Hall meeting, and it was confirmed that further analysis of the results is ongoing. The importance of the communication flow between the EDI and SSCC was emphasised, and this will now be facilitated by Tahmina Aktar in her new role as the Equality Diversity and Inclusion RSR.<br><br>**ACTION: Tahmina Aktar to be introduced to EDI committee in her new role as the EDI RSR (CC).**<br><br>Student Focus Group (ID)<br>Due to low student interest, it has been agreed that the Student Focus Group was not working successfully as a link between the SSCC and EDI committees. Instead, the role of a Student Staff Exchange Committee Representative has been created, and Ivan Doykov will take up this role to facilitate the flow of communication between the two committees.<br><br>Race Equity Group<br>Update to be provided to the SSCC at the Autumn term meeting. |

| 10 | **AOB** |
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| | Academic Rep of the Year Award |
| | Congratulations were given to Claudiu Cozmescu who was awarded 'Faculty Academic Rep of the Year'. |
| 11 | **Date of Next Meeting** – 2021/22 dates to be confirmed |

| Summary of Action Points: Date of Meeting | Item | Action | By Whom | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12/11/2019 | 4 | ER to provide CT with student software requirements (which software and why). | ER | O |
| | | CT to discuss with Tansy Jones regarding software issue and investigate whether it is possible to carry out the requests with IT or to consider appropriate funding model. | CT | O |
| | | CT to consider how to manage institute-wide Post Doc support service for PhD students. | CT | O |
| 24/06/2020 | 4 | Sophie Bennett to contact Kathryn Hesketh about Post Doc Statistics support and feedback updates to CT. | SB, KH | O |
| 24/06/2020 | 6 | CT to share link to Psychology student well-being support system for students once this becomes available. | CT | O |
| 09/11/2020 | 7 | CT to discuss with JS about how to approach creating a local database for aligning PhD students to MSc courses for remote teaching. | CT | O |
| 09/11/2020 | 10 | PM to discuss Open Access funding issues from BRC perspective with LT. | PM | O |
| 09/11/2020 | 10 | AS to arrange meeting with Jane Simmonds, Joe Budd and Mike Rowson to discuss potential approaches for PhD internships. | AS | O |
| 24/03/2021 | 5 i) | CT/RDO to contact Kasia Bronk (Acting Head Researcher Experience) to make the requests regarding a course listings/directory and Bloomsbury PG Network courses to be added on Inkpath. | CT, RDO | O |
| 24/03/2021 | 5 ii) | RSRs to encourage student cohorts to complete PRES 2021 and ICH EDI Survey. | RSRs | C |
| 24/03/2021 | 5 iii) c) | Communication to students and supervisors to take place once UCL stipend extension funding is confirmed and to the CIO-funded students and supervisors once CIO Trustee meeting decisions have been communicated to the RDO. | CT, RDO | C |

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| 24/03/2021 | 6 | RDO to circulate outline of proposed changes and division of responsibility for the annual monitoring process once available for RSRs to feedback. | RDO | C |
| 24/03/2021 | 7) ii) a) | RDO to circulate thesis proforma for covid related research delays to students and supervisors once the final version is received from the Doctoral School. | RDO | O |
| 24/03/2021 | 7 ii) b) | CT to contact Grazia Manzotti for clarification about open access publishing process and where to find information about which publishers have open access publishing agreements in place with UCL. | CT | O |
| 24/03/2021 | 7 ii) c) | SF to follow up approval of draft i-expenses policy with R&T Department admin teams for circulation once approved. | SF | C |
| 24/03/2021 | 7 iii) | RSRs to provide to CT a list of modules / course leads / Institutes where PhD students have not been given access to teaching and materials for this to be escalated to Directors of Education.<br><br>AS to raise MSc auditing issue with Doctoral School. | RSRs<br><br>AS | C<br><br>O |
| 24/03/2021 | 7 iv) | RSRs to prepare a brief paper on incorporating publications into PhD theses.<br><br>AS to discuss RSR feedback on thesis publications at Faculty level and with the Doctoral School. | RSRs<br><br>AS | C<br><br>O |
| 24/03/2021 | 8 i) | CC to contact RTDRs regarding postdoc participation in Skills Exchange Programme. | CC | C |
| 24/03/2021 | 9 | AM to invite Laurette Bukasa to SSCC meetings for update on the GOS ICH Race Equity Group. | AM | C |
| 24/03/2021 | 9 | CT to ask Ludi Capelan about potential for reinstating workshops at GOS ICH. | CT | O |
| 24/03/2021 | 10 iii) | CT to contact Helen Bedford and Angie Wade (Co-Directors of Education) to draw their attention to the ongoing problem and to reach an Institute-level solution to prevent the inconsistencies with PhD teaching support payment. | CT | C |
| 14/06/2021 | 5 a) iii) | Communication to the CIO-funded students and supervisors once CIO Trustee meeting decisions have been communicated to the RDO. | RDO | C |
| 14/06/2021 | 5 c) | Communication to students and supervisors about IRIS profiles once an update is available from the Doctoral School. | RDO | O |
| 14/06/2021 | 6 | Email reminder to students about the departmental open-door policy. | PG Tutors | O |

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| | | Faculty TC guidance to be forwarded onto RSRs for comments once updated guidance is available. | **AS** | **O** |
| | | Document B to be revised with details of where reports should be submitted and/or uploaded with hyperlinks to online forms, where applicable, and revised version to be circulated to students and supervisors once finalised. | **SF, RDO** | **O** |
| | | Communication to supervisors to clarify that TC Chairs should send meeting reports directly to TC members for approval, and it is the responsibility of the student to upload the final copy, approved by the committee, to their elog | **SF, RDO** | **O** |
| 14/06/2021 | 7 a) | GOS ICH PG Society budget available for student wellbeing events to be confirmed. | **SF** | **C** |
| | | RSRs to contact the EDI Wellbeing Focus Group for advice on running wellbeing events. | **RSRs** | **O** |
| | | RSRs to provide SF with a proposal of student events with an indication of whether they are academic, social, or a mix of both, as well as an estimate of cost per event. | **RSRs** | **O** |
| 14/06/2021 | 7 b) i) | Online survey to be made available for sharing, and Chloe Li, Faculty RSR, to be contacted to facilitate circulation of student survey across the Faculty | **LW, CC** | **O** |
| | | Student feedback regarding theses including publications to be discussed with the Doctoral School and raised at UCL RDC. | **AS** | **O** |
| | | An open letter to be drafted for circulation to supervisors, subject to approval by CT, to gauge whether senior staff agree that students should be able to include their own publications in the main body of their thesis, and to gather insights about their experience of this issue in other universities. | **RSRs, CT** | **O** |
| | | Clarification to be sought about processes at LSHTM for including publications in main body of thesis, and the distinction in approval processes between open and closed access journals. | **LW** | **O** |
| 14/06/2021 | 8 i) | RSRs/RTDRS to arrange a meeting with Claire Smith to find out further information about the content and format of the online skills sessions run for MSc students. | **CC, JC** | **O** |
| 14/06/2021 | 9 | Tahmina Aktar to be introduced to EDI committee in her role as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion RSR. | **CC** | **O** |

# APPENDIX A: Division of responsibility (TCs vs PG Tutors)

**Division of Responsibility: Thesis Committee vs PG Tutors**

| Thesis Committee | Postgraduate Research (PGR) Team |
|---|---|
| The Thesis Committee (TC) provides degree-spanning support and advice about academic and training progress for the PhD student. The TC sits between the primary supervisor and the Departmental Graduate Tutor (Research). The aim of the TC is to give support regarding general academic progress in the research project as well as oversight over skills training and monitoring the personal development plan of the student. | PGR Tutors provide pastoral care to all postgraduate research students. The aim of a Tutor is to ensure the wellbeing of his/her PGR Tutees, and to be "on-hand" to offer guidance and advice throughout a Student's studies (with an "open door" policy). Each student is encouraged to attend an Annual Tutor meeting with their Tutor so that they can review their studies, discuss any problems, and receive support and pastoral direction. Tutors also work closely with Research Student Representatives and Research & Teaching Department Representatives to discuss and address PGR matters at departmental-level, as well as working to support and take forward the strategic aims of the Child Health Research PhD programme at Institute level. |

| Timeline* | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Month 1** | **Month 3** | **Month 6** | **Month 9** | **Month 12** | **Month 18** | **Month 24** | **Month 30** | **Month 36** | **CRS** |
| | TC1: Submit project proposal and PDP to TC | | TC2: Complete and submit 8-Month Scientific Progress Report to TC | | TC3: Upgrade Meeting | TC4: General progress review (optional) | TC5: Discuss thesis outline | | TC can be available for further meetings on request |
| Register on e-log. Complete 'Init' section. | Complete 3m section of e-log | Complete 6m section of e-log | Complete 9m section of e-log | Complete 12m and Upgrade sections of e-log (upgrade to take place between 9-18 months). Update training record - Students should have accrued approx. 20 training points | | Complete 24m section of e-log. Update training record - Students should have accrued a total of approx. 40 training points | Complete 30m section of e-log | Complete 36m section of e-log. Upgrade training record - Students should have accrued a total of approx. 60 training points | |
| | November-December: Annual Tutor meetings with all students registered between 1st July-31st December. Students to complete Annual Tutor Meeting Form B, Supervisors to complete Form A. | | May-June: Annual Tutor meetings with students registered between 1st January-30th June. Students to complete Annual Tutor Meeting Form B, Supervisors to complete Form A. | Student to complete and submit Upgrade Proposal form to the RDO for DGT approval. Primary Supervisor to submit pre-upgrade progress report to RDO, and share with student and upgrade panel. | Chair of Upgrade Panel to complete and submit Upgrade Panel Report form to RDO for DGT approval. | | | | Student to complete exam entry form via Portico approx. 4 months prior to submission of thesis. Supervisor to complete nomination of examiners form and submit to RDO for DGT approval at least 4 months prior to the Student's submission of thesis. Supervisor to request CRS status on behalf of the Student after 36 months registration. Requests for CRS to be sent to researchdegrees@ucl.ac.uk |

* Based on academic year, 1st October-30th September, FT student

**Thesis Committee**
**Research Log**
**PG Tutor/Research Degrees Office (RDO)**

# Postgraduate Feedback for Staff-Student Consultative Committee
## Monday, 14th June 2021

**C. Auditing MSc Courses**

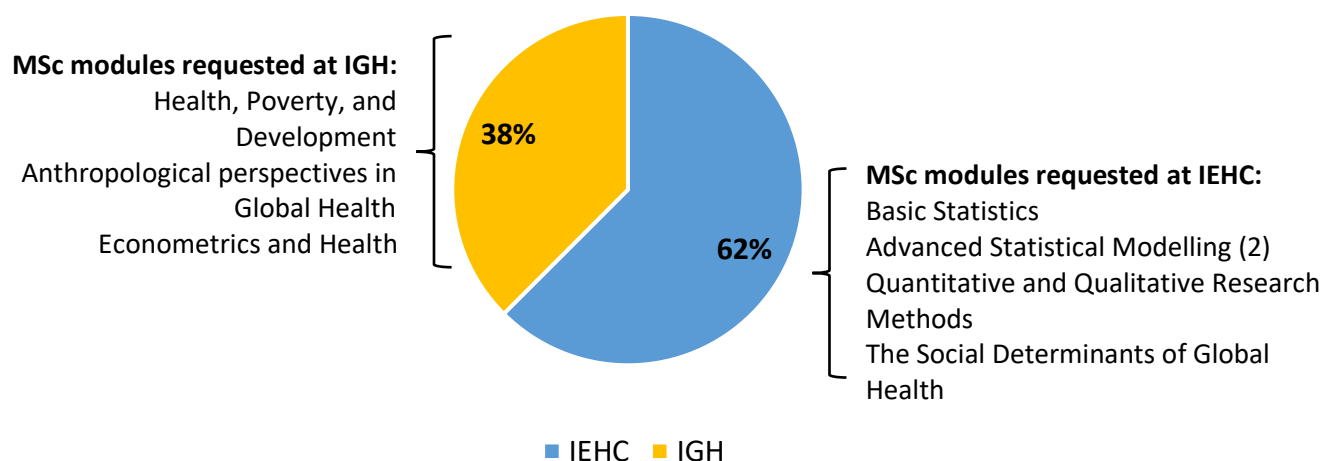Issues surrounding PhD students auditing MSc courses:
- Confusion amongst students and faculty regarding "auditing" terminology;
- PhD students unaware of opportunities to audit courses (only listed in the ICH roadmap);
- PhD students not hearing back from module leads or being rejected from auditing modules.

To better understand which modules are being rejected and why: a spreadsheet was circulated to all PhD students at ICH to collate a list of modules. The following information was provided:
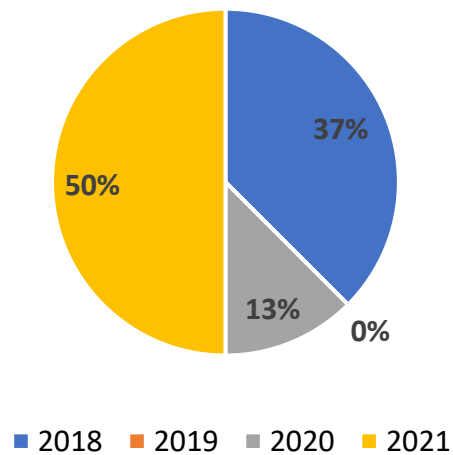
*This document is designed for PhD students at UCL GOS Institute of Child Health to report any instances where their requests to audit modules were denied. The purpose is to identify modules that have previously rejected PhD students (at ICH/other institutes and departments) in order to encourage module leads to accept auditing requests. Auditing a module means that you can attend lectures and have access to materials, but you do not receive credit for the module/complete any assignments or exams. This option is ideal for PhD students who are interested in the course material/would like further training in a specific topic area that is complementary to their PhD research.*

**A total of 8 MSc modules between 2018-2021 were rejected and reported by students in the spreadsheet (n=8)**
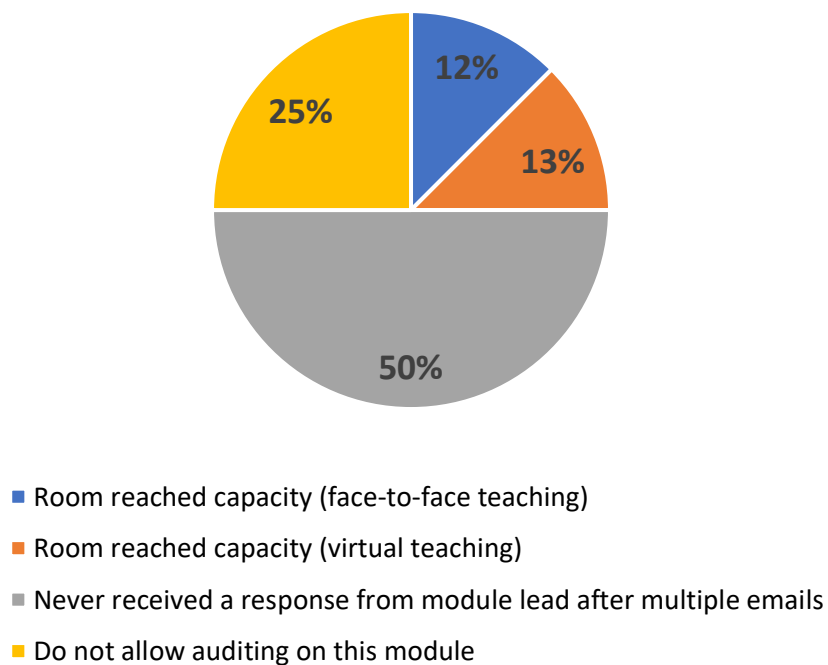
**Where are PhD student auditing requests being rejected (n=8)?**



**MSc modules requested at IGH:**
Health, Poverty, and Development
Anthropological perspectives in Global Health
Econometrics and Health

38%

62%

**MSc modules requested at IEHC:**
Basic Statistics
Advanced Statistical Modelling (2)
Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods
The Social Determinants of Global Health

■ IEHC  ■ IGH

**When were students auditing requests rejected (n=8)?**



- 2018  ■ 2019  ■ 2020  ■ 2021

**What were the reasons why auditing requests were rejected?**



- Room reached capacity (face-to-face teaching)
- Room reached capacity (virtual teaching)
- Never received a response from module lead after multiple emails
- Do not allow auditing on this module

Several courses that rejected students were research skills-orientated, including qualitative and quantitative methods. These courses are useful for PhD students wanting to learn new methods beyond those offered through CASC at ICH or UCL Doc Skills.

**Recommendations**
- Terminology regarding "auditing" across ICH and the FPHS needs to be clarified and possibly rephrased, such as "PhD students sitting in modules"

- More awareness on the opportunity to audit MSc course is needed across students at ICH

  - ICH Roadmap mentions student auditing but there is no mention on ICH website or UCL Doctoral School Handbook

- A spreadsheet of all modules available to audit across FPHS for PhD students should be created, categorized by topic area, such as a pre-existing spreadsheet created by IGH, where they advertise MSc courses available for auditing and access granted to PhD students

- Ongoing issues regarding lack of statistical support for PhD students at ICH may be partly addressed by encouraging students to audit statistical modules within FPHS, such as Basic Statistics and/or Advanced Statistical Modelling at IEHC

- Students should be provided access to Moodle materials at the minimum if rooms have reached capacity

# Postgraduate Feedback for Staff-Student Consultative Committee
## Monday, 14th June 2021

## D. Theses Incorporating Publications

The following survey was circulated to all PhD students at UCL, who were supplied with the following information:

*The following survey concerns incorporating publications into PhD theses.*

*A thesis incorporating publications allows PhD candidates to include any work that they published during their PhD in the main body of their theses without having to significantly rewrite it.*

*PhD candidates at many UK universities (e.g. King's College London, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the University of Southampton) are given the choice to incorporate publications in this way when formatting their thesis, with universities requiring students to submit a declaration with their thesis stating the contributions of any other authors (e.g. supervisors, co-authors on papers).*

*Students must still ensure they adhere to copyright guidelines as stipulated in journals, such as incorporating the appropriate paper version or including a notice of copyright in their thesis.*

*--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------*

*Current UCL Guidelines state that:*

*5.1.2. Requirements of a PhD/EngD Thesis*

*2. A series of papers, whether published or otherwise, is not acceptable for submission as a thesis. Research work already published, or submitted for publication, at the time of submission of a thesis, either by a student alone or jointly with others, may be included in the thesis. The published papers themselves may not be included in the body of a thesis but may be adapted to form an integral part of a thesis and thereby make a relevant contribution to the main theme of a thesis. Publications derived from the work in a thesis may be bound as supplementary material at the back of a thesis." (UCL Academic Manual 2020-21, Chapter 5: Research Degrees Framework, Page 17)*

*3.14 Academic Integrity*
*3. UCL will investigate and, where necessary, penalise any conduct which is likely to give an unfair advantage to the candidate, affect the security of assessment, and/ or affect the standards of the degrees awarded by UCL including, but not limited to, instances of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, impersonation, collusion, falsification, exam room misconduct, or contract cheating. Any such conduct will be investigated in accordance with the regulations*

*in Chapter 6, Section 9: Student Academic Misconduct. (UCL Academic Manual 2020-21, Chapter 4: Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes, Page 20)*

*9.2 Definitions*
*c) Self-Plagiarism: defined as the reproduction or resubmission of a student's own work which has been submitted for assessment at UCL or any other institution. This does not include earlier formative drafts of the particular assessment. (UCL Academic Manual 2020-21, Chapter 6: Student Casework Framework, Page 32)*

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

*\* NOTE: a thesis incorporating publications should not be confused with a "PhD by publication", which consists of several publications being bound into a single volume and is usually reserved to members of staff.*

A total of 38 students responded to the survey and provided the following information.

## Quantitative results

**What is your department at ICH?**

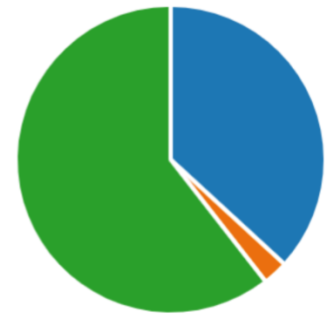| | |
|---|---|
| 🔵 Developmental Biology & Can... | 2 |
| 🟠 Developmental Neurosciences | 5 |
| 🟢 Genetics & Genomic Medicine | 6 |
| 🔴 Infection, Immunity, Inflamma... | 7 |
| 🟣 Population, Policy & Practice | 18 |



**What is your current year of study?**

| | |
|---|---|
| 🔵 Year 1 (full-time) | 7 |
| 🟠 Year 1 (part-time) | 1 |
| 🟢 Year 2 (full-time) | 14 |
| 🔴 Year 2 (part-time) | 3 |
| 🟣 Year 3 (full-time) | 8 |
| 🟤 Year 3 (part-time) | 2 |
| 🩷 Year 4 (full-time) | 3 |
| ⚪ Year 4+ (part-time) | 0 |
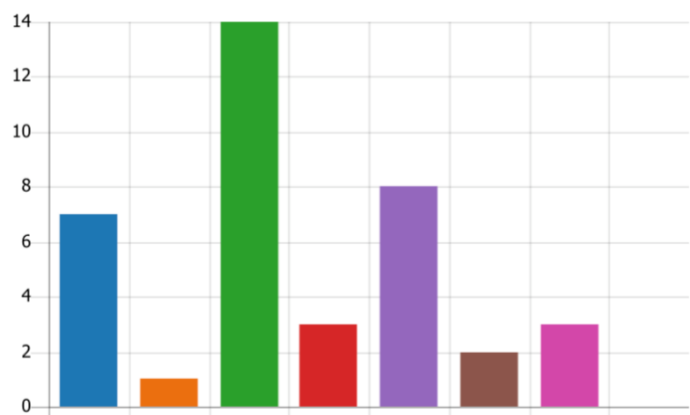
D

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ● | Yes | 14 |
| ● | No | 1 |
| ● | Somewhat | 23 |

**Do you feel you understand the current UCL guidelines on copyright?**

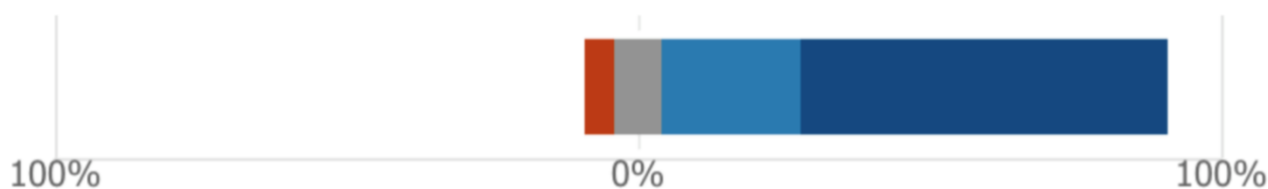| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ● | Yes | 8 |
| ● | No | 11 |
| ● | Somewhat | 19 |

**In your opinion, do you think UCL should allow PhD students to incorporate publications in the main body of their theses?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ● | Yes | 37 |
| ● | No | 0 |
| ● | Maybe | 1 |

**If UCL did allow PhD students to incorporate publications in the main body of their theses, how likely would you be to use this format when submitting your thesis?**

**Very unlikely:** 5.3%
**Somewhat unlikely**: 7.9%
**Neither likely nor unlikely**: 0%
**Somewhat likely:** 23.7%
**Very likely:** 63.2%

## Qualitative results

| Source | Full Feedback | Shorter Quotes |
|---|---|---|
| Survey | It's absurd to me that a student would be penalized for submitting their own work, especially given that it's been through peer review which means it's written in the clearest and most accurate form it can be according to experts in the field, therefore any rewording can only make it less clear/accurate than it was before | Given that [publications have] been through peer review... means it's written in the clearest and most accurate form it can be according to experts in the field, therefore any rewording can only make it less clear/accurate than it was before. |
| Survey | I have 3 publications from my thesis published before submitting my thesis, not including them into the main body significantly reduces the amount of work I have done. These publications are the center of my work and putting them in the appendix doesnt make sense | I have 3 publications from my thesis published before submitting my thesis, not including them into the main body significantly reduces the amount of work I have done. |
| Survey | My PhD supervisors were unaware of this rule and did not inform me. They pushed me publish and write all my PhD thesis chapters as publications first, so now I have to rewrite all of them. We should be able to utilise our publications in the main body of our theses especially if it is our work toward the PhD. It is counterproductive to have to worry about the pressure to publish while writing the thesis if we can't use the work we have done---essentially, it is writing two theses on the same topic at the same time---I've had to rewrite thesis chapters after | It is counterproductive to have to worry about the pressure to publish while writing the thesis if we can't use the work we have done---essentially, it is writing two theses on the same topic at the same time---I've had to rewrite thesis chapters after publishing because I wasn't allowed to use the material as I had published even though a significant amount of labour (months) went into the research and write up of the publication. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | publishing because I wasn't allowed to use the material as I had published even though a significant amount of labour (months) went into the research and write up of the publication. | |
| Survey | Students are continually encouraged to publish and this is really important also in securing fellowships and other post-doctoral positions, yet the current thesis format does not align with that and instead discourages students to submit papers during their PhD. It also does not align with what other major universities/schools are doing. | Students are continually encouraged to publish and this is really important also in securing fellowships and other post-doctoral positions, yet the current thesis format does not align with that and instead discourages students to submit papers during their PhD. It also does not align with what other major universities/schools are doing. |
| Survey | It is very silly to force students to write a chapter twice essentially, I have better things to do, and makes us a little bitter. | It is very silly to force students to write a chapter twice essentially, I have better things to do, and makes us a little bitter. |
| Survey | This change would potentially make PhD theses a bit more publication-focused and aid students to publish more during their PhD, or motivate them more to have publications before submitting. The PhD thesis writing is a major stress in a student's life, so incorporating published papers into the thesis would help with this stressful process. Having to significantly rewrite work that was already published seems counterproductive. | This change would potentially make PhD theses a bit more publication-focused and aid students to publish more during their PhD, or motivate them more to have publications before submitting... Having to significantly rewrite work that was already published seems counterproductive. |
| Survey | The UCL regulation might make sense in the humanities (I say might, but I doubt it) but it certainly does not in the sciences. We are publicly funded researches wasting our time duplicating efforts and this is unacceptable. There is no absolutely no reason why we should not be able to incorporate our PhD publications in our PhDs. | We are publicly funded researches wasting our time duplicating efforts and this is unacceptable. There is no absolutely no reason why we should not be able to incorporate our PhD publications in our PhDs. |
| Survey | Clinical researchers are very likely to have published during the course of the PhD and it seems to be a waste of effort and time to have to rephrase your own writing that has been peer-reviewed for journal articles. The best version of that writing has already been used for submission of the manuscript and so to have to reword it for the thesis means that it is a subpar version that has to be submitted. It would be good if papers where you are first/second author of is allowed to be included verbatim. | The best version of that writing has already been used for submission of the manuscript and so to have to reword it for the thesis means that it is a subpar version that has to be submitted. It would be good if papers where you are first/second author of is allowed to be included verbatim. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Survey | Most of the UK's leading universities allow students to include publications in the main body of their PhD theses. I have friends at Kings who have submitted PDFs of their publications as chapters. This is done at UCL on a case-by-case basis depending on a student's department and/or supervisor. This is incredibly unfair and if I had known that I would not be able to include my publications in my main thesis, I would have thought twice about choosing to study at UCL. I am at a disadvantage compared to my peers at other UK and international universities and the resistance from UCL to implement changes to the submission system is astonishing. | Most of the UK's leading universities allow students to include publications in the main body of their PhD theses... This is done at UCL on a case-by-case basis depending on a student's department and/or supervisor. This is incredibly unfair... I am at a disadvantage compared to my peers at other UK and international universities and the resistance from UCL to implement changes to the submission system is astonishing. |
| Survey | I was very shocked to learn students can't incorporate their publications in their thesis. After going to the US for my undergraduate and master's degrees, where I learned that publications are a "significant plus" to any PhD or post-doctoral applicant, I was motivated to collaborate on studies and develop manuscripts to demonstrate my potential to become a good researcher and to disseminate my work to the wider community. In this process, I also learned important skills that any researcher needs, including improving my writing and research skills, understanding the scholarly publication process, collaboration with other experts in the field, and so on. In any context, PhD students constitute an integral part of academia and publishing their work allows them to establish themselves in their field of knowledge early in their career. Additionally, expecting students to re-write peer-reviewed work is counterintuitive, as the best possible version of the manuscript is after the peer-review process. While I appreciate the importance of the dissertation and understand that supervisors are concerned with students feeling pressure to publish, I think it should be a personal choice. In my PhD, I aim to develop two or three manuscripts, which would fit nicely within a wider chapter of my thesis. As there is a shift towards more publishing in the academic world, its important UCL students are also at the forefront of this. | In any context, PhD students constitute an integral part of academia and publishing their work allows them to establish themselves in their field of knowledge early in their career. Additionally, expecting students to re-write peer-reviewed work is counterintuitive, as the best possible version of the manuscript is after the peer-review process.... As there is a shift towards more publishing in the academic world, its important UCL students are also at the forefront of this. |

| Email | I sent a text to a friend doing a PhD at [another UK university] and he has forwarded to me his declaration which I've attached. When I talked to my friend who is doing a cdt at [UCL] and she was saying how they are completely expect to use published work within their PhD. | When I talked to my friend who is doing a cdt at [UCL] and she was saying how they are completely expect to use published work within their PhD. |
|---|---|---|
| Email | This whole PhD by publication has rattled me... Like if that is possible for other people, I don't get why it shouldn't be possible for us... I think in [the case of certain disciplines] where your publication outputs are up there it makes sense. | If [it] is possible for other people, I don't get why it shouldn't be possible for us |
| Email | I never really understood the whole "rewriting to avoid self-plagiarism" especially as publications are so important in academia as an output and funding is quite tight (3 years) so it's really difficult to publish AND finish on time (eg [my last] phd paper got published [...] 3 years later). So PhD by publication is certainly [something] useful to consider...<br><br>...I found rewriting papers for chapters time consuming (although this was still much quicker than the other chapters). I had two chapters that were adapted from papers (one published, one under revision). For one chapter, I ended up adding further analyses not included in the publication to make it sufficiently different, and I expanded all sections adding detail that didn't make it in the paper, for the other I run all analyses again. I guess it was good to have space to show all extra work, but it did feel like doing work twice and it was reverse process to paper writing – adding words rather than cutting down. It would certainly be great to have the option [PhD incorporating publications] (depending on a project), and it also creates an incentive to publish... [Feedback from past PhD student in PPP] | I never really understood the whole "rewriting to avoid self-plagiarism" especially as publications are so important in academia as an output and funding is quite tight (3 years) so it's really difficult to publish AND finish on time… I found rewriting papers for chapters time consuming… it did feel like doing work twice and it was reverse process to paper writing – adding words rather than cutting down. |

**Summary of findings:**
- PhD students at ICH unanimously believe that students should be allowed to include publications in the main body of their theses without significantly rewriting or including them in the appendix.

- Even students who responded that theses incorporating publications may not be applicable to them believe that this option should be available to other PhD students.
- Many students feel that having to significantly rewrite their publications is a waste of time, especially as the "best version" of their writing has already been accepted for publication and peer-reviewed by experts in their field.
- Many students feel that not being able to include publications in their PhD theses is unfair because other universities currently allow students to submit their theses incorporating publications.
- Students do not have time during their PhD to write publications as well as rewrite their chapters so many students choose not to publish. With the shift to publish more papers during their PhD, students believe that not being able to include publications in their theses negatively impacts their chances of post-doctoral positions.

## Recommendations

- A report summarising the results from the above survey should be prepared and presented to the UCL Doctoral School.
- The survey should be circulated to PhD students in the Faculty of Population Health Sciences to gather feedback across different disciplines.
- The survey should be circulated to PhD students across UCL to determine whether there is wide-spread agreement that students should be able to include publications in the main body of their theses.
- An open letter could be circulated around supervisors to gauge whether senior staff are in agreement with students that theses should include publications.
- If there is agreement across UCL, the Doctoral Handbook should be rewritten in line with other universities guidelines (see below).
- A declaration (see below) could be included when submitting the theses which outlines the contributions of co-authors and signed by the supervisor.

## Further Information from other universities that allow students to include publications in their theses:

### London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine:

The following information was taken from the LSHTM Doctoral Handbook:

> *Research Paper style thesis – this is for work that was published or prepared for publication during the student's registration period. While the thesis can be in 'research paper' style, it must meet the general requirements of the book-style thesis, including an introduction and a general discussion to make a coherent whole. Each research paper section must be accompanied by a Research paper cover sheet signed by your supervisors, available here.*
>
> *A possible example structure for a Research Paper style thesis is:*
> - *Title*
> - *Abstract*
> - *Acknowledgments*

- *Table of contents*
- *Table of abbreviations*
- *Glossary*
- *Introduction (setting out the background and what the thesis covers)*
- *Literature review (which may be a published paper)*
- *Research question*
- *Methods (often including more detail than in the published papers)*
- *Research paper 1 (published)*
- *Research paper 2 (published)*
- *Research paper 3 – draft paper*
- *General discussion*
- *Conclusion*
- *References*
- *Appendices*

*As above, a combination of styles is possible, with, for example, a research paper as one chapter of an otherwise "book style" thesis. When including published papers there is no need to reformat them for the thesis (subject to copyright agreement from the journal). It is fine to include draft papers.*

***PhD by Prior Publication (only available to staff)*** *– The thesis for a PhD by Prior Publication is a portfolio that should include three elements:*

*(a) A 15,000 words (max) analytic commentary outlining:*
*the overarching objective(s) of the research presented in papers contained in the portfolio*
*a coherent argument linking these papers*
*the original contribution to knowledge that the papers have made in a defined area of research, with reference to existing literature*

*(b) A minimum of four interconnected, peer-reviewed, published research papers written in English. Papers should be in the public domain and traceable in bibliographic or other public databases. For multi-authored papers, the student is expected to be the first author or to clearly define the importance of their academic contribution.*

*(c) A statement describing the student's contribution to each paper, signed by the student and counter-signed by the lead co-author and/or Principal Investigator.*

**King's College London:**

Please click on this link to access a PDF outlining the guidelines on submitting a thesis incorporating publications at King's College London.

**University of Southampton:**

Please find below a snapshot of a declaration submitted by a PhD student at the University of Southampton (redacted for confidentiality):

## Academic Thesis: Declaration Of Authorship

I ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ declare that this thesis entitled ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ ▓▓▓▓▓▓ and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

7. Either none of this work has been published before submission, or parts of this work have been published as: [please list references below]:

▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

▓▓▓▓▓

Signed: ..............................................................................

Date: ...........24/6/18...............................................

**<u>Postgraduate Feedback for Staff-Student Consultative Committee
Monday, 14th June 2021</u>**

**E. <u>Post Graduate Teaching Assistant issues</u>**

This survey was circulated to all PhD students at ICH and were provided with the following information:

> *PhD students at ICH have the opportunity to take on temporary work at ICH during their studies, including in teaching roles, specifically as postgraduate teaching assistants (PGTA).*
>
> *As per UCL's Postgraduate Teaching Assistant (PGTA) Code of Practice (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/postgraduate-teaching-assistant-code-practice) and UCL's Pay and Grading Structure (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-benefits/salary-scales), all PGTAs should be paid at Grade 6 of the UCL non-clinical salary scale, which is a minimum of £15.32 per hour. This policy has been in place since 1st September 2020.*
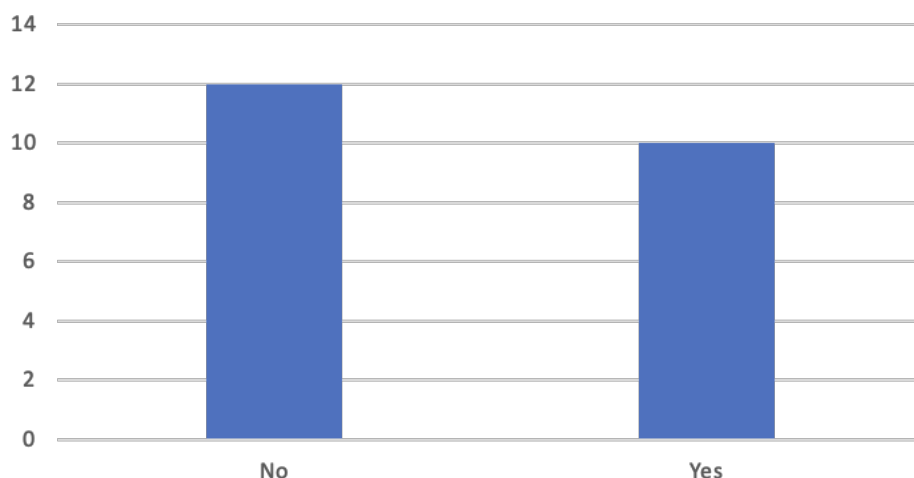>
> *We would like to gather the experiences of all PhD students of teaching and payment within ICH.*

A total of 22 students responded to the survey.

### Which department are you in at ICH?

| Department | Count |
|------------|-------|
| DBC | 2 |
| DN | 2 |
| GGM | 4 |
| III | 1 |
| PPP | 13 |
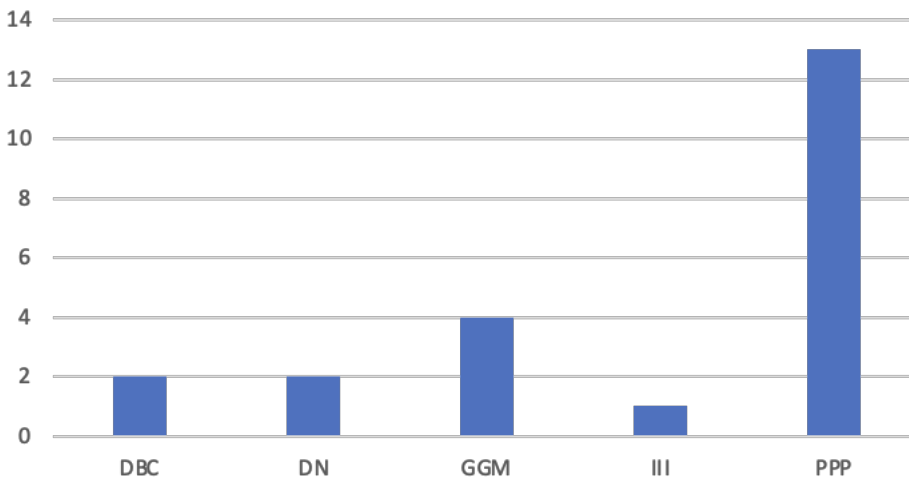
## Have you ever done teaching?



The following responses are from those who have never taught (N=12)

## Why have you not taken up work at ICH?



- I have not found appropriate opportunities yet
- I am not interested in working at ICH during my PhD
- I have not been aware of opportunities
- Work I was interested in advertised pay that was too low

**Free-text comments:**

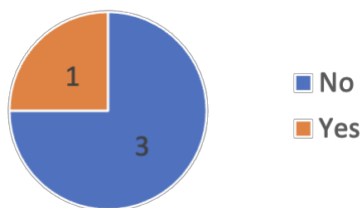| |
|---|
| "ICH does not provide many opportunities that I've seen for teaching, which is a huge disappointment and detriment to people who want to go into academia. We will lose favour for professorships to people who had teaching experience built into their PhDs the way other programmes do" |
| "Paid roles will definitely encourage me to take it" |
| "There needs to better dissemination of information regarding the opportunities for PhD students to be involved in teaching at UCL" |

> "I'm very interested in taking up a teaching position and have started the Arena One course, but I'm struggling to find a position. Those advertised on the PGTA hub seem to be very competitive and there don't seem to be opportunities in the department."

> "I must say, the pay for teaching is abysmal. I charge a minimum of £40 per hour for teaching in my private capacity outside UCL. I long ago lost interest in teaching as a PGTA at UCL."
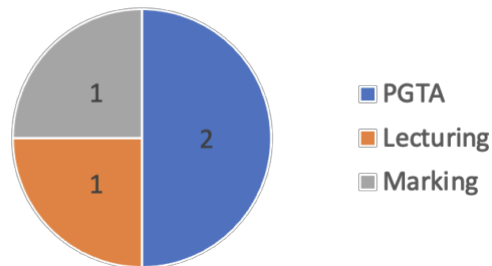
> "I would be very keen to undertake teaching at UCL, however no opportunities have come up during my 1.5 years here."

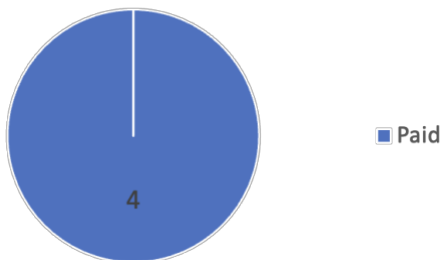The following responses are from those who taught **before** September 2020 (N=4)

**Overall, were you satisfied with the advertising and payment processing for the roles you have undertaken?**
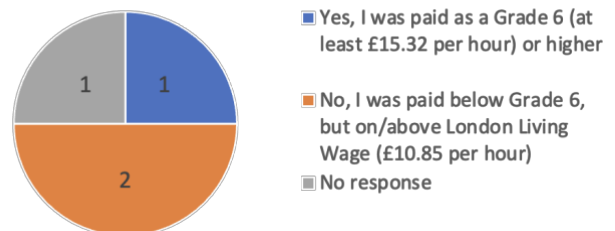


- No: 3
- Yes: 1

**What role did you do?**



- PGTA: 2
- Lecturing: 1
- Marking: 1

**Was the role paid or unpaid?**



- Paid: 4

**Were you paid as per UCL's pay structure?**



- Yes, I was paid as a Grade 6 (at least £15.32 per hour) or higher: 1
- No, I was paid below Grade 6, but on/above London Living Wage (£10.85 per hour): 2
- No response: 1

**Were you paid as advertised/agreed before accepting the role?**



- I don't know, pay was not advertised nor discussed when I accepted the role: 3
- Other; I had to do extra hours for free: 1

**Did you receive payment promptly?**



- Yes, payment was prompt: 1
- Yes, payment was prompt as defined by UCL, but I thought this was too slow: 2
- No, there were delays to my payment: 1
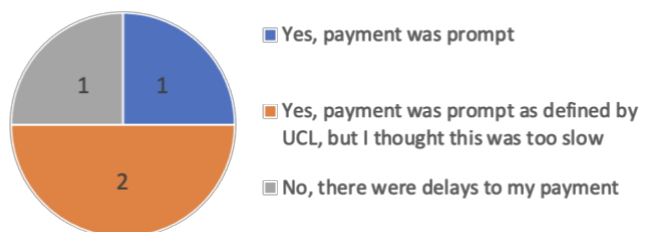
**Free-text comments:**

> "I was told: 'I know it will probably take you longer to mark all this, but I just don't have more PGTA budgeted hours, sorry...'"
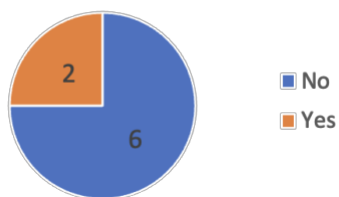
> "Payment through Unitemps is delayed. For example work done in April will be paid at end of June because of how the timesheets are processed. They should pay twice a month to reduce the delay in payment"

> "Different courses appear to pay different amounts it's not always clear why, possibly as Unitemps take a share and some admin also include holiday pay towards the hourly pay to reach the pay grade, however it is difficult for students to come forward and say anything especially as there is often no one communicating directly (just generic emails from Unitemps). I have taught multiple times at ICH and not once was pay and number of hours of pay agreed beforehand. Course leads and teaching admin really need a guide on how to pay students for teaching roles so that it is consistent. When emails are sent to students where pay and hours are agreed the module lead should be copied in to ensure all is correct. All course and module leads and teaching admin should also all be sent the UCL code of practice and the Unitemps pay grade guidance to ensure students are not underpaid and left in an awkward position."
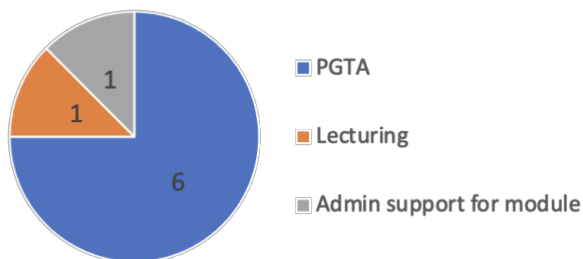
The following responses are from those who taught **after** September 2020 (N=8)

*Note: some people taught both before and after September 2020, which is why the total teaching responses equates to 12, even though only 10 respondents had taught.*
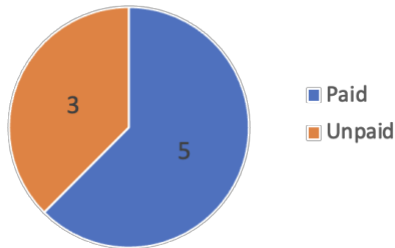


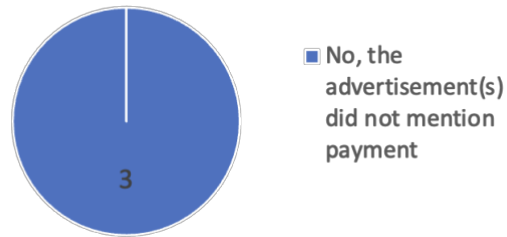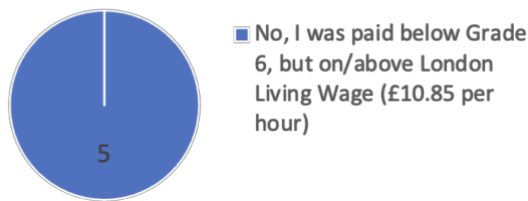Overall, were you satisfied with the advertising and payment processing for the roles you have undertaken?

- No: 6
- Yes: 2



What role did you do?

- PGTA: 6
- Lecturing: 1
- Admin support for module: 1

**Was the role paid or unpaid?**

Paid: 5
Unpaid: 3

**For unpaid roles: Did you know the role(s) were unpaid when accepting?**

No, the advertisement(s) did not mention payment: 3

**For paid roles: were you paid as per UCL's pay structure?**

No, I was paid below Grade 6, but on/above London Living Wage (£10.85 per hour): 5

**Were you paid as advertised/agreed before accepting the role?**

I don't know, pay was not advertised nor discussed when I accepted the role: 2
No, I was paid less than advertised/agreed: 3

**Did you receive payment promptly?**

Yes, payment was prompt: 1
Yes, payment was prompt as defined by UCL, but I thought this was too slow: 2
No, there were delays to my payment: 1
Other; I only just submitted my timesheet: 1
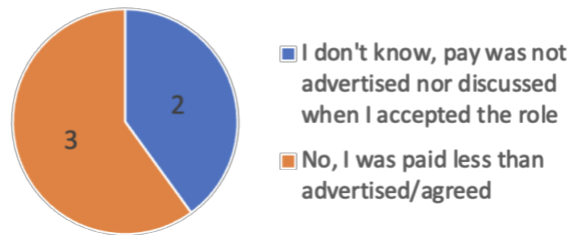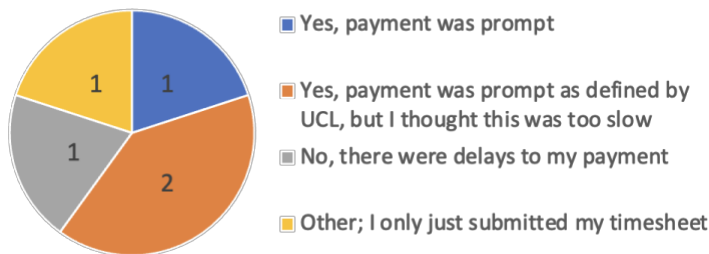
Free-text comments:

"Having done placements across UCL, I would say that policies around payment for PhD students are much more clearly and frequently articulated in other institutes (e.g., IGH, IEHC) and it seems that processes for payment through Unitemps are better understood generally. As much of teaching is now delivered online, I think support from PhD students should be more clearly defined (technical support versus teaching support or combination) and policies around compensation for technical support should be considered if this is to continue to be requested."

"I have been incredibly disappointed with my experience teaching at ICH. There was no payment advertised and it was up to me to ask how much I was going to be paid. I then felt obliged to accept whatever payment was offered because I had already got in contact with the module lead and didn't want to seem ungrateful. I was offered £14 excluding holiday pay but when I had completed the teaching I was told that I was going to be paid £14 including holiday pay which works out to be £11 an hour. I find that insulting. I was told that Unitemps set the amount of payment but when I spoke to Unitemps they told me that it was set by ICH. After I followed up with a senior member of staff at ICH, I was dismissed and made out to feel that I was asking for too much. I also had to wait months to be paid. It is absolutely unacceptable to put students in this position and I will not offer to teach for ICH again nor encourage any of my peers to help with teaching."

"All PhD students should be compensated for teaching as per UCL guidelines. When I was invited to support teaching, there was no mention of pay but I thought it would come later. The module lead never mentioned payment prior, during, or after the teaching was done. I believe I was hired as a "Teaching Associate" which is a teaching role at ICH that does not compensate students for teaching - contradicting UCL guidelines. At the time, I didn't know there were unpaid Teaching Associate roles at ICH and think there needs to be some clarification between PGTA and TA roles and some mention of which role is being offered/whether its paid in all teaching advertisements sent out at ICH"

## Summary of findings:

- The majority (70%) of those who had never taught at ICH before said it was because they had not found appropriate opportunities. The free-text comments also highlight the need for better communication about opportunities.
- The majority (75%) of those who have taught, both before and after September 2020 said they were not satisfied with the advertising and payment processing for the teaching they had undertaken.
- The majority of teaching conducted by students at ICH are in roles as PGTAs. Other roles are also being carried out, including lecturing.
- The majority of students are paid for their teaching work.
- All students who undertook unpaid roles were unaware that the opportunity was unpaid at the time of accepting, because the advertisement did not mention payment.
- The majority of students who accepted paid roles did not have clear pay information offered to them before taking on the role.
- For those students who were offered payment information before starting the role, they were paid less than agreed, which may suggest that module leads/ administrators do not take commission/holiday pay into account when submitting pay through Unitemps.
- Since the introduction of the PGTA Code of Practice in September 2020, no students were paid at Grade 6 as stated , however they were all paid above London Living Wage.
- The majority of students think that the current timeframe for payment defined by UCL guidelines is too slow.

## Recommendations:

- All teaching opportunities offered to PhD students at ICH should follow a standardised Code of Practice, such as that set for PGTAs.
- All teaching opportunities offered to PhD students at ICH should be paid.
- All teaching opportunities should be advertised using a standard advertisement template that module leads/ administrators can complete and circulate to students. This should include payment information.

- All teaching opportunities should be advertised in a single location to improve dissemination of opportunities, such as the [pre-existing Faculty of Population Health Sciences Teaching Portal](#) where the Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care advertise their teaching opportunities.
- All module leads/ administrators should undergo training at UCL and Unitemps to understand the payment processing procedure. This includes the commission taken by Unitemps, and holiday pay considerations, so that the hourly pay received by students matches that advertised by module leads/ administrators.
- Short online training video covering payment processing procedure with Unitemps should be created for all module leads/administrators
- All students who have worked as PGTAs since September 2020 should be back-paid based on the introduction of the PGTA policy (which other institutes in FPHS have already done)
- ICH should consider submitting payment twice a month, instead of once per month, in order to speed up the time it takes for students to receive payment.