OFS Postgraduate Survey pilot 2022 - Liaison Officer Guidance

(Updated 4 May 2022)

Contents

Introduction to the OFS Postgraduate Pilot survey

UCL will participate in the new pilot survey for students in the final year of their taught postgraduate programme. The survey will run from 19 April to 31 May and can be completed via www.postgradsurvey.co.uk.

The survey is organised by the Office for Students (OFS) and managed by Ipsos MORI, an independent research agency. Ipsos MORI also organise the annual National Student Survey (NSS) on behalf of the OFS, and the Postgraduate Survey will feature reminder SMS messages and phone calls for eligible students yet to complete the survey, similar to the NSS campaign.

UCL will not participate in the 2022 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and UCL will continue to review the options for future postgraduate surveys.

Unlike the NSS, results from the pilot will not be publicly available but department and programme-level results will be shared internally, providing at least 10 responses have been received at that level. The OFS will not share UCL's results with other institutions participating in the pilot but may compile a report on the sector-wide postgraduate taught experience survey.

The survey is open to students in the final year (usually the *only* year for full-time postgrads) of a taught postgraduate programme. This includes programmes at Master's, PGCert and PGCE levels. More information on eligibility can be found in the 'Student Eligibility' section of this guide.

The role of the PGS Liaison Officer/s

There is at least one PGS Liaison Officer (PGSLO) in each UCL department that has taught postgraduates. The duties of the departmental PGSLO include:

- Ensure the correct students from the department are included in the Postgraduate Survey (PGS) sample and advise the Student Engagement & Experience team if any additions or removals are required;

- Encourage student participation in the PGS within departments or other department-level academic units (e.g. divisions, institutes, schools etc.);

- Build staff awareness of the PGS and where appropriate coordinate promotional activity;

- Liaise with Student Engagement & Experience team in coordinating PGS promotional activity;

- Share any examples of promotional good practice for further transmission across UCL;

- Provide feedback at the end of the survey to the Student Engagement & Experience team.

Data Privacy and Security

The Office for Students (OfS) have a full [privacy statement](#) relating to the storage, handling of, and type of data collected. After the survey has finished in June 2022, all students' details will be removed from Ipsos MORI's computer systems.

PGS 2022 questionnaire

The Postgraduate Survey has 26 core questions, relating to ten aspects of the student experience, plus two summative questions:

1) Motivation for study
2) Information
3) Course design and content
4) Course organisation and management
5) Teaching and learning
6) Assessment and feedback
7) Dissertation or major project
8) Learning resources
9) Academic support
10) Student voice

Unlike the NSS, the Postgraduate Survey does not include any open text comments. You can find the full questionnaire on the [UCL Teaching & Learning Portal](#).

PGS pilot 2022 - Key Dates

Date	Activity
24 February 2022	Lists of students sent to all PGSLOs to check details of participating students
10 March	Deadline for addition / removal of students to list of survey participants
19 April	Survey opens for final-year PGT students, Ipsos send email invite to eligible students
25 April	Term 3 starts at UCL
26 April	Ipsos MORI send SMS reminders to students yet to respond
3 May	Ipsos MORI email reminder to eligible students yet to respond
7 May	***Ipsos MORI telephone campaign*** begins to eligible students yet to respond
15 May	Second SMS reminder to eligible students yet to respond
28 May	Final Ipsos MORI reminder email
Midnight 31 May	Postgraduate Survey closes

Student eligibility for the PGS

There are strict criteria governing inclusion or removal from the PGS sample. The list of eligible students was sent to Liaison Officers for checking on Thursday 24 February, with a deadline for returns of Thursday 10 March.

Eligible Students

The Postgraduate Survey (PGS) aims to survey postgraduate taught students in the final year of their course. The criteria for inclusion in the PGS are the following:

- Students must be studying a course at postgraduate level that is mainly taught e.g. Master's, PGCE, PGDip and PGCert.
- Students should be actively engaged in study i.e., not taking a break or sabbatical from study. Students on work placements should be included.
- **Students must have completed or be expected to complete an eligible course between 1 November 2021 and 31 October 2022.** Expected to complete means the date of last scheduled activity by a student and should include the end of the scheduled exam period, or formal writing up period, but excluding retakes and exceptional extensions to the writing up period.
- Students should be taught wholly or mainly in the UK. Students from overseas campuses should not be included.

Assessment of the student's work does not need to have been completed, nor any award made. A student who has completed all other requirements and then hands in their dissertation between these dates would be expected to be included.

Students studying towards a stated learning aim or award without a defined course length or end date should be surveyed if they entered their second consecutive year of active study after 1 August 2021. Students studying without an end date who began their course in the 2021-22 academic year and are known to have completed more than 66% of the requirements by the start of the survey period (19 April 2022) should also be included. Requirements in this case may be decided either using credits completed or the number of modules completed.

Additions

If you notice that there is a student who meets the above criteria and is missing from the list, please notify the Student Engagement & Experience team (student.engagement@ucl.ac.uk) know by **Thursday 10 March.** If you notice that a student is missing from the list after this date, please let the Student Engagement & Experience team know as soon as possible, as it may still be possible to add them.

Removals

The criteria for removal from the survey cohort are as follows:

- Students who are dormant (taking time out of study) – both those who became dormant prior to the 1 November 2021 and those who have become dormant up to the start of the survey window (19 April 2022).
- Students who are seriously ill or deceased.
- Students studying courses where the majority of delivery is overseas.
- Incoming exchange students.
- Students on research-based Master's (e.g. MRes) or Doctorate programmes.

If there are any students on your list who meet any of the criteria for removal, please notify the Student Partnership team (student.engagement@ucl.ac.uk) know by **Thursday 10 March.** If you notice that a student needs to be removed from the list after this date, please let the Student Engagement & Experience team know as soon as possible, as it may still be possible to remove them.

Frequently asked questions about student eligibility can be found in Appendix A.

Check-list of actions for the PGSLO to undertake for the PGS

Local promotion of the survey:

- Post a message on the departmental (or equivalent) Moodle site publicising the PGS with links to the website: www.thepostgradsurvey.co.uk

- Share weekly response rate updates with relevant departmental teaching / support staff and Student Academic Representatives.

- Encourage lecturers / tutors to ask students to participate in the PGS and explain that teaching staff play a vital role in communicating with their students about the survey.

- Add the PGS as an agenda item in the Departmental Teaching Committee (DTC) or equivalent, and the Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC). You may also wish to share results and open text comments from previous editions of the PTES.

- Encourage your department's Student Reps and any relevant student societies to promote the survey.

Raise awareness of changes that have been made in response to student feedback. You can find examples on the You Shaped UCL pages, but students may be particularly impressed by changes at departmental level.

Consider the use of social media, such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook etc. Student Reps may also want to share these social media posts.

- Ask Heads of Departments, programme directors etc. to send an email message to students (suggested in Appendix B).

It may also be worth mentioning to students that Ipsos MORI's reminder communications only go to students who have not yet completed the survey. Consequently, the sooner they complete their questionnaire, the fewer reminders they will receive.

Ideas and good practice from survey liaison officers in other campaigns*

- Arrange group sessions where students can complete the survey. You could also invite the Head of Department or other senior departmental figures (such as the Departmental Graduate Tutor or equivalent). Some departments use these meetings to also provide information on exam and revision techniques, careers advice, or as part of Personal Tutoring meetings.

- Give students 10 minutes at the end of a lecture, seminar or revision session to complete the survey.

* Please let the Student Engagement & Experience team know of any of your own activities that may be good practice that other departments can use and we will circulate them as examples.

Publicity tools

The following electronic publicity material will be hosted on the UCL Teaching and Learning Portal in mid-April for you to download:

1)   Electronic publicity material

The following will be available on the Teaching & Learning Portal:

- Web graphics – for use on departmental webpages.

- Wallpaper – for use on PCs (note ISD are doing this in the cluster rooms and library) and can be used for plasma screens too.

- Email-footer – Please add this to your email signature and ask other staff, especially the Head, Dept. Tutors and key lecturers should make use of it too.

Different sizes of the materials are available; please contact the Student Engagement & Experience team if you require them.

2)   Emails and social media

You can find Email templates, suggested text for tweets and social media posts, and key messages for communications to use at your discretion in the appendices of this guidance document.

There will also be images that will be suitable for display on the digital screens around campus.

3)   Presentation

A PowerPoint presentation will be sent to you for use in lectures and / or PGS events.

Contact us

If you have questions on anything in this guide, or would like to discuss the PGS, surveys or wider student engagement initiatives at UCL, please contact the Student Engagement & Experience team:

Sally Mackenzie (Associate Director of Student Engagement & Experience)
sally.mackenzie@ucl.ac.uk

Sarah Grossman (Student Surveys Manager) s.grossman@ucl.ac.uk

Tom McMahon (Student Partnership Manager) t.mcmahon@ucl.ac.uk

Appendix A - Key eligibility questions

- **If a student has changed course, which course will they be surveyed under?**
  - o Students will be surveyed under the course that they are currently registered for.

- **Are students with an undefined course length eligible to be included?**
  - o Yes, students without a defined course length or end date should be surveyed if they entered their second consecutive year of active study after 1 August 2021. Students studying without an end date who began their course in the 2021-22 academic year and are known to have completed more than 66% of the requirements by the start of the survey period (19 April 2022) should also be included.

- **Should students on a work placement be included?**
  - o Yes, students on work placements should be included in the survey.

- **Are students studying towards an MRes eligible to take part in the PGS?**
  - o No, students studying towards an MRes are not eligible for the PGS. They will be surveyed separately in the Postgraduate Research Survey (PRES), which is overseen by the UCL Doctoral School.

Appendix B: Suggested email text

Dear [student],

I am writing to ask you to participate in the new Postgraduate Survey from the Office for Students, which is open now for all UCL postgraduate taught students in their final year of study.

This is your opportunity to give honest feedback about your postgraduate programme and your time here at UCL. The survey covers many facets of your academic experience and typically takes around 10 minutes to complete. Go to www.thepostgradsurvey.co.uk to take part.

The Postgraduate Survey will help UCL and its departments make improvements in the postgraduate experience. You can find examples of changes inspired by previous student feedback on the You Shaped UCL pages.

In this department, we have [*insert details of local improvements here*]

All of your responses in the new Postgraduate Survey are confidential and cannot be attributed to you. Results from the Postgraduate Survey do not contribute to university league tables or rankings.

Best wishes, etc.

Appendix C - Key messages for lecturers

- The PGS opens on 19 April 2022 for final-year taught postgraduates in the UK. Ipsos MORI will contact eligible students on 19 April.

- This is an opportunity for postgraduate students to give their honest feedback.

- The survey covers teaching, academic support, assessment and feedback, course organisation and management, learning resources such as the library and IT.

- The survey is conducted by Ipsos MORI, an independent research agency and responses are completely anonymous.

- It usually takes around 10 minutes to complete, and can be completed at www.thepostgradsurvey.co.uk

- Things that have changed in this department as a result of previous years' feedback are: [list any concrete examples of improvements at departmental level, or UCL-wide examples such as those on You Shaped UCL

Suggested social media message

Calling all postgraduates on taught programmes: take 10 minutes to tell us about your experience of your degree programme and UCL! Take the survey now at www.thepostgradsurvey.co.uk [accompany with PGS image] Your views help shape the future of education at UCL.

Or retweet an PGS post from @UCL_teaching