

Completed work

Title: Exploring the impact of Research Culture and Supervision on Post Graduate Researcher engagement within the School of Pharmacy

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Background: Institutional research culture is influential to a Post Graduate Researcher's (PGRs) PhD journey and their future career path. It can also impact on how well their research is conducted and the extent of dissemination (The Royal Society 2018). Recent Postgraduate Research Experience Survey results indicated that 76% of PGRs felt their supervisor helped them to identify their training and developmental needs and 68% believed they had frequent opportunities to discuss their research with a wider community. Despite these encouraging results, engagement with School PGR seminars and meetings is observed to be poor.

Aim: To explore the impacts of research culture and supervision on PGR engagement by exploring individual perceptions and experiences of resources, environment and training opportunities.

Method: PGRs within the School (n=60) were invited to take part in an anonymous online survey. Open and closed questions were developed based on a review of the current literature surrounding research culture. Responses (n=14) were subsequently used to develop a semi structured interview topic guide. Interviews were conducted with willing participants (n=5) and thematic analysis was used to develop arising themes. Ethical approval was obtained.

Results: PGRs wanted to be part of and engage with a research culture, where they could “promote, celebrate and... share ideas and experiences” (participant v). However, the rare use of facilities such as the dedicated PGR lounge and poor attendance at seminars and workshops was felt to hinder this. This was primarily based on lack of encouragement for these activities from supervisors. PGRs reported the need to have regular, informal contact with their supervisors, alongside monthly meetings.

Conclusion: Supervisor encouragement was concluded to be one of the major contributing factors driving student engagement with School research culture. This project was limited by the low number of respondents and it is likely that those PGRs who participated were already contributing significantly to the research culture.

References:

The Royal society. (2018). Research Culture | Royal Society. [online] Available at: <https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/research-culture/> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2018].

Preferred method of presentation:

Oral presentation

Poster X

No preference