Biological Science Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, 94% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a).

- According to around 18% of respondents, resources are not always appropriate, especially regarding journal access (See Section 2 and additional comments Question 4). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

  - It’s a shame that barely any of the scientific journals are available in hard copy.

  - The access to online journals is terrible. My PhD is in microbiology, and Holloway library does not even subscribe to Nature Reviews Microbiology. In my opinion this is not good enough for a university that claims to be research led, even if science is not a priority department. Maybe linking to other University of London colleges would be good and if this is already available let us know about this!

  - The physical library and access to online journals could be much better - but I appreciate that these things cost a large (and increasing) amount.

- You may wish to focus on Section 3 (Research Culture) and especially on Questions 5b, where it seems that 29% of students lack opportunities to discuss research with peers.

- According to Section 5 and Section 9 more feedback from peers and staff (other than the supervisor) is needed by the respondents. Below is a selection of the written feedback received for Questions 10 and 18:

  - It would be nice to be told during induction (at the start of PhD) to whom contact other than your supervisor.

  - While I can read official guidelines about who I can go to with problems this does not really work in practice. I think professors hold too much power within departments and there is no one who would hold your side in a problematic situation.

  - I think the only downside to the programme is never being able to cross monitor yourself with others, where one supervisor is content with minimal work for a thesis, another may be demanding a lot more; and you never get an idea of what is the "right amount" etc.
Classics Report

Considering the number of students from Classics responding to PRES (only 10), the overall feedback regarding the department is positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the College attracted many positive comments, around 90% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a).

- You may wish to focus on the additional comments of Question 4, where it seems that, according to the respondents, resources need to be reinforced.

Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

- In terms of working space, often the library does not have adequate seating. I am pleased to know that a research space for PG students and staff is planned for 2015 but it would be even better if this came sooner and if there was a PG specific reading room in the libraries, particularly for use of reference only journals and dictionaries to avoid photocopying copious amounts of pages.

- Lack of important, recent texts in the library. No personal work space.

- The PGR room in my department is unsuitable for protracted research and I have no dedicated space to use at RHUL; as a result I normally work at home or in libraries, leaving me physically cut off from Campus.

- According to Section 5 on responsibilities, a small number of the respondents think that feedback is not valued enough by the Department.

Below is a written comment received for Question 10:

- So far I have had little indication that feedback is even read, let alone responded to. Concerns raised in person have been seemingly dealt with well, but so far I have not seen a single tangible effect of any concerns I have raised, or surveys I have taken part in. Hope springs eternal, I suppose.
Computer Science Report

Considering the number of students from Computer Science responding to PRES (only 6), the overall feedback regarding the department is positive. Perhaps answers cannot be taken as a consistent case study, nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the College attracted positive answers, 5 out of 6 respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a).

- You may wish to focus on 5 where, according to two respondents, greater attention should be given to creating opportunities to discuss research with staff (other than the supervisor).
Considering the number of students from Criminology & Sociology responding to PRES (only two: student numbers: 100629213 and 100684161), perhaps answers cannot be taken as a consistent case study. The overall feedback regarding the department is positive; you may wish to encourage students to express their opinions more actively in the survey in future.
Drama & Theatre Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- According to around 35% of respondents, resources are not always appropriate, especially regarding study space and journal access (See Section 2 and additional comments Question 4).
  Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

  - The library could do with expanding its theatre and performance studies collection, particularly ejournal subscriptions.
  - In my department no suitable working space is available for research students. Also, the literature necessary for my field of research are mostly not available at the RHUL library.
  - There are databases not available to me, also in the theatre department we do not have any working space as research students or available facilities.

- Although the majority of respondents positive replied to Section 6, comments regarding Research Skills are mixed:

  - Creativity and innovation are not useful attributes for anyone undertaking a Ph.D. in the UK. It’s the most disappointing aspect of this type of study.
  - Departmental as well as university wide workshops on ethics in the first year were excellent.
Earth Science Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, around 81% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a). Nevertheless you may wish to read carefully the additional comments on Section 1.

- Regarding teaching (or demonstrating), it seems that the 37.5% of respondents think that a more appropriate support is needed (see Question 16a).

- Overall experience reported by students is more than satisfying; nevertheless you may wish to read carefully all the additional comments (below are the two comments received for Section 9).

  - I am confident that I will finish within the College's 4 year deadline, however I am not confident I will finish within my departments expected 3 year deadline.

  - The fact of not having a supervisor that is knowledgeable of the subject has been very demotivating and stressing. The necessity of continuous search for external advice has been time consuming and not always effective. Linked to this, the PhD project was not set up in advance, there was no plan (no research proposal) and the lack of dataset ended up delaying my progress considerably. I really think these facts should be consider in the future as PhD students can be left completely unescorted. This can damage not only the students career but also the Department in the case of major corrections after viva or in the eventual case of PhD dropout.
Economics Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, almost 100% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a and additional comments).

- Regarding resources (Section 2), some of the respondents thinks that strengthening is needed:

  - *Could do with better functioning and more computers in the room.*

  - *The computers are very slow which is not very useful. Furthermore the wireless internet is below par. Very low speed and often disconnected. I also e-mailed the library with a book request, a week later I am still waiting for a reply.*

- Very positive feedback was received (above the College’s average values) on the acknowledgement of responsibilities (see Section 5), research skills (see Section 6) and professional development (see Section 7).
Considering the number of students replying to the survey, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive answers, 85% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a).

- Resources are perceived to be lacking by some respondents, especially in terms of study space (see Additional Comments, Question 4). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

  - I don't understand why each department doesn't have a workspace for their PhDs. We, particularly international students, pay a lot of tuition. I think it could be managed. Other University of London campuses provide these.

  - It is hardly necessary for me to point out the absolute lack of anything even vaguely approaching 'suitable working space': even a brief glance around Founders Library on any day during the second and third term will show dire overcrowding. This has got worse over the last three years or so. I have mentioned it in every survey I’ve been coerced into completing. For me, this begs two questions. First, what is the point in all these surveys? Second, what is being done about overcrowding? It’s as big a problem for undergraduate "customers" (as no doubt they’ll soon be called) as it is for PGR. I would also like to know why the Postgraduate Common Room in Founders was redecorated, re-allocated to undergraduates and promptly wrecked? Where else are PGRs to go? A campus retailer of coffee, perhaps? I assume the reason for this re-allocation is another asinine survey, which may have noticed that this room wasn't "operating to the max".

  - RHUL resources themselves are a little disappointing (particularly in terms of printed material), but access to SHL/ BL makes up for this to an extent. The PG computer room in International Building is far too noisy and busy to make a proper work space. The fact that there is no office for PG research students (who are not teaching) in English Studies is an issue, particularly as this facility is provided in other depts.

- Regarding Section 6 (on research skills), it seems that for some respondents the GSP and workshops were not successful enough in order to develop knowledge of appropriate research methodologies. Below is a selection of the additional written comments to this section of the questionnaire:

  - I believe that it has been the contact with my supervisor which has helped develop my research skills, but I would say that mostly I believe I started the course with the requisite skills and abilities, and so the college's GSP has not made much of a difference.

  - I would say that these skills/this understanding has come from my own initiative and the time I have spent working and not as a result of the workshop programmes.

  - One size does not fit all. Specific subjects require specific skills. Additionally, I have no desire to meet or talk to management students.

- You may wish to pay attention on the additional comments to Question 18, where it appears that the biggest lack perceived by respondents is probably the absence of teaching opportunities.
Geography Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- According to around 26% of respondents, resources are not always appropriate, especially regarding journal access (See Section 2, Questions 3c and 3d). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

  - Access to online journal articles via the RHUL VPN is very limited and the process of getting them is very long and complicated. There are also inappropriate resources to cater for other languages.

  - Between all University of London library facilities I am able to access what I need, but RHUL is rarely the first place I look -- it is often unlikely to have what I'm looking for.

- Very positive feedback was received (above College’s average values) on progress and assessment (see Section 4), students’ perception of responsibilities (see Section 5), and research skills development (see Section 6).
History Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive (83% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- Feedback regarding resources for students is mixed. Although the majority of respondents replied positively to Section 2, according to their written comments resources are not always appropriate, especially regarding journal access.

Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

- I use the British Library to study and work. It would be impossible to base myself at the Egham campus for the resources would be totally inadequate.

- Some of the top journals in Social sciences need to be subscribed immediately.

- The online resources available at the library could be expanded.

- You may wish to pay attention to the additional comments for Question 18, where it appears that one of the issues perceived by respondents is the absence of teaching opportunities.

- Teaching experience would have been an invaluable asset. Despite all my efforts it proved impossible to find an opportunity to teach at the department. In my opinion, the college is recruiting way more students than it can ever offer teaching positions to.

- I am appalled at the lack of teaching opportunities offered by RHUL to PhD students (in my year at least).
Information Security Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive (83% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- Although the majority of respondents replied positively to Sections 3 and 4, some of them have some concerns on the issue of interdisciplinary research. Below is a selection of the written feedback received for Questions 6 and 8:
  
  - The ISG is not geared to support interdisciplinary research such as mine. It is instead geared to support research relating to cryptography, network security, computer science and similar areas. In my humble and sincere opinion it needs to decide between: (1) equipping itself to adequately support interdisciplinary research such as mine, and (2) not claiming it has an credentials relating to this kind of research. I believe it has the potential to do both.
  
  - Again, I don’t believe the ISG supports interdisciplinary students in this aspect of research. It is very difficult for us to understand what is required of us. I speak in the plural because I’m assuming that the fourth out of four students is still reading for a PhD. The first two were unsuccessful. I am the thirds, and have encountered serious issues.

- Section 5 on Responsibilities presents a written comment on which you may wish to focus:
  
  - It is unfortunately the case that I was subject to bullying within the ISG department. I feel this is particularly unethical, and it has irreversibly damaged my research career.
Management Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, the great majority of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a). Written comments reflect the general trend on supervision:
  - My supervisors are helping me to complete my PhD within the 3 years I need to complete it in.
  - The reason I came to rhul was because of my supervisor
  - They are the best

- According to around 19% of respondents, resources are not always appropriate, especially regarding journal access (See Section 2 and additional comments Question 4). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:
  - We do not have enough access to online journals and we constantly have to request through the British Library. Its time consuming
  - Library at Uni needs to be improved. Many times I could not find the books and articles that I want, but on another hand they offer inter-library loan. Also, there is no convenience places for reading at Library, there is just some desks for working or writing.

- You may wish to focus on Section 3 (Research Culture) and especially on Questions 5b, where it seems that 33% of students lack opportunities to discuss research with peers.

- Respondents are confident overall regarding their professional development (See Section 7) and their ability to complete their PhD within the required timescale. Nevertheless, you may wish to read carefully the additional comments to Question 18.
Mathematics Report

Considering the number of students from Mathematics responding to PRES (only seven), perhaps answers cannot be taken as a consistent case study. The overall feedback regarding the department is positive; nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, almost 100% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Section 1).

- You may wish to focus on Section 3 (Research Culture) and especially on Questions 5b, (where 33% of respondents say that they lack occasions to discuss research with peers) and on Question 5d (where 50% of respondents complain that they have not been offered opportunities to be involved in the wider research community beyond their department).
Media Arts Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive (92% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- Very positive feedback was received (above the College’s average values) on Progress and Assessment (Section 4). The only small complaint concerns the departmental handbook: students expected to receive this but did not (see Question 8 in the additional comments).

- Very positive feedback was received (above the College’s average values) on students’ acknowledgement of responsibilities and rights (see Section 5)

- Research and teaching support offered by the college was much appreciated by students, as shown by the additional comments on Sections 3 and 6:
  - I sense that Royal Holloway is really making big steps with its attention to its postgraduate culture. This is great to see.

  - I think it’s great that RH runs generic skills training sessions. I have attended sessions on managing one’s supervisor, managing one’s research, RH library services, and RH I.T. advice. There seemed to very little stuff like this at the University of Bristol, where I did my Masters, so well done to RH!

- Nevertheless, you may wish to focus on the written comment of a respondent who would appreciate more teaching support even within the department (see Additional Comments Section 9):

  - Teaching support mostly from the InStil programme. Department could perhaps offer something a bit more structured for those teaching for the first time.
Modern Languages Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive (85% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, 92% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a). However, you may wish to focus on the small number of negative responses and on the additional comments (see Section 1 on Supervision).

- Resources are perceived to be lacking by some respondents, especially in terms of study space (see Section 2 and Additional Comments, Question 4). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

  - *I don't have a working space, but use the resources on campus. Many of them get very busy, especially near UG deadlines which can make things more difficult.*

  - *There should be better facilities within the department for PG students- office space/ access to printers/photocopiers. Libraries don't usually have the room.*

- Compared to the college trend, fewer students than the average value are confident that they will complete their research degree programme within their institution’s expected timetable (See Question 17b).
Music Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive (86% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- Resources are perceived to be lacking by some respondents, especially in terms of study space (see Section 2 and Additional Comments, Question 4). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:

  - In the music department no PhD student has a space at all.

  - The lack of dedicated workspace for postgraduate researchers in the Faculty of Arts remain a problem. The libraries are not quiet, and during exams there often isn't even space. Still, many are dependent on the library collections; it is physically impossible to carry all books you may need in a day between different temporary work spaces. A quiet postgraduate corner, with lockers to keep checked-out library books really is all that is needed.

- Very positive feedback was received (above the College’s average values) on research culture (see Section 3 and additional comments Question 6):

  - I am extremely satisfied by the work done in the department and the way it integrates its students. The standard is extremely high, and it is also obvious when I talk to other students from other Universities that the Royal Holloway Music Department is one of the best in the country at the moment, if not the best.

- Respondents are confident overall regarding their professional development (See Section 7) and their ability to complete their PhD within the required timescale (almost 95% of respondents are confident that they will complete their research degree programme within their institution’s expected timetable).
Considering the number of students from Philosophy responding to PRES (only two), perhaps answers cannot be taken as a consistent case study. The overall feedback regarding the department is positive; nevertheless you may wish to focus especially on the first three sections and on question 16a. No written comments specific to Philosophy were left on the survey by students.
Physics Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is positive (83% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- Feedback regarding resources for students is mixed. Although 100% of respondents think that they have a suitable working space (the only case in the whole College data), a part of them report that library facilities and specialist resources should be strengthened (see Section 2 and Additional Comments).

- Very positive feedback was received (above the College’s average values) on students’ acknowledgement of responsibilities and rights (see Section 5).

- According to question 16a, respondents think that more support for teaching is needed.
Politics & IR Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES (only 11), the overall feedback regarding the department is positive. Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- Some sections present a small number of negative responses (see Section 1 on Supervision, Section 2 on Resources and Section 6 on Research Skills).

- Very positive feedback was received (above the College’s average values) on the acknowledgement of responsibilities (see Section 5) and professional development (see Section 7).
Psychology Report

Considering the number of students replying to PRES, the overall feedback regarding the department is very positive (85% replied that overall they are satisfied with the experience of their research degree programme, as shown in Question 17a). Nevertheless some sections need to be highlighted:

- In line with College data, the quality of PhD supervision at the department attracted many positive comments, 80% of respondents agreeing that their requirements had been met (see Question 1a). However, you may wish to focus on the small number of negative responses and on the additional comments (see Section 1 on Supervision).

- According to around 25% of respondents, resources are not always appropriate, especially regarding journal access (See Section 2 and additional comments Question 4). Below is a selection of the written feedback received for this section of the questionnaire:
  
  - I had to access a lot of the relevant research papers via different library registrations. RHUL should have better access to journals that are relevant to social psychologists.
  
  - The library is not good. There are many necessary books and journals that are unavailable.

- You may wish to focus on Question 18, where you can find the below comment on coordination and administration:

  - Overall the programme is very good and I am very happy with my supervisor however you get roped into things at the last minute that detract from your PhD work. The lack of a coordination and well managed admin/operations function means that you have to ask a number of people a question to get to the solution. It would be a good idea to update the content pages for PhD students so that everything is clear to them when they join rather than having 30 piecemeal emails circulated with the information you need.
Considering the number of students from Social Work responding to PRES (only five), perhaps answers cannot be taken as a consistent case study. The overall feedback regarding the department is positive; nevertheless you may wish to focus especially on the first three sections, on the Research Skills section and on the additional comments.

You may wish to encourage students to express their opinions more actively in the survey in future.
ULIP Report

Considering that only one student from ULIP responded to PRES, perhaps answers cannot be taken as a consistent case study. Nevertheless, you may wish to focus on answers and on additional comments especially because overall experience is perceived as disappointing by the student.
You may wish to encourage students to express their opinions more actively in the survey in future.