

Bangor University
Doctoral School Board (DSB) – PRES 2020 Analysis
Minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2020

Present: Doctoral School

Professor Andrew Hiscock [AH] (PGR Dean, Chair), Penny Dowdney, Aashu Jayadeep

College Directors

Dr Sue Niebrzydowski [SN](CoAHB), Dr Neal Hockley [NH](CoESE), Prof Debbie Mills [DM](CoHS)

School PGR Leads

Dr Noemi Mantovan (BBS), Dr Eirini Sanoudaki (LLL), Dr Marie Parker & Dr Wei Shi (Law), Dr Pwyll Ap Sion (Music & Media), Dr Robin Mann (H,Phil & So Sci), Dr Line Cordes(Ocean Sciences), Dr William J Teahan (Computer Science & EE), Mr Graham French (Education), Dr Richard Binney(Psych), Dr Sion Williams(HS), Dr Christopher Staples (MS),

SU

James Avison (SU)

Other Invitees

Mairwen Owen [MO] (Library & Archives Services), Mandy Angharad [MA] & Danielle Barnard [DB] (SEU)

Apologies:

Dr Nathalie Fenner, Dr Martina Lahmann, Prof Gerwyn Williams, Dr Ross Roberts

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Professor Andrew Hiscock welcomed everyone to the special meeting of the Doctoral School Board which had been arranged online to discuss the PRES 2020 results. He informed the group that the purpose of this PRES analysis meeting was to give an opportunity for College PGR Directors and School PGR leads to discuss the outcomes and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of PRES 2020. He emphasised that the meeting presented a good opportunity to share good practice. He stressed that feedback to the PGR community is important, especially

during these unprecedented times, and we should be responsive to their comments/ queries and concerns.

He mentioned that the meeting would be structured as below :

1. MA and DB from the SEU to do a short presentation of the PRES 2020 survey
2. College-specific break-out groups chaired by College PGR directors, addressing questions of:
 - areas of achievement and concern highlighted by the PRES 2020 survey in colleges/schools.
 - action plans for 2020-21.
 - good news stories to be identified for publicity purposes.
3. College PGR Directors would then report back the points of discussion regarding action plans.

2. PRESENTATION

MA & DB presented the PRES University report 2020. The University's PRES results achieved an 83% overall satisfaction score (81% in 2019) with an 80% global benchmark, based on 423 BU responses.

MA highlighted that given the Covid-19 situation, we have done well according to the data below. She thanked everyone for their continuous efforts.

OUT OF 38 INSTITUTIONS	AT A GLANCE
10th	Overall
13th	Supervision
9th	Resources
6th	Research Culture
14th	Progression
6th	Responsibilities
7th	Research Skills
6th	Professional Development

The results varied considerably across Schools, with some Schools consistently having highly positive scores and others evidently dipping in certain categories. MA mentioned that scores below 80% had been highlighted in yellow and those below 70% in red. The SEU would like to encourage Colleges / Schools to address those areas in collaboration with their PGRs during action planning events. The presented University data in this format can be used for publicity purposes, with caution if using comments. She emphasised the importance of data protection regarding the reports discussed at the meeting.

DB mentioned that normally printed booklets were used in discussions during action planning events but given the current circumstances, Schools should share the document with their PGRs as long as it is communicated to them that this is in the strictest confidence and the data should not be shared.

She requested that colleges/ schools should invite the SEU to their action planning events.

3. Q & A SESSION

The PGR Directors/ Leads requested the SEU to issue a different version of the College reports with the comments hidden so that they can be used for the action planning events, along with the University report.

The SEU pointed out that data for some of the programmes are small and hence cannot be separated to maintain anonymity.

Members of the group also commented about the lack of previous data to compare with due to the restructuring of Schools and Colleges.

AH emphasised that the Doctoral School is receiving messages from PGRs indicating isolation and understands that PGRs feel that they're not being informed of wider opportunities. The Doctoral School, in response to PGR requests, is negotiating for PGRs to have access to the staff bulletin. Communicating to PGRs needs to be prioritised. It is important to maintain the supervisory relationship with the PGRs and if they do encounter difficult relationships with their supervisory committee, they should be directed to the PGR lead or the personal tutor. Inductions should include details about these communications.

4. SUGGESTIONS - AFTER DISCUSSIONS IN BREAKOUT ROOMS

CoHS

DM updated the following:

- Overall satisfaction for the College is at the top.
- The College will be conducting inductions soon.
- Separate College PRES action planning event will be organised.
- The College is looking at innovative ways to address concerns and responding to them.
- The College really benefited from organising PRES meetings ahead of the survey. The PGRs were able to understand the questions more clearly.

RM commented that it would be useful to have specific information on best practice from schools that performed well. MA assured all that they can contact her for specific reports.

CoESE

NH updated the following:

- Some sections (ex. Research Culture) are highlighted red especially for SNS when compared to other schools. This could probably be because of the merger/ restructuring of the school.
- More work needs to be done in interpreting the questions to the PGRs as this could be one of the reasons for low scores, especially in the Research Culture section.
- We should expect the impact of the Covid –19 situation for next year's survey as this time the PRES survey was conducted towards the beginning of the pandemic.

MA indicated that concerns or suggestions regarding the questions can be fed back to her to be forwarded to the survey authorities.

CoAHB

SN updated the following:

- The College has an excellent team of PGR leads across the schools who support and promote excellent supervisory relationships.
- The College now has a specific Blackboard page for 1st year PGRs.
- Concerns are arising regarding the non-availability of workspaces for PGRs. It is crucial that we support them.
- It would be good to have a shared document of best practice which can be referred to by all Colleges across the University.

Library & Archives

MO updated the group about the services available through the Library given the current situation with Covid-19. The Doctoral School will circulate the document to the PGR community. MO reminded the group that the situation is changing constantly, and regular updates will be available through the Library website and via social media.

5. CONCLUSION

The Chair congratulated everyone involved for the PRES 2020 results and mentioned that even though some of the comments are disheartening, we have scored well in many aspects and are on a par with the sector. MA offered to provide further reports according to requirements.

AH highlighted that it is important that action plan events are arranged and are followed through to close the loop by informing the PGRs that their feedback is acted upon. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the contributing to the discussions.