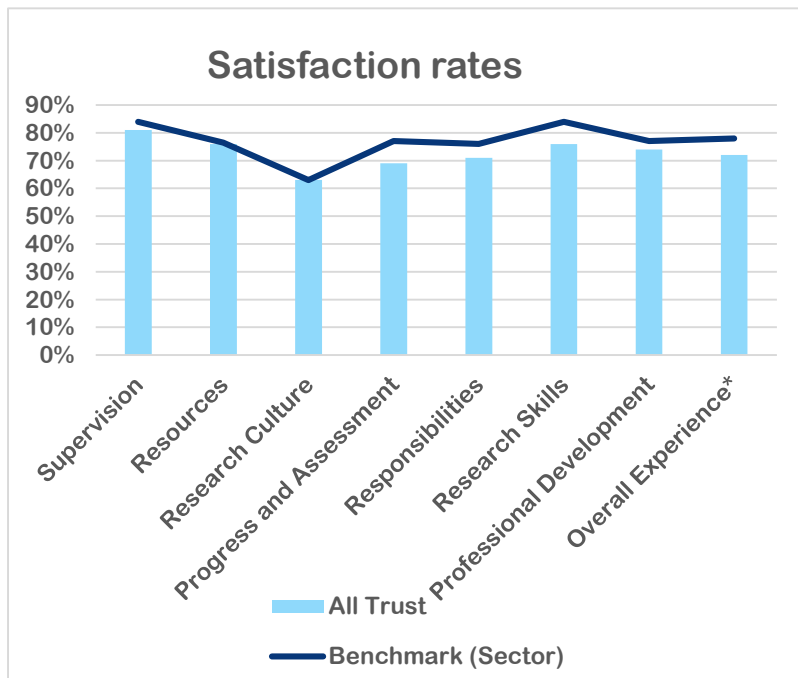


Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust

PRES Survey Overview Report 2014-15 Academic Year | Executive Summary



Overall satisfaction: The Trust achieves 72% on overall satisfaction, 6 percentage points below the sector benchmark for our field of study. Four out of six Trust courses exceeded the sector benchmark for overall satisfaction.

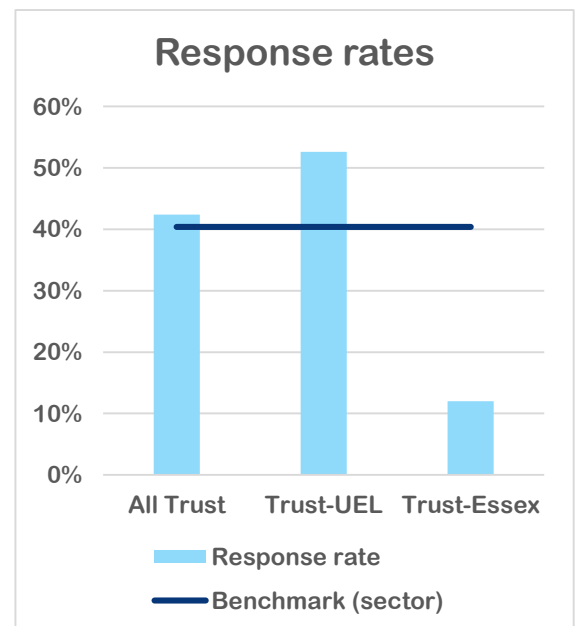
Response rates: Overall Trust response rate (42%) exceeds sector benchmark (40%).

*Overall experience is calculated as the positive responses to the question 'Overall, I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme'. All other sections are an average of the responses to the four questions within each section.

N.B. Benchmarks consist of the PRES 2015 average of London Health and social Care and London Social Sciences sector benchmarks.

Recommendations

1. Ensure closer integration of the Taught/Research elements of the Doctorates as part of the Essex validation.
2. Consider increasing the supervisory resources
3. Look into introducing online training modules for the mandatory regulations training as a way of reducing the burden on supervisors while ensuring supervisors have the required knowledge.
4. Consider investment in new computers in the common rooms
5. Ensure the Doctoral web-pages for UEL courses are advertised. Include a link from the cross-doctoral moodle page and from all doctoral course moodle pages.
6. Induction – consider having a cross-doctoral induction as part of enrolment week where library, AGQA Unit and others makes short presentations on the information available for doctoral students.
7. Consider how Research Skills and Research Methodology can become a more integral part of the doctoral courses (particularly D10D and M80 (including M80N)). Draw from the expertise of experienced Course Leads (particularly D50/60) relating to Research Skills.



Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)

Overview Report 2014-15 Academic Year | Full Report

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 **Description of the PRES.** The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is the only sector-wide survey for research degree students and is led by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). There are currently 123 Higher Education Institutions participating in the survey. It is worth noting that the HEA do not separately count the Trust, and is under the umbrella of the University of East London and the University of Essex.
- 1.2 **Background.** The Trust participated in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) for the second time in academic year 2014/15 in collaboration with University Validating Partners University of East London; and University of Essex. The last time the Trust participated was in academic year 2012/13.
- 1.3 **Frequency.** As this is a biennial survey, the Trust alternates this with its own internal survey.
- 1.4 **Student Participation.** Out of 277 students eligible to take part in the survey, 109 students across the Doctoral courses returned completed forms. Due to data disparity issues between the Trust and UEL, only 192 UEL/Trust students were sent the survey and therefore the total number of students who were sent the survey across University of East London (UEL) and University of Essex (Essex) is 257. Taking this into account, the Trust/UEL response rate was 52.6% and the response rate for Trust/Essex is 12%.
- 1.5 **Relevance of PRES.** The vast majority of students on Trust courses were Professional Doctoral students, and the survey is designed to accommodate PHD, MPhil, MRes (Masters by Research) and other research-based degrees, this meant that the survey is not specifically designed for the Professional Doctorate model. Although inviting all years of the PRES gives a useful snapshot, it means that students on the earlier part of the course are not in a position to comment on certain aspects. In many instances, students have commented on the fact that they have not yet got research supervisors and have not yet begun their research.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 **Delivery.** The survey was conducted entirely online. UEL/Trust students were sent an initial email from the Dean of Postgraduate Studies in March, and the unique link was sent out to students via an individual, personalised email in March and April. There followed a targeted campaign, in which students who had not completed the survey were sent up to three personalised reminders between April and May.

2.2 **Eligibility criteria.** Eligible students are those who are fully enrolled on any year of a Doctoral course at the Trust. Students who have been awarded, who have withdrawn, those without a current record, debtors and those who are on a suspension were not eligible.

2.2.1 Significant work was carried out in liaison with Course Administrators and Registry to ensure that students who were initially not eligible (such as those with a debt or those with no current record) were contacted to clear debts and ensure their records were updated. These students were then sent a link to complete the survey.

2.2.2 The UEL used the HESA 2014 return to produce the list of eligible students. This did not reflect students who were currently enrolled on the course, as around 30% of eligible students were missing, and approximately 30% of the students included on the UEL list were not eligible. If the Trust participates in the PRES survey with UEL in academic year 2017/18, it is imperative that the data is an accurate reflection of student enrolment figures. However, as the Trust is currently undertaking a procurement project for a new student records Management Information System (MIS), the 'Information Communication Technology' (ICT) project, which is currently scheduled for implementation by June 2016, sharing data with University Partners is anticipated to be significantly more straightforward in the future.

2.2.3 The University of Essex used a simpler method, whereby all students were emailed the same link and then signed in with their Essex credentials. Although there were some issues with students not knowing their Essex credentials, this was overall a simpler system of delivery and avoided the data issues that were faced with UEL.

2.3 **Questions.** The questionnaire consisted of the following 10 sections of 'core' questions:

- Supervision
- Resources
- Research Culture

- Progress and Assessment
- Responsibilities
- Research Skills
- Professional Development
- Overall Experience
- Opportunities
- Motivations

2.3.1 In addition to the core questions, the UEL included additional questions on the survey specifically aimed at the professional doctoral contingent. The Trust negotiated with the UEL on the inclusion of the Professional doctoral questions, and also requested that additional questions were added around the ethical approval process.

- Opportunities for Teaching (NA for Trust students)
- Professional Doctorates
- Ethical Approval

2.3.2 Each section comprised multiple questions. For each question, the students were asked to tick one of five options:

- Definitely agree
- Mostly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Mostly disagree
- Definitely disagree

2.3.3 Students were also given the option to answer 'N/A' to any question. In the analysis of these responses, the N/A answers were not included in the total population, in line with the HEE methodology.

2.3.4 With the exception of the Overall Experience section, the average score for each section was calculated and rounded to the nearest whole number, in line with the HEA methodology.

2.4 **Benchmarks.** UEL data was benchmarked with the Sector and with the million+ group, which consists of a group of 17 UK Universities, which are newer Universities (often with long histories as colleges and polytechnics) such as Bath Spa, Anglia Ruskin, London Southbank, Middlesex and UEL. As these Universities are not comparable to the Trust as an education

provider, and because the Essex results were not benchmarked with the million+ group, the data will be compared with the following benchmarks:

- The Trust's previous PRES survey results from 2013
- The Trust's internal Postgraduate Research Degrees survey from 2014
- The PRES 2015 sector results for London – Social Sciences and London – Health and Social Sciences.

2.5 **Course level analysis:** Throughout the report, there will be references to individual courses where this helps to shed light on Trust-level results. It is important to note that good practice in data analysis would exclude D10D from being part of the analysis due to the fact that a maximum of nine students completed the survey. This needs to be borne in mind when considering their lower scores as it is not a fair reflection on the performance or quality of the course when considered in isolation. In addition, written comments (although mixed) are generally extremely positive which provides another aspect when looking at D10D results.

2.5.1 Other courses with low response rates are PhD (1 respondent), M4/M5 (8 respondents), M80S (4 respondents), D50 (merged with D60 to add up to 10 respondents between the two courses). Therefore these courses will not be discussed individually, although are included in the Trust-level stats.

3.0 Response Rates

Response Rates for Trust students

Institution	Number of eligible students	Number of students sent the invitation	Number of returns	Response rate
Trust (UEL)	212	192	101	52.6%
UEL (overall) response rate				46%
Trust (Essex)	65	65	8	12%
Essex (overall) response rate				15%
Overall Trust response rate				42%
Sector (overall) response rate				40%

3.1 The Trust/UEL response rate of 52.6% compares favourably with the Sector average of 40% and the UEL average of 46%. In the previous PRES survey, the response rate for the Trust was 20% and the internal survey 2014 response rate was 55%.

3.2 This comparably good response rate is likely to be the result of a significant effort to achieve a high response rate through:

- Collaborating with Course Leads and UEL to ensure Trust perspectives were taken into account within the customised questions added by the UEL to the PRES questionnaire.
- Posters were put up around the trust, and leaflets distributed in the library and canteen. Because of preparations for the CQC site visit, DET were not allowed to put Education and Training posters in the boxes by the lifts on floors 1-4, but posters were put up on the 5th floor by the lifts, in the canteen and in the common room as well as in the library and in Course Admin rooms.
- Notices were also placed on Moodle Course pages.
- Engaging Course Leads and Cluster Leads (now Portfolio Managers) in the process through consultation.

- Sending communications to all Doctoral staff and students (including Course Administrators) from the Dean of Postgraduate Studies advertising the survey ahead of the start date, asking them for help and support in achieving a good response rate.
- Particularly reminding staff that a higher response rate means fairer and more accurate results as there is a tendency for unsatisfied students to complete the survey more readily than satisfied students.
- Sending out weekly updates to course teams with the latest response rates by course so that they can see how they are doing, and working collaboratively with the tutors who worked hard to improve their response rates.
- Sending out personalised reminders to students who had not taken the survey (three over the course of three months) in addition to the marketing email from the Dean, and the initial invitation.
- Not running the internal student survey at the same time, as happened in the academic year 2012/13 and resulted in the internal survey being prioritised and ‘survey fatigue’ amongst students.
- Strong liaison with the UEL Student Engagement Manager throughout to ensure stats and information was transmitted quickly, and issues were resolved as soon as possible.
- The UEL ran a competition where one student who had completed the survey would be selected at random from each School (The Trust being counted as a ‘School’ in this context) would win a £50 Amazon voucher, and one student would win £500 towards attending a conference of their choice.

3.3 Delivering the survey online only was a significant risk factor in terms of response rates, as tutors were not able to ensure students completed the survey in seminar time. However, there were also significant benefits – such as enabling students to complete the survey anywhere in the world, which suited many of the students who lived a significant distance from the Trust and may only come in rarely (if ever) for supervision. Judging by the results of the previous survey held (the internal survey), the response was less than 3% lower than the internal survey and therefore appeared to have little if any impact on the response rate.

3.4 There is a significant disparity between the UEL/Trust response rate and the Essex/Trust response rate. It is likely that the following factors influenced this issue:

- The link to the Essex survey to communicate to students was not circulated until April which left less of a window for students to complete the survey.

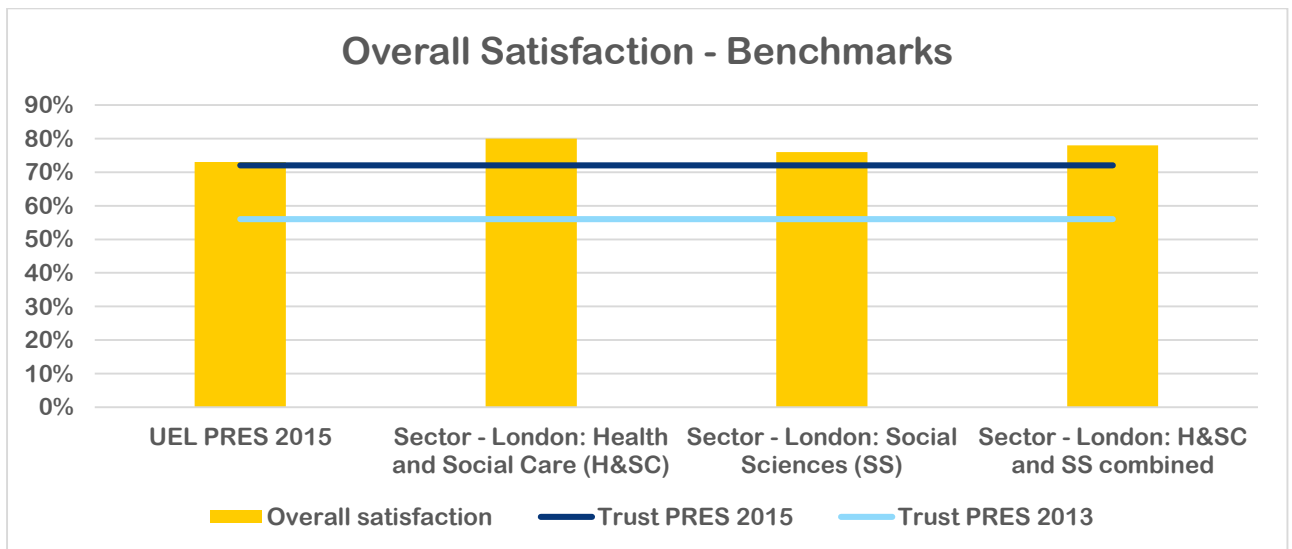
- As the significant majority of Doctoral students are UEL/Trust students, efforts towards getting good response rates for Trust/UEL courses were prioritised over the Essex/Trust students. In addition, due to the significant data issues with UEL/Trust students, this took an increased amount of time and effort.
- The students were communicated with through Moodle by the Course Administrator, as it was felt at the time that students were more likely to consider an email from a recognised contact. However, it meant that the Quality Officer managing the PRES did not have as much direct control over the frequency and content of the emails, particularly as it was a very busy time for the Course Administrators.
- There was no prize draw for Essex students
- As the overall response rate for Essex was 15% it appears that the PRES was not a priority for the University.
- Contact between the Trust and Essex was limited and it was not possible to get a running total of response rates to share with course tutors, and a targeted approach to achieving a response rate was therefore not possible.

4.0 Analysis of Results

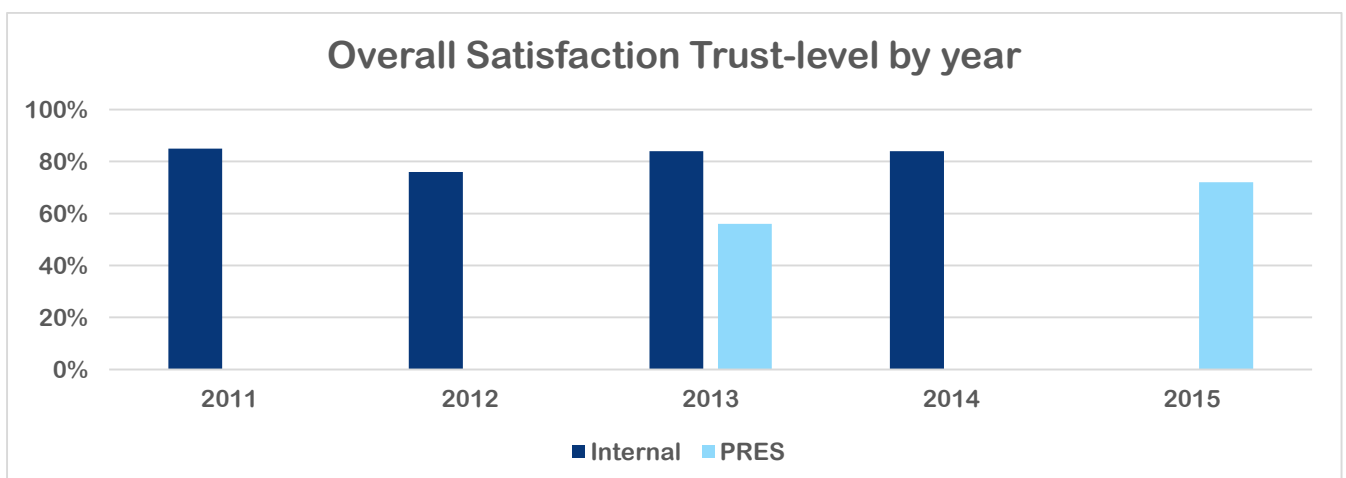
4.1 Overall satisfaction

Q18.1a Overall I am satisfied with the experience of my research degree programme

4.1.1 The Trust falls 6 percentage points below the sector average on overall satisfaction, although we are comparable (1% difference) with University of East London who currently validates the majority of the Trust's DProf courses. Compared to the previous PRES exercise where the Trust achieved only 56% on overall satisfaction, this indicates an upward trend:



4.1.2 The Trust has consistently achieved higher overall satisfaction rates on internal surveys than on the national survey:

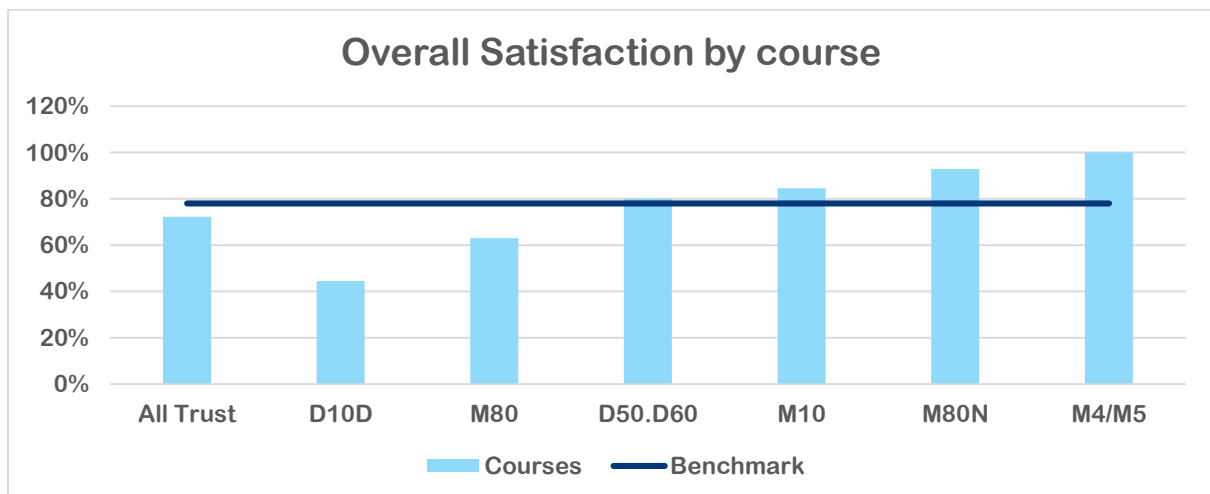


4.1.3 This could be for one or more of the following reasons:

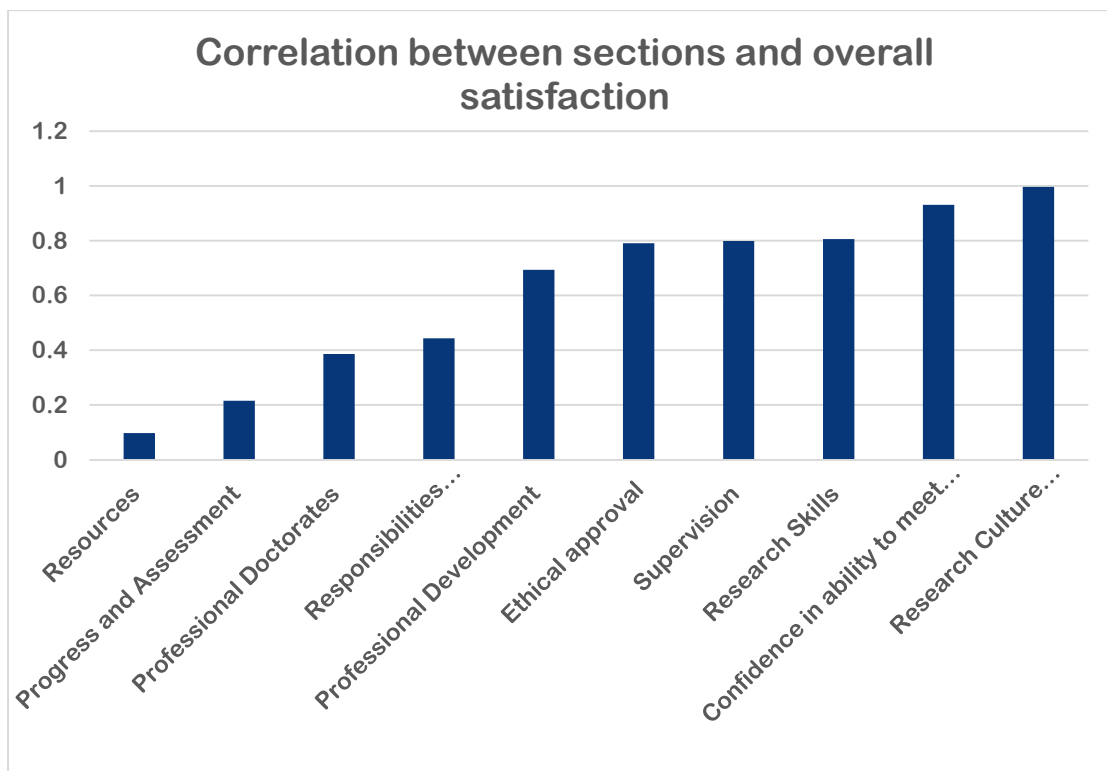
- The internal survey is local and students see it as a Trust-led and governed process whereas the PRES could be seen as a more UEL or Essex-led and governed process.
- The internal survey cannot satisfactorily guarantee anonymous feedback as the PRES does, because of the method of gathering the feedback. This may lead to students being more forthright in the PRES than they might be in the internal survey.

4.1.4 One way of testing these theories is by asking students to answer one-question surveys throughout the year using (for instance) Moodle. This tool must be used judiciously to ensure students are not put off by being over-surveyed. It is also recommended that this issue is taken to the Student Experience Committee to discuss with the members why they think this phenomenon may occur.

4.1.5 Having said this, it is worth noting that in the 2013 PRES survey, respondents were almost entirely made up of DProf Child Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (M80) students. If we isolate the PRES results for overall satisfaction for M80 students, this is at 63% - higher than in 2013, but still significantly below the sector average, whereas DProf Social Work/Care (D60/50), DProf Systemic Psychotherapy (M10), DProf Child Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy delivered at the Northern School for Applied Psychotherapy (M80N) and Essex-validated Educational Psychology Professional Doctorates (M4/M5) all achieve a higher satisfaction than the sector average:



4.1.6 The following chart considers which sections have the most influence on the overall satisfaction (the strength of the correlation between sections and the overall satisfaction):



4.1.7 This demonstrates that the most influential sections on **overall** satisfaction are: 1) Research Culture; and 2) Students' confidence in their ability to meet their completion deadline. This is followed by: 3) Research Skills; 4) Supervision; and 5) Students understanding ethical approval requirements (This last is a UEL-specific question and does not apply to Essex-validated courses).

4.1.8 These sections are in some ways interlinked. For instance: students understanding their responsibilities and the responsibilities of their supervisors; supervision; students' confidence in their ability to meet completion deadlines; and understanding ethical approval requirements are all linked and therefore addressing one may well have a knock-on effect on the other areas. These will be discussed under each section in this report.

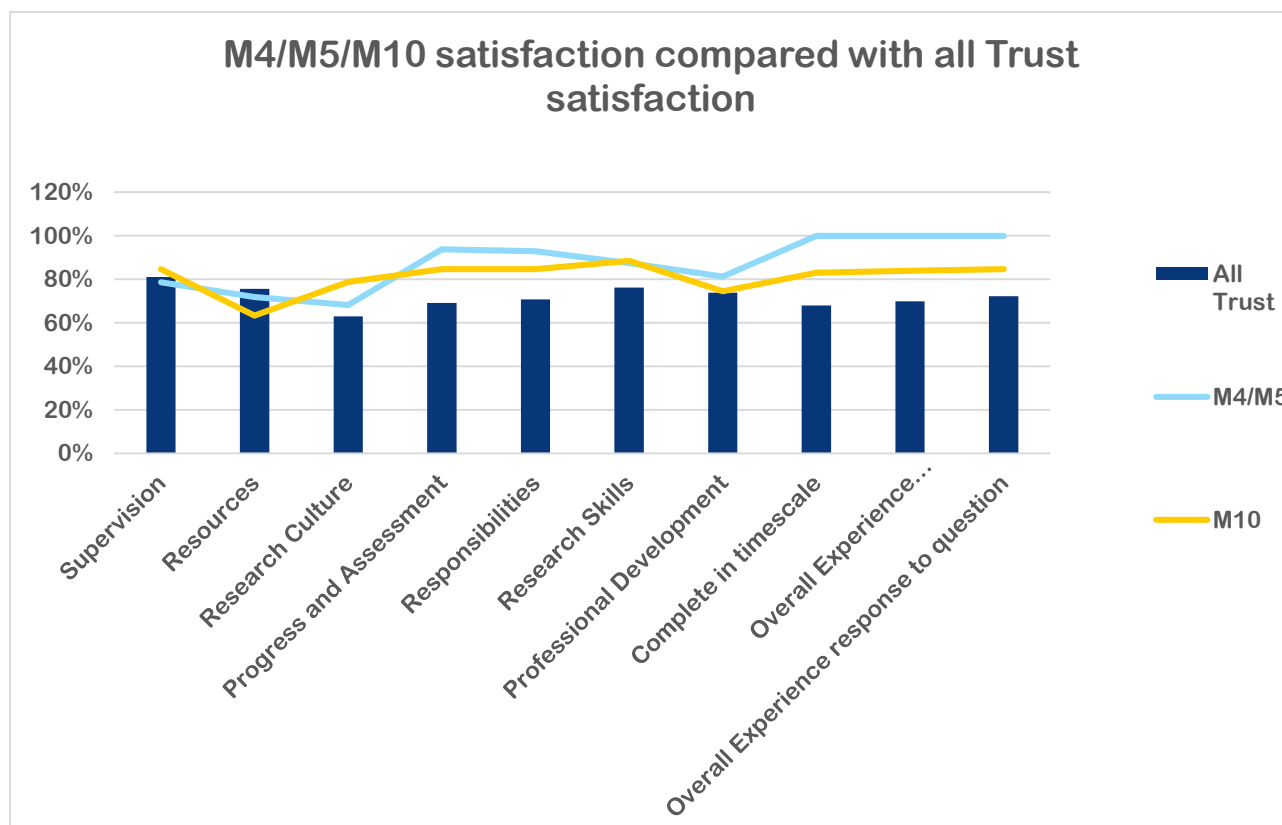
Q18.2a I am confident that I will complete my research degree programme within my institution's expected timescale

4.1.9 Under the section 'student satisfaction' on the survey, students were also asked the above question. As discussed in 4.1.7, this is a major factor in students' overall satisfaction.

4.1.10 The Trust has a legacy of students who have been enrolled on a Doctoral programme for 8 or more years. This is largely due to the structuring of the course, with many of the UEL-validated professional doctoral courses consisting of a 'phase one' which consists of Taught (and possibly

clinical) elements followed by a 'phase two' which consists of researching and writing up their thesis. Since the taught phase on many of the professional doctorates is three or four years, this can mean that students are on their fifth year before they begin their research.

4.1.11 The courses that differ from this model are the DProf Systemic Psychotherapy (M10) and the DProf Educational Psychology (M4/M5), where students are required to submit a research proposal as an assessed module, and they start their research while still completing taught modules. This more integrated approach also means that students are still part of a community when beginning their projects. Although other factors, such as the size of the course and the management of the course could affect satisfaction, the structuring of these courses could be a significant impact on their higher satisfaction rates:



4.1.12 This has already been recognised as an area for development in the DProf Child Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (M80) in their recent validation with the University of Essex. The course team have developed much closer integration between the taught and research elements of the doctorates in the newly validated course structure. This is anticipated to address the high numbers of students 'stepping off' the doctorate with an MProf rather than completing the whole doctorate, due to the long timescales and study fatigue experienced on the UEL-validated version of the doctorate.

4.1.13 These actions are supported by the written comments provided by students in relation to the structuring of the M80 doctorate – many of whom request a 'better balance' between research and

clinical; they claim ‘we are not given any time to do it [research]’; ‘the course could benefit from the same emphasis on the research’; that research feels like an ‘add on’.

RECOMMENDATION: Ensure closer integration of the Taught/Research elements of the Doctorates as part of the Essex validation.

4.2 Supervision

4.2.1 There is a relatively high correlation between overall satisfaction and satisfaction with supervision (0.798). The section on supervision is made up of four separate questions:

Question	Sector - London: Social Sciences and Health and Social Care averages	All Trust
<i>2.1.a. My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research</i>	92%	86%
<i>2.2.a. I have regular contact with my supervisor/s, appropriate for my needs</i>	87%	84%
<i>2.3.a. My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities</i>	87%	84%
<i>2.4.a. My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher</i>	73%	70%
Supervision overall	84%	81%

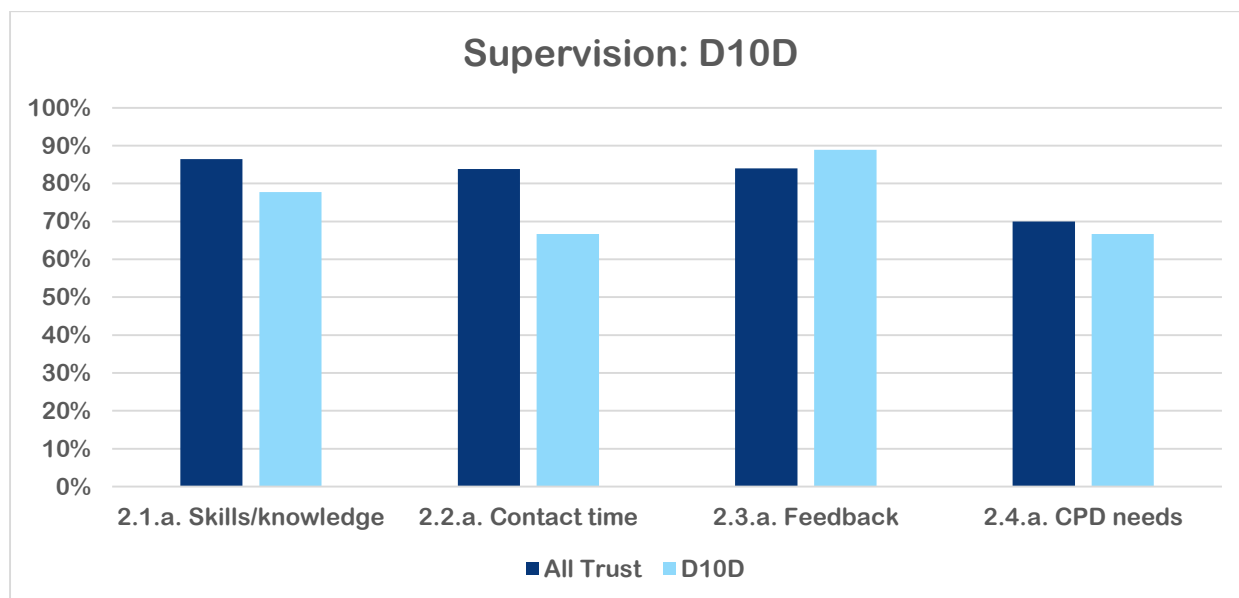
4.2.2 A number of students in written comments have been very complementary to individual supervisors across all the doctoral programmes.

4.2.3 The results above also represent an increase in satisfaction from the previous (13/14) internal survey, where ‘Quality of research supervision’ achieved 78% satisfaction; and frequency of supervision achieved 78% satisfaction.

4.2.4 Professional Doctorate students who undertake clinical placements as part of their studies, are provided a clinical supervisor. Although this question relates solely to research supervisors,

students may struggle to differentiate between clinical and academic supervisors, particularly if they have not begun researching and have not been allocated a research supervisor yet. Therefore the results to this question could relate to either clinical supervision or research supervision (although intended only for the latter).

- 4.2.5 Apart from question 2.3a, the DProf in Consultation and the Organisation (D10D) generally scores the lowest in this section:



- 4.2.6 It has been observed at Trust Research Degrees Sub Committee that the course team has in the past struggled with finding suitably experienced supervisors for research students. As the newest course, the course team is inexperienced compared to some of the more established courses such as D60, M80 and M10. This is reflected in the number of referrals on D10D applications to register the thesis proposal compared to the other courses –sometimes because the sections on supervisory support is missing within the form.
- 4.2.7 Despite the fact that D10D generally has a generally lower satisfaction rate around supervision, the written comments are very positive with comments about being able to arrange meetings being the main cause for concern amongst this group of students. In fact, for the question ‘My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities’ D10D scores second highest at 89% against a sector benchmark of 87%. In addition, the results of the D10D PRES satisfaction rates should be treated with caution due to the low number of returns. See 1.7 for further details.
- 4.2.8 An area of concern is the availability of supervisors to support their students on all the Trust-based courses (as opposed to the Leeds-based course). Only M80N and M4/M5 do well in this area. In the UEL ‘Code of Practice for Research Degrees’ it stipulates that supervisors working full-time should have no more than nine supervisees at any one time. Most of the Supervisors at the Trust are on fractional contracts and are juggling teaching and clinical duties alongside a high number of

supervisees. Some have more than ten which, on a fractional contract equates to more than double the recommended levels. Part of the issue around this is that a supervisory team must have supervised to successful completion (between them) at least three previous students. Directors of study must have a permanent contract with the Trust. Due to several experienced staff either stepping down from supervising or leaving the Trust, this has left a diminishing number of experienced supervisors. Although new supervisors are coming through, their lack of experience means that the burden on experienced supervisors to make up the numbers on a team is extreme.

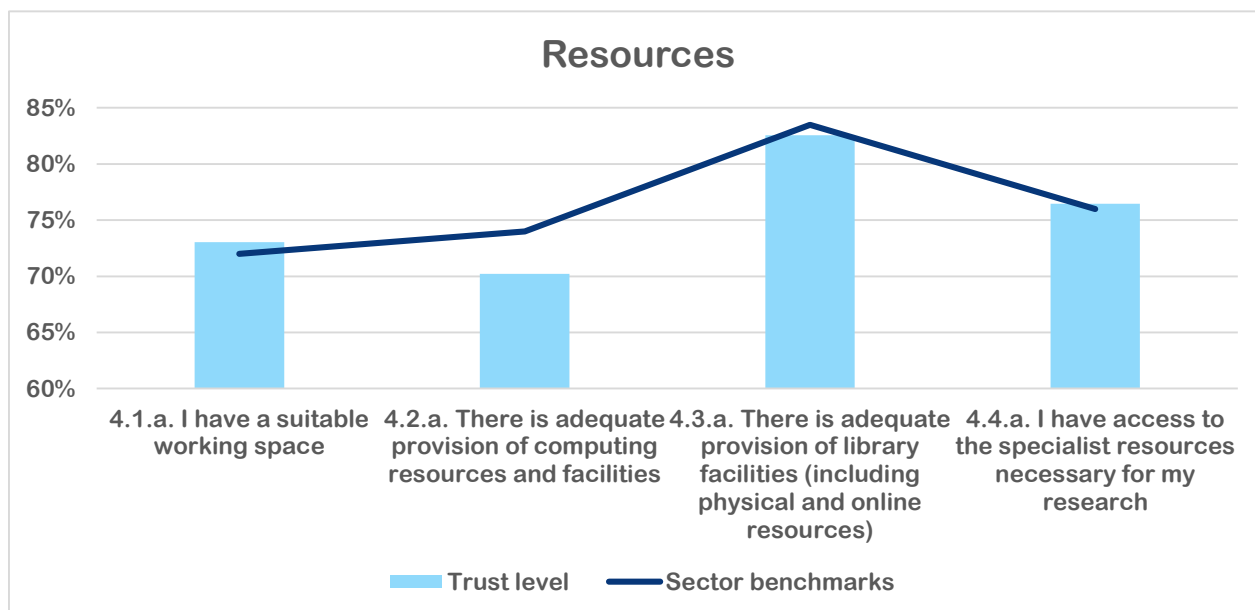
4.2.9 Partly due to this issue, many supervisors are extremely reluctant to undertake even mandatory training, with some supervisors not having taken the training significantly after the timescale. This leads to supervisors not knowing the regulations, knowing about access to resources available, and not undertaking their full responsibilities.

4.2.10 The staff to student ratio at the Northern School (M80N) means that this is less of an issue there. M4/M5 are validated by the University of Essex and fall under separate regulations. The major difference being that the students are only required to be allocated one supervisor (which, because students are also completing taught elements means that they are still well supported) rather than the two or three required with UEL. There is a mentoring scheme at Essex for new supervisors who have not previously supervised a student through to completion. Therefore the burden on supervisors should be less on the Essex-validated version of the doctorates. Having said this, the UEL-validated doctorates will run for a significant number of years and there may be a need to address the supervisory resources before these courses with UEL end.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider increasing the supervisory resource

RECOMMENDATION: Look into introducing online training modules for the mandatory regulations training as a way of reducing the burden on supervisors while ensuring supervisors have the required knowledge.

4.3 Resources

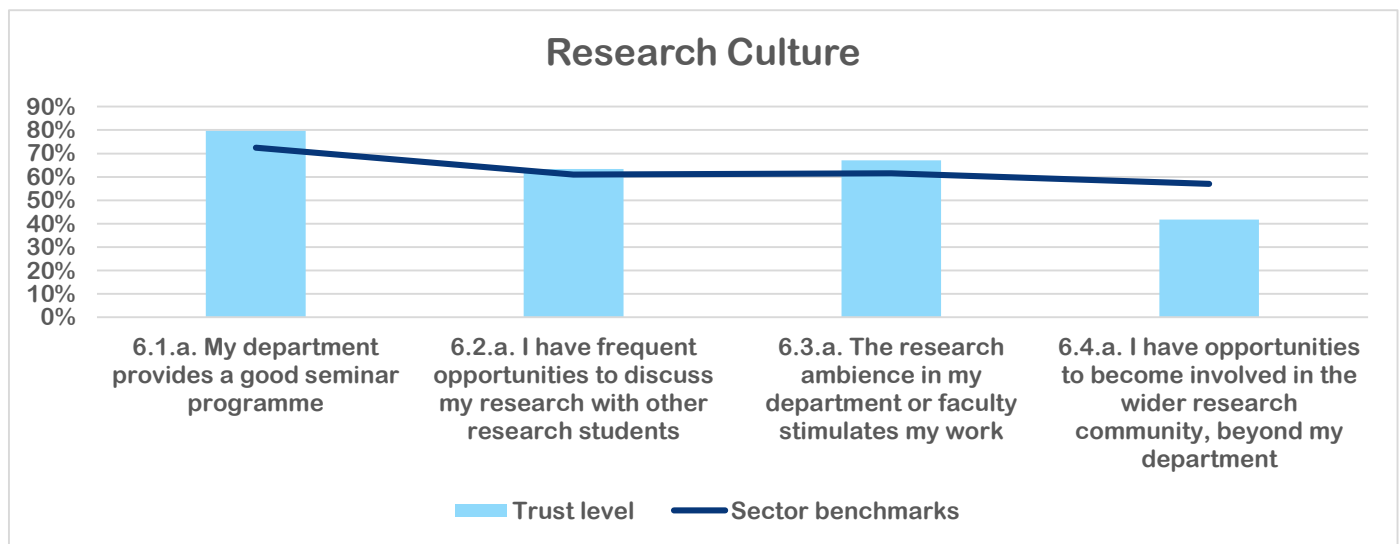


- 4.3.1 Resources, according to the correlation analysis under 4.1.6 is the least influential area on overall satisfaction. This is supported by the fact that the Systemic Psychotherapy doctorate (M10) scores the least well in the resources section but has the second highest overall satisfaction rate compared to the other Doctoral courses.
- 4.3.2 The Trust has recently improved its teaching and seminar rooms, and the library has also had a recent major refurbishment. Written comments are particularly complementary regarding the library staff. Having said this, there are some points to be aware of relating to this section:
- 4.3.2.1 **Secure data storage.** Students are soon to receive access to secure data storage via Moodle. This will mean that students can access their data from any computer anywhere in the world. It also ensures the security and meets data protection requirements. This has taken some time to provide to students, and will hopefully enhance doctoral students' experience of researching with the Trust.
- 4.3.2.2 **Computers.** Several written comments relate to the computers provided in the common rooms on floors two, three and four. It may be worth investing in some new computers for these areas. In addition, data analysis software such as Nvivo 10 on a limited number of computers in the library might be a good investment for doctoral students, although more feedback from students as to whether this is worthwhile should be gained before going ahead. It is also worth noting that 70% satisfaction represents an increase in satisfaction from the internal survey which took place in 2013/14, where 34% of students responded positively to the question on the quality of IT facilities, and 45% responded positively to the question on access to IT facilities.
- 4.3.2.3 **Students studying offsite.** Students do not seem fully aware of the availability of the excellent e-resources available from the Trust library, or the fact that through UEL or Essex, students can

access many other University libraries in the country. The Head of Library and Information Services has undertaken to ensure that this is more widely publicised to students.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider investment in new computers in the common rooms

4.4 Research Culture



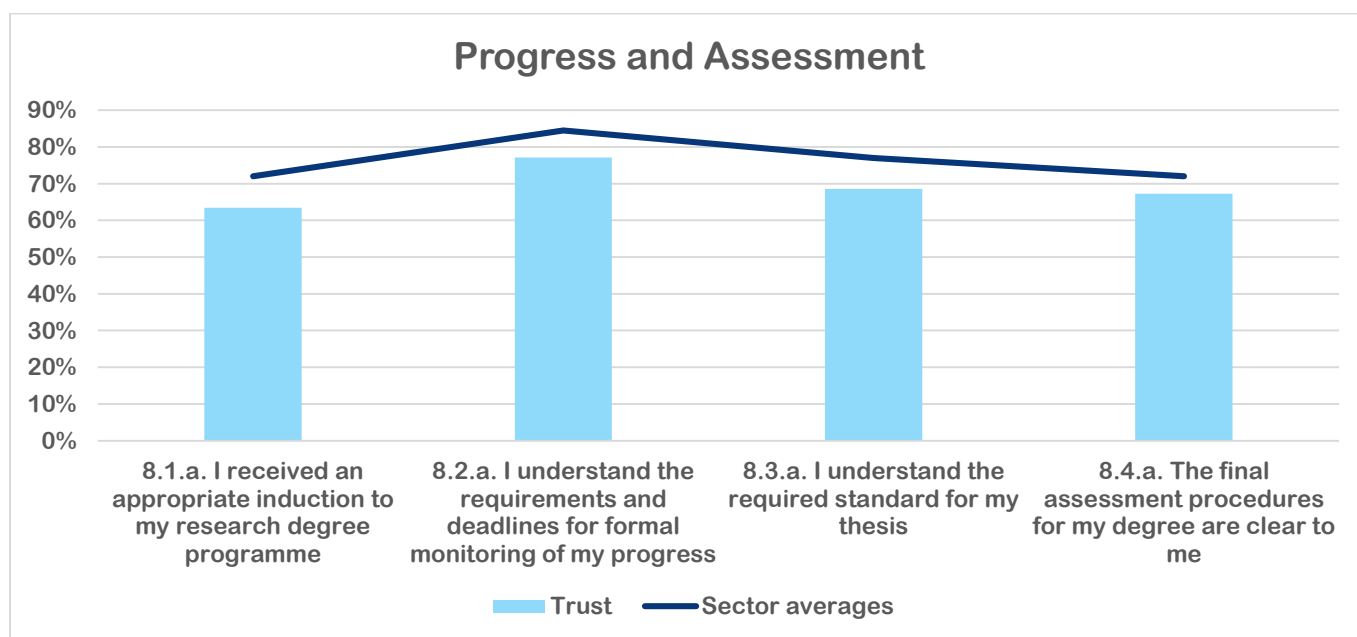
- 4.4.1 The Trust compares favourably with the relevant benchmarks for the sector, apart from in question 6.4.a. where the Trust scored 42% satisfaction against the relevant sector benchmark of 57%. It was noted in written feedback that students were not able to attend events due to the fact that they clashed with work commitments or that students did not live near enough to the Trust to participate. In a discussion with Technology Enhanced Learning regarding the availability of activities to students offsite culminated in the development of a cross-doctoral Moodle page where online resources could be shared with all students. See [4.4.4.4](#) below for more detail.
- 4.4.2 It is worth noting that the equivalent question to 6.3.a on the internal survey carried out in 13/14 attracted 80% satisfaction (for both 'There is a sense of community amongst my peers'; and a separate question on the 'stimulating intellectual climate') which is significantly higher than the satisfaction in the PRES survey, although the PRES results also compare favourably with the sector.
- 4.4.3 It is notable that the sector does not score very highly on this section, suggesting that this is an issue on a national level. However, the Trust has an advantage in this area due to the fact that the majority of the research degree courses are structured professional doctorates rather than PhDs

and the presence of course teams should have a positive impact in this area, provided they are able to devote time and energy to these issues.

- 4.4.4 According to the Correlation analysis in 4.1.6, Research Culture was the most influential area on overall satisfaction. Therefore, although the Trust compares relatively well with the relevant sector benchmarks, it is worth noting that continual improvement in this area will also enhance the overall satisfaction and will have the biggest knock-on effect on other areas.
- 4.4.5 On a course level, all courses except for D10D and M80 score above the sector benchmarks, with D10D at 44% falling significantly short. It could be partly to do with the fact that D10D students are not based at the Tavistock clinic unlike the other courses apart from M80N. Unlike the other courses where the Course Administrators act as the main conduit for communication and information-sharing, this is less the case on D10D.
- 4.4.6 M10 do particularly well, scoring 16 percentage points higher than the sector average. The cross—doctoral lecture series which is a series of recorded lectures available on Moodle, originated from M10 and this kind of innovative thinking may be providing students (some of whom are based abroad - in Norway, for example) with a feeling of connectedness with a wider research community.
- 4.4.7 Research Culture has been the focus of significant enhancement activity within the past academic year at the Trust:
- 4.4.7.1 **Website.** A new ‘tab’ on the Trust website gives all interested parties easy access to information about research taking place within the Trust – both staff and student (<http://tavistockandportman.uk/research-and-innovation>). This now houses the doctoral guidance pages for UEL doctoral students, which details tips and guidance on registering their research proposal, ethical approval, taking a break from their studies and so forth.
- 4.4.7.2 **Research and Development Committee.** Closer links have been forged between the Research and Development Committee and the Trust Research Degrees Subcommittee, with cross-over of membership between the two.
- 4.4.7.3 **Research Week and the Doctoral Conference.** A Doctoral Conference and a ‘Research Week’ are being planned for the 15/16 academic year. These have been a long time in the planning, partly due to a change in the role of the Associate Dean, Academic Governance and Quality Assurance, and also due to administrative resource issues within the Academic Governance and Quality Assurance Unit meaning that resources could not be found to support these events. Discussions are currently in process regarding properly resourcing these events to ensure the prestige and success that they deserve.

4.4.7.4 **Moodle.** A new cross-doctoral Moodle page is being set up for use as a cross-doctoral forum, a means of communicating to all doctoral students, sharing online resources such as the cross-doctoral lecture series, an events calendar advertising upcoming events, training and deadlines and a Turnitin submission area for theses. All doctoral students can self-enrol on this page, and should be heavily publicised to doctoral students as an essential resource for their studies and enhancing their experience as a student researcher.

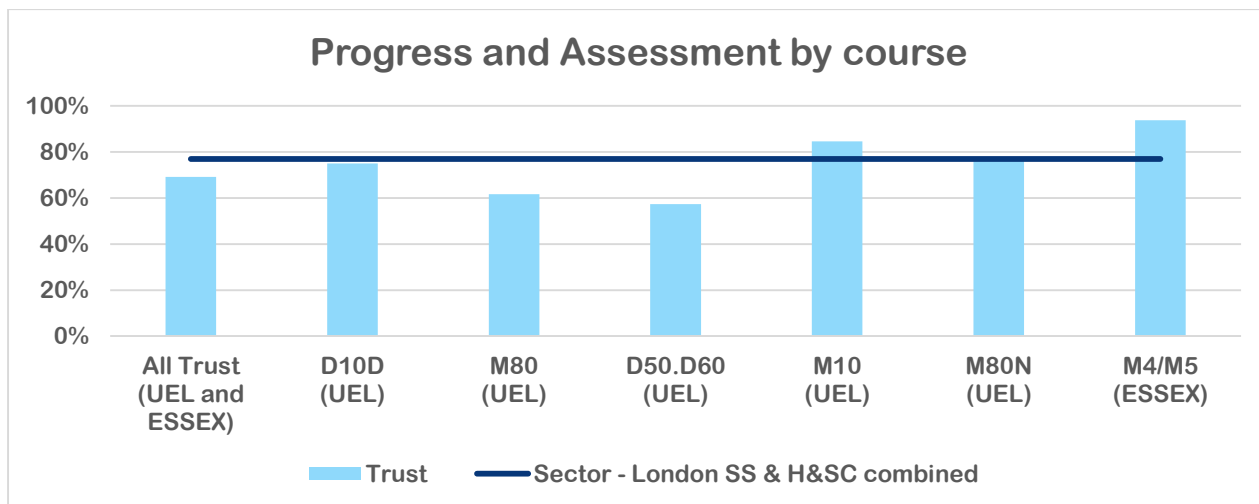
4.5 Progress and Assessment



4.5.1 According to the correlation analysis under 4.1.6, Progress and Assessment is the second least influential on overall satisfaction. However, as Teaching and Learning, and Supervision are core parts of the student experience on any course, attention should be paid to enhancing the progress and assessment on the Doctoral courses.

4.5.2 Many students claim that assessment information is not available to them, and that they do not know how to submit their thesis or how the viva examination works. Significant enhancement work was carried out in academic year 2013/14 to create a website to provide students with clear and accurate guidance on all UEL doctoral processes, which are complex and unclear without this guidance (<http://tavistockandportman.uk/research-and-innovation/doing-research/student-research>). In addition, a Thesis Module map was created for all professional doctorates which detailed information about word counts, presentation, assessment criteria and more. This is also available at the above link. Clearly more work is needed to ensure students are aware of this resource.

4.5.3 M10 and M4/M5 score significantly higher than the sector averages, at 85% and 94% respectively. For M4/M5 this sensationally high score could be due to the fact that these courses are structured differently due to being validated by Essex University rather than University of East London. M10 on the other hand is a UEL-validated course along with all the other courses:

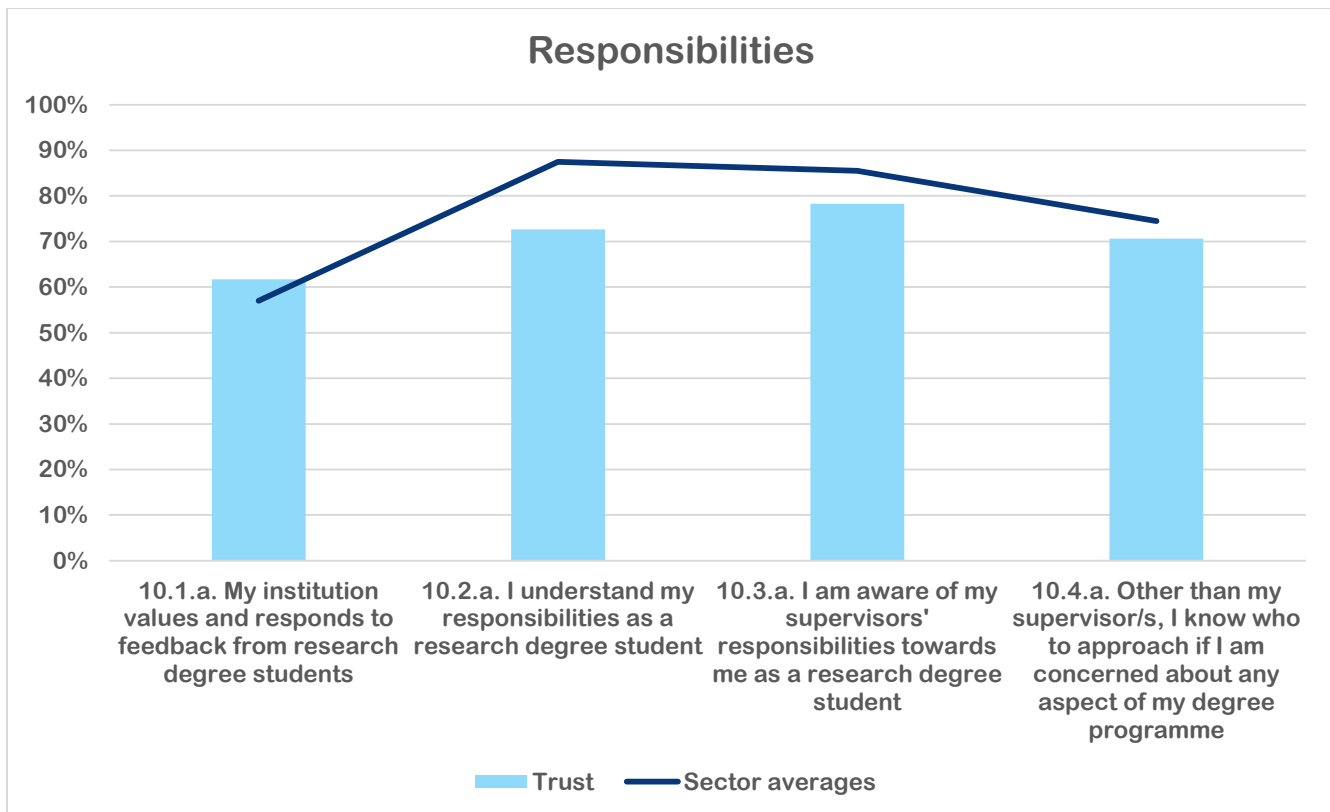


4.5.4 One of the reasons why M10 might have outperformed the other DProf courses could be because of the dedicated, course-level induction that students are provided with on entering the course. This provides students with information about where to access critical guidance – namely: Moodle; the course handbook (held on Moodle); and the UEL Doctoral guidance web pages. As well as this, the M10 course is the most closely aligned course to the M4/M5 programme in terms of structure (as mentioned in 4.1.11 above). This is also bound to have an impact on Progress and Assessment, as students have a closer relationship with the Course Team and Course Administrator for a bigger proportion of the course.

RECOMMENDATION: Ensure the Doctoral web-pages for UEL courses are advertised. Include a link from the cross-doctoral moodle page and from all doctoral course moodle pages.

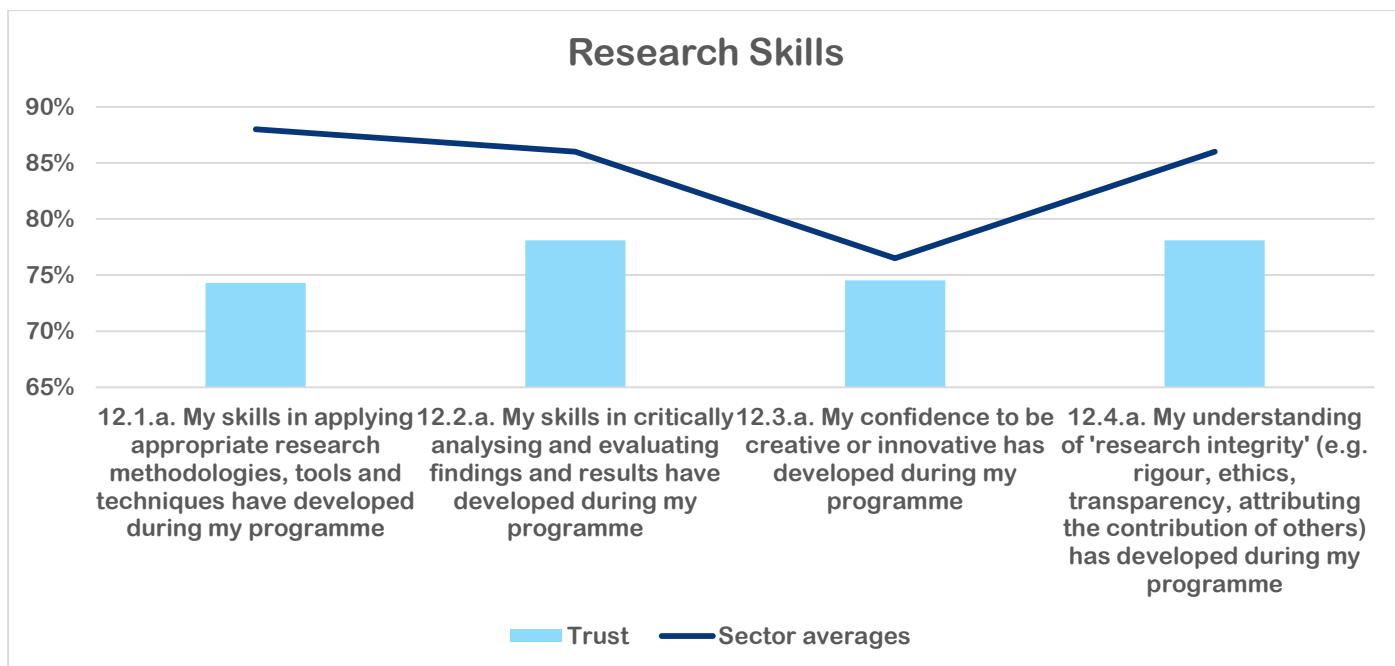
RECOMMENDATION: Induction – consider having a cross-doctoral induction as part of enrolment week. This need only be an hour seminar where library, AGQA Unit and others makes short presentations on the information available for doctoral students.

4.6 Responsibilities



- 4.6.1 The section on Responsibilities is closely linked with other areas, such as Induction (question under Progress and Assessment, Section 4.5 above); and Supervision (Section 4.2 above), as improvements in those areas is highly likely to have a significant impact on this area.
- 4.6.2 According to the correlation analysis at 4.1.6 above, this section has a lesser influence on overall satisfaction.
- 4.6.3 It is worth noting the fact that 62% of students agreed that the Trust values and responds to feedback from research degree students (question 10.1a), compared to the relevant sector benchmark of 57%. This is a significant improvement on the previous PRES (2013) Trust response to this question, of 41.5%. In-course feedback, particularly on M80 is constantly being sought. In addition, communications to students inviting them to complete the PRES 2015 stated that the Trust genuinely cared about getting student feedback, and the ways in which the Trust has acted on student feedback in the past – which may have raised their awareness of the efforts the Trust goes to in response to student surveys.

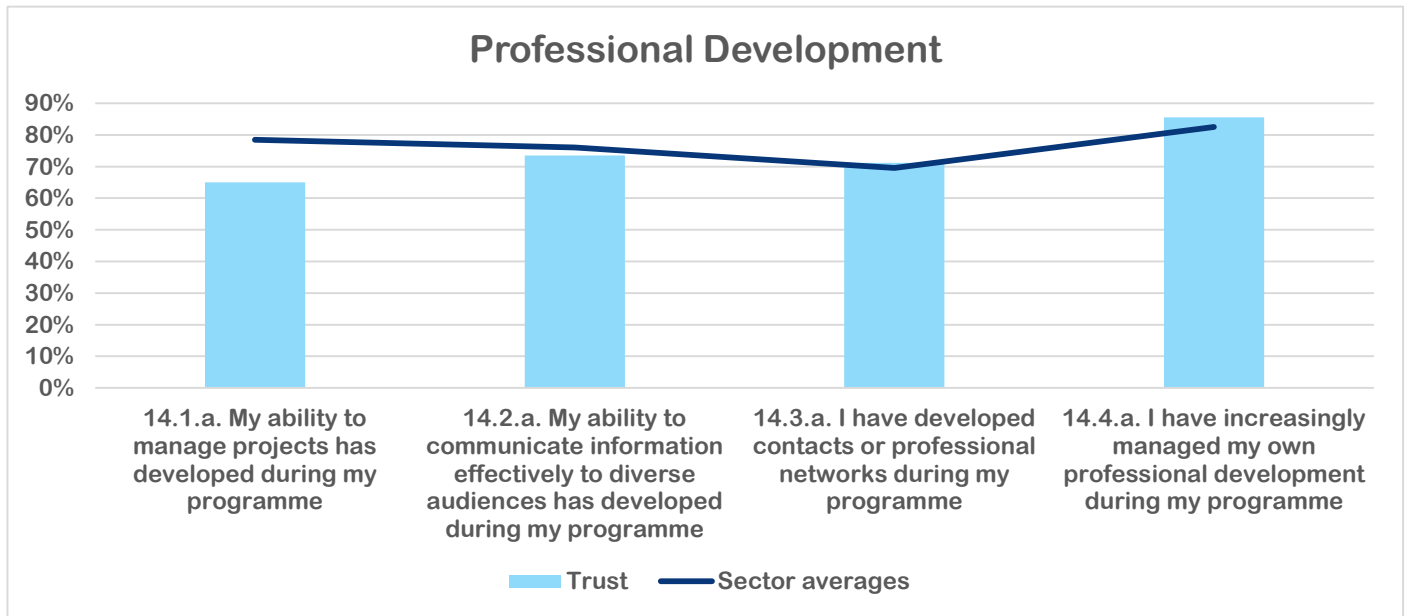
4.7 Research Skills



- 4.7.1 It is noted that the Trust does not compare favourably with sector averages in this section. Having said this, compared to some sections the Trust scores relatively higher satisfaction than other areas where the Trust compares more favourably with the sector but results are actually lower.
- 4.7.2 Research skills is the third most influential section (0.805) according to the correlation analysis at section 4.1.6 above, and Research Skills scores the second lowest. Therefore it is advisable that this area is a focus for enhancement over the coming year.
- 4.7.3 D50/60, M10 and M4/5 achieves 89%, 88% and 88% respectively, achieving higher than the sector averages. This is likely to be because these three have a more integrated curriculum around Research methods compared to courses such as M80, where written comments suggest that research feels like an 'add-on' rather than an integrated part of the course.

RECOMMENDATION: consider how Research Skills and Research Methodology can become a more integral part of the doctoral courses (particularly D10D and M80 (including M80N). Draw from the expertise of experienced Course Leads (particularly D50/60) relating to Research Skills.

4.8 Professional Development



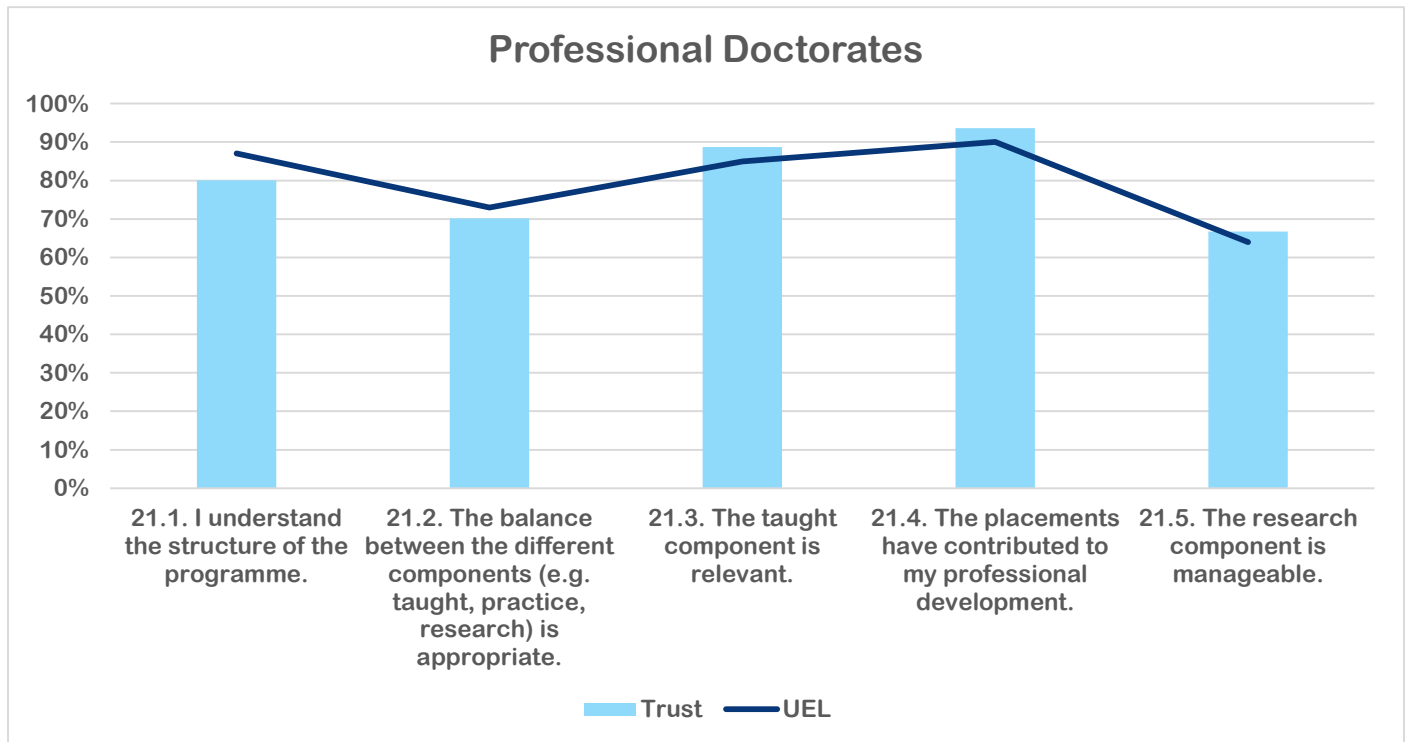
- 4.8.1 The Trust compares favourably with relevant sector benchmarks in Professional development, as would be expected for Professional Doctorates that focus on preparing students for the workforce, but perhaps further teaching and learning support around Research Skills (see 4.7 above) may increase satisfaction in this question in the future.
- 4.8.2 The question that does not fare well compared to the relevant sector benchmarks is question 14.1.a, 'My ability to manage projects has developed during my programme'. This could be because of the ambiguity of the question. Written comments provide no context around this question.
- 4.8.3 Of the few comments available in this section, they focus on the fact that they feel that, as adult learners with significant professional experience behind them, they are already undertaking the responsibilities for their own professional development as detailed in the questions to this section.

4.9 UEL Specific Questions

4.9.1 Opportunities for Teaching

- 4.9.1.1 The Trust does not currently offer formal teaching opportunities for Doctoral students, although some students do have the opportunity to teach on related courses. However, due to the fact that there are very low numbers of responses to this question – the majority of students choose 'Not Applicable' to the questions in this section – there is not enough data to make a fair and reliable analysis of this area.

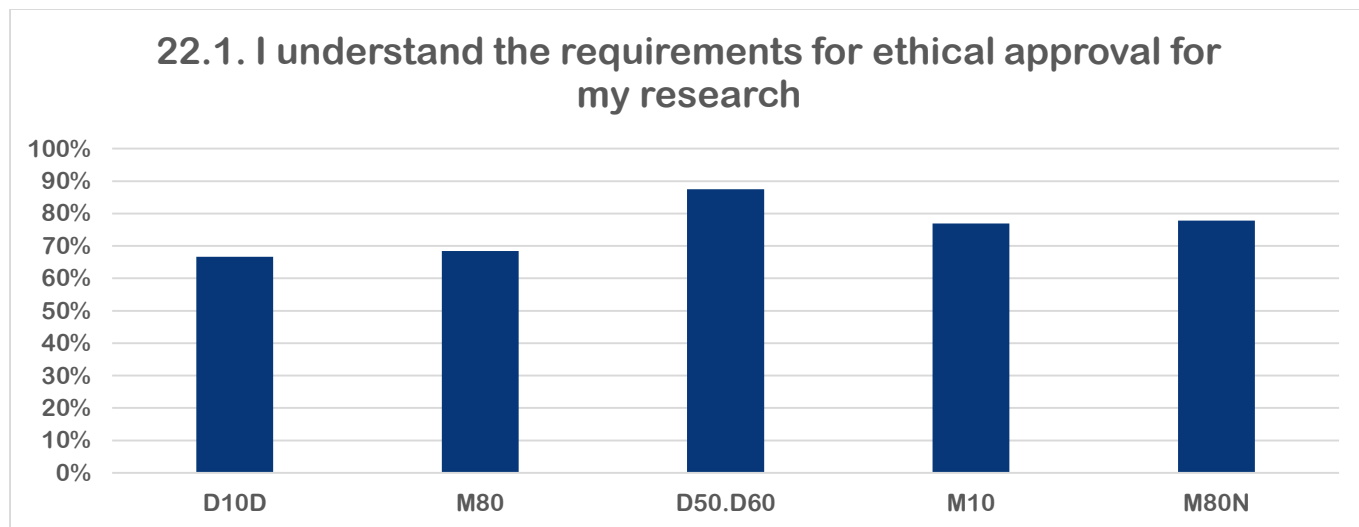
4.9.2 Professional Doctorates



4.9.2.1 This section only relates to the UEL-validated doctorates (M80, D10D, D50/60, M80N), as these questions only appear on the UEL version of the PRES forms as optional extra questions. For this reason, there are no sector benchmarks to compare the Trust results with. Results are compared with the UEL results to these questions.

4.9.2.2 The first question of this section, 21.1: 'I understand the structure of the programme' attracts the least favourable response compared to the UEL benchmark. Within this, M80 attracts the lowest satisfaction regarding this, which relates to the discussion in section 4.1.12 - 4.1.13 above, concerning the structure of the UEL-validated M80 course (and the other UEL-validated courses).

4.9.3 Ethical Approval



- 4.9.3.1 There is no benchmarking data available for this question. Ethical approval is one of the most complex and demanding processes of the doctoral experience, particularly the resource-intensive University of East London Ethical approval process. This is reflected in the comments which describe ethical approval processes as ‘a nightmare’ (more than once), ‘confused’, ‘unclear’, ‘unhelpful’, ‘complicated’, ‘time consuming’ and even ‘dysfunctional’. One student described is as ‘rigorous’ going on to say that ‘it forced me to focus more closely on, and redefine my project parameters’. This last comment is the kind that would be acceptable: Considering the risks and responsibilities relating to ethical approval this should without a doubt be rigorous. The difference between rigour and being process-heavy though is a fine line and needs to be tread carefully.
- 4.9.3.2 The introduction of ethical approval workshops delivered by NOCLOR and UREC should in time see an improvement in this area particularly in the area of UREC approval.
- 4.9.3.3 D10D and M80 trail behind the other courses at 67% and 68% respectively. This could be because students on these courses are not as aware of the significant web guidance available (<http://tavistockandportman.uk/research-and-innovation/doing-research/student-research/ethics>), or because they receive less course support in this area, although anecdotally it seems unlikely that this is the case – M80 certainly provides a large amount of support to students on the ethical approval processes.
- 4.9.3.4 The Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC) will play a bigger part in the Professional Doctorates validated by University of Essex, as this University devolves ethical approval

responsibility to the Trust. The Trust is currently reviewing the TREC processes and procedures to ensure robustness and efficiency. It is paramount that a good balance is struck between rigour and bureaucracy.

Rebecca Bouckley
AGQA Unit October 2015

5.0 Action Plan

SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound

	Issue	Recommendation	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1	4.1: Overall Satisfaction: Confidence in completing on time, clarity of responsibilities, support for students, length of study.	Ensure closer integration of the Taught/Research elements of the Doctorates as part of the Essex validation.		AD AG&QA and AD L&T	Implemented by September 2016
2	4.2: Supervision: Quality of supervision, responsibilities and support	Consider increasing the supervisory resources		Dean of Postgraduate Studies	By 10 th November 2015 (to report to AGQA)
3	4.2: Supervision: Quality of supervision, responsibilities	Look into introducing online training modules for the mandatory regulations training as a way of reducing the burden on supervisors while ensuring supervisors have the required knowledge.		QA Officer AG&SE (along with: QA Officer RD&E)	By September 2016
4	4.3: Resources: Computer resources	Consider investment in new computers in the common rooms		Dean of Postgraduate Studies	By 10 th November 2015 (to report to AGQA)
5	4.5: Progress and Assessment: knowledge of viva and thesis requirements and processes.	Ensure the Doctoral web-pages for UEL courses are advertised. Include a link from		QA Officer RD&E and QA Officer AG&SE	By 23 rd December 2015

		the cross-doctoral moodle page and from all doctoral course moodle pages.			
6	4.5: Progress and Assessment	Induction – consider having a cross-doctoral induction as part of enrolment week where library, AGQA Unit and others makes short presentations on the information available for doctoral students.		AD AG&QA and AD L&T	Prepared by 1 st September 2015
7	4.7: Research Skills	Consider how Research Skills and Research Methodology can become a more integral part of the doctoral courses (particularly D10D and M80 (including M80N)). Draw from the expertise of experienced Course Leads (particularly D50/60) relating to Research Skills.	See recommendation 1 above (combined action)	AD AG&QA and AD L&T	Implemented by September 2016

AD AG&QA = Associate Dean, Academic Governance and Quality Assurance

AD L&T = Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching

QA Officer, RD = Quality Assurance Officer, Research Degrees and Ethics

QA Officer, AG&SE = Quality Assurance Officer, Academic Governance and Student Engagement

RTF = Research Tutor Forum