Higher Education Academy

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE SURVEY

PRES 2017 Insight Report

University of Poppleton

Executive Summary

Strengths

- The results were positive, which is reflected in the overall student satisfaction score (82%).
- **Research skills** (90%) and **Supervision** (89%) were the most positive scoring areas.
- There were some clear areas of strength throughout the organisation, with those whose permanent residency is '**Other EU**' being above the University average, sector results and 2015 results. Additionally, **Physical Sciences** and **Professional Doctorates** were most above the University average and the sector benchmark.
- The highest scoring items in the questionnaire illustrate how positively **Research skills** and **Supervision** are perceived.
- **Creative Arts & Design** and **Business** saw a good improvement from 2015 to 2017.

Areas for development

- **Professional development** (79%) and **Research Culture** (68%) were the least positive scoring areas, although they were the same or slightly more positive than the sector results.
- With regards to **Research Culture**, the lowest scoring item was around research ambience stimulating work (62%).
- With regards to **Professional Development**, the lowest scoring item was around developing contacts or professional networks (72%).
- The extent to which students feel the institution **values and responds to their feedback** (66%) was also amongst the 5 least positive scoring items.
- It is evident from the report that there are pockets of students whose experience of studying at the University may not be as positive as others.

Risks

- Whilst the results are positive, some students, albeit a small number, do not feel as positively as others, which has the potential to impact on student recruitment and retention.
- Students who do not feel part of the research community, or part of networks may be less likely to feel a sense of belonging within the institution. This could ultimately impact upon their motivation, wellbeing and retention.
- Students who do not feel they have a voice in how their course is run may feel a sense of disengagement and disempowerment

Opportunities

- Explore and interpret the results within the local context – do the results resonate with people 'on the ground'?
- Use in conjunction with detailed data available from the standard benchmarking report, and other sources of data available locally.
- Share good practice across the University through, for example, developing Communities of Practice in key areas.
- Where the results are less positive, explore the reasons why, problem solve with colleagues and action plan.
- Recognise and celebrate good practice across the University.
- Promote the results externally through marketing materials.

The % cited in the report represent the % of respondents that had a positive score (either 'agree' or 'definitely agree').

Methodology

This report presents a summary of the 2017 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)* for the University of Poppleton. It also makes comparisons with the overall sector results and with Poppleton's 2015 results.

In total 1000 students completed the survey from Poppleton, making a response rate of **66%.** The breakdown of the sample by demographic and subject area is detailed in the tables on this page.

Demographics	Abbreviation	N	% of total sample
All responses	**All**	1000	100%
Female	Female	468	47%
Male	Male	499	50%
30 years old or younger	30 and under	433	43%
31 years old or older	31 and over	522	52%
Disabled	Disabled	83	8%
No known disability	No disability	900	90%
Non-BME	Non-BME	643	64%
BME	BME	322	32%
UK	UK	695	70%
Other EU	Other EU	35	4%
Non-EU	Non-EU	204	20%
PhD	PhD	623	62%
Professional doctorate	Prof. Doc.	217	22%
Master by research	Masters by Res	84	8%
Full-time	Full-time	551	55%
Part-time	Part-time	432	43%
Face-to-face	Face-to-face	578	58%
Distance learner	Distance learner	392	39%

Subject area	Abbreviation	N	% of total sample
Education Studies	Education	80	8%
Subjects allied to medicine	Allied to Med.	122	12%
Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience	Psychology	105	11%
Biological Sciences	Bio. Science	55	6%
Chemistry	Chemistry	60	6%
Physical Sciences	Physical Science	37	4%
Computer Science	Comp. Science	90	9%
Engineering	Engineering	130	13%
Business and Economics	Bus. & Econ.	92	9%
Education	Education	20	2%
Sociology, Social Policy & Anthropology	Sociology et al	16	2%
Languages and Area Studies	Langs. and area studies	40	4%
History and Philosophical Studies	History & Phil.	90	9%
Creative Arts and Design	Arts and Design	40	4%

The results are reported for demographic and subject areas that had a response from five or more participants. Where the number of participants is low, it is important to treat the results with caution.

Unless otherwise stated, the % cited in the report represents the % of respondents that had a positive score (either 'agree' or 'definitely agree').

* See p9 for more information about PRES, including what it measures

Overall satisfaction with programme

Insight

- PRES asks students to rate their overall satisfaction with their research degree programme.
- This page presents the results (the proportion of students that responded positively) for the University as a whole, how the University compares to the sector benchmark, and how Poppleton's 2017 and 2015 results compare.
- Analysis was also undertaken to identify the groups that were most above or below the comparison in these areas. The results of the four most and least positive areas are detailed in the green and red boxes.
- Levels of satisfaction are high, with 82% of students responding positively to the question on overall satisfaction with programme. Satisfaction remains consistent with 2015's results and the sector benchmark.

Overall Satisfaction
82%

University Vs Sector benchmark
0%

4 areas most above sector benchmark *

Other EU	+12%
Prof. Doc.	+8%
Physical Sciences	+8%
Psychology	+6%

4 areas most below sector benchmark *

Chemistry	-24%
Sociology et al.	-20%
Comp. Science	-13%
Bio. Sciences	-7%

Vs University Average

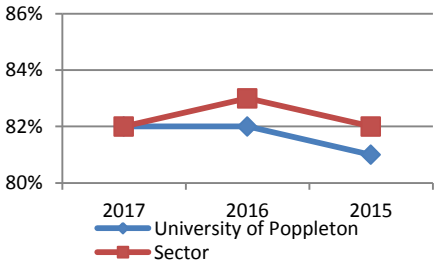
4 areas most above University average

Other EU	+12%
Prof. Doc.	+9%
Physical Sciences	+8%
Education	+7%

4 areas most below University average

Chemistry	-24%
Sport et al.	-20%
Comp. Science	-14%
Disabled	-12%

Overall Satisfaction Trends



2017 Vs 2015
0%

4 areas most above 2015 results

Arts and Design	+21%
Business	+13%
Masters by Research	+13%
Other EU	+11%

4 areas most below 2015 results

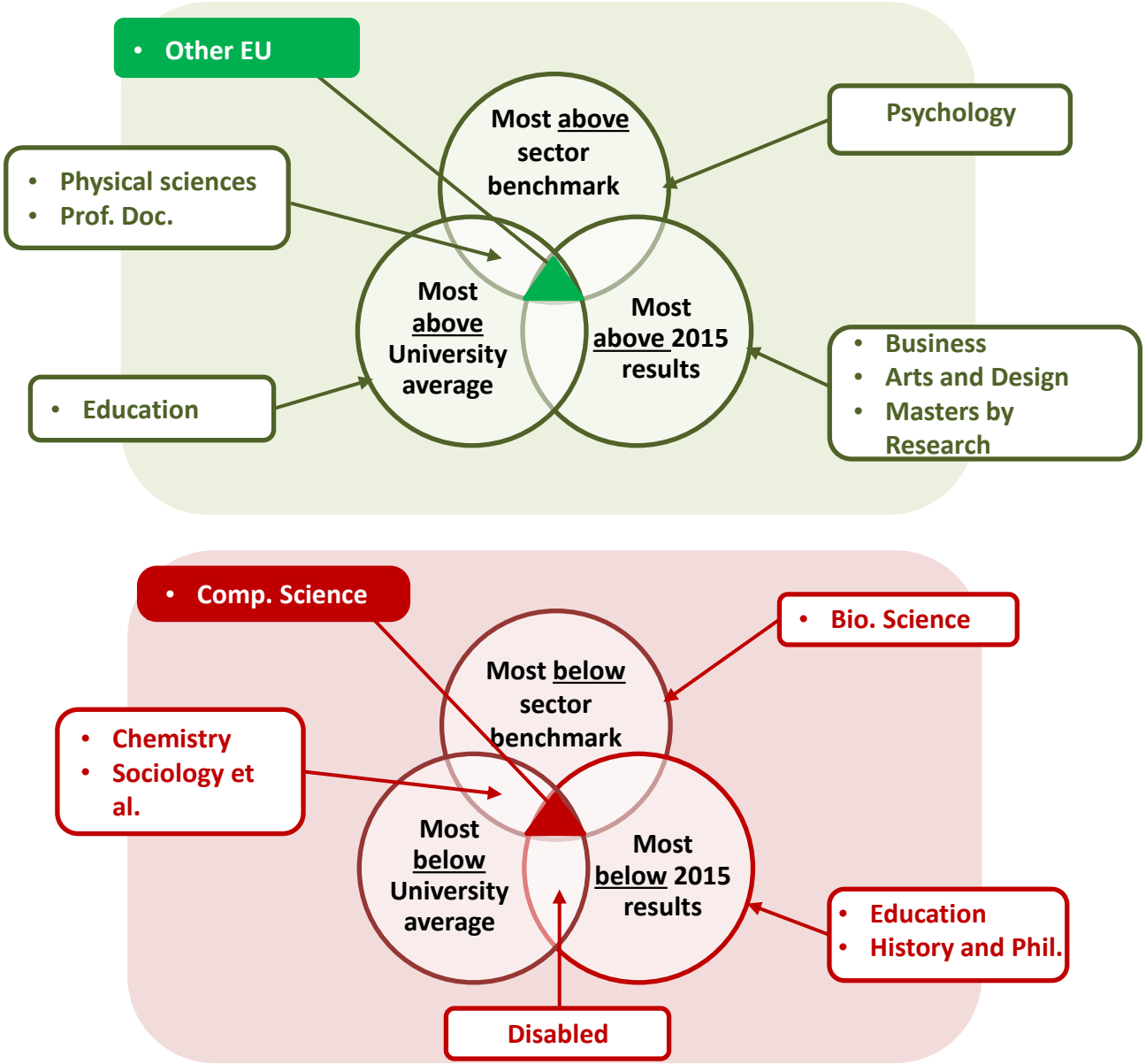
Comp. Science	-24%
Education	-15%
History and Phil.	-10%
Disabled	-4%

* This is compared to the sector benchmark for that particular group

Overall Satisfaction Hotspots

Insight

- The Venn diagrams on this page illustrate the groups that are amongst the highest (green) and lowest (red) scoring areas in the University as a whole, how the University compares to the sector benchmark, and how the 2017 results compare to those of 2015 with regard to overall satisfaction with course.
- It is an advancement on the previous page as it indicates visually where the strength and developmental 'hotspots' are, particularly where groups fall into the overlapping circles.
- It can be seen from the **green diagram** that 'Other EU' results were in the top four across all the comparisons, whilst it is evident from the **red diagram** that the results for 'Comp. Science' were consistently lower across the comparisons.



What links to overall satisfaction the most?

Insight

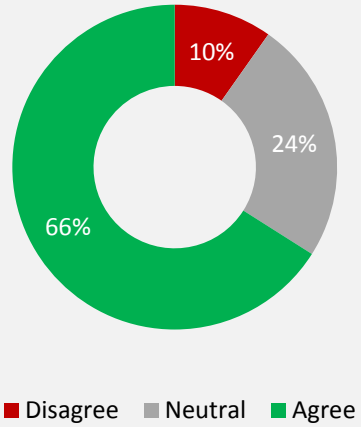
- Correlation analysis was undertaken to identify the strongest relationships with overall satisfaction with research degree. Correlations are scored on a scale of -1 to 1, with 1 being the strongest possible positive relationship.
- Feeling that the **institution values and responds to feedback from research students** (.65) and that **the research ambience in their department or faculty stimulated their work** (.64) were most highly correlated with overall satisfaction with research degree.
- As can be seen from the doughnut charts, these areas show some room for opportunity in terms of developing PGRs' experiences further.
- Also, from the green and red boxes it can be seen there is variance across the University, which would benefit from further exploration.

Key driver of overall satisfaction with quality of course:

My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students

Correlation* = .65

My institution values and responds to feedback from research degree students



4 most positive areas

Education	80%
History and Phil.	80%
Psychology	79%
Medicine	79%

4 least positive areas

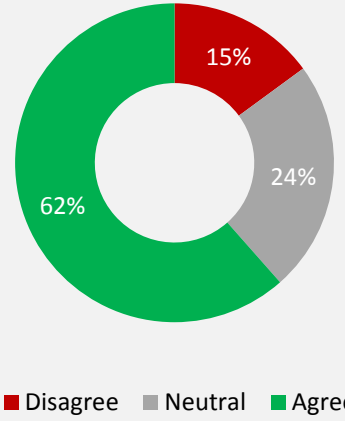
Chemistry	17%
Langs. and area studies	29%
Sociology et al.	38%
Bio. Science	44%

Key driver of overall satisfaction with quality of course:

The research ambience in my department or faculty stimulates my work

Correlation* = .64

The research ambience in my department or faculty stimulates my work



4 most positive areas

Education	80%
Other EU	80%
History and Phil.	79%
Physical Sciences	73%

4 least positive areas

Sociology et al.	25%
Langs. and area studies	29%
Arts and Design	42%
Disabled	44%

* A correlation of greater than .5 is classed as a strong correlation

At a glance

Research Skills	Supervision	Progression	Responsibilities	Resources	Prof. Dev.	Res. Culture
90%	89%	87%	83%	80%	79%	68%
+2 V '15	+2 V '15.	+3 V '15.	+1 V '15	0 V '15	-1 V '15	0 V '15
+4 V Sec.	+3 V Sec	+8 V Sec	+4 V Sec	-1 V Sec	0 V Sec.	+2 V Sec.

Insight

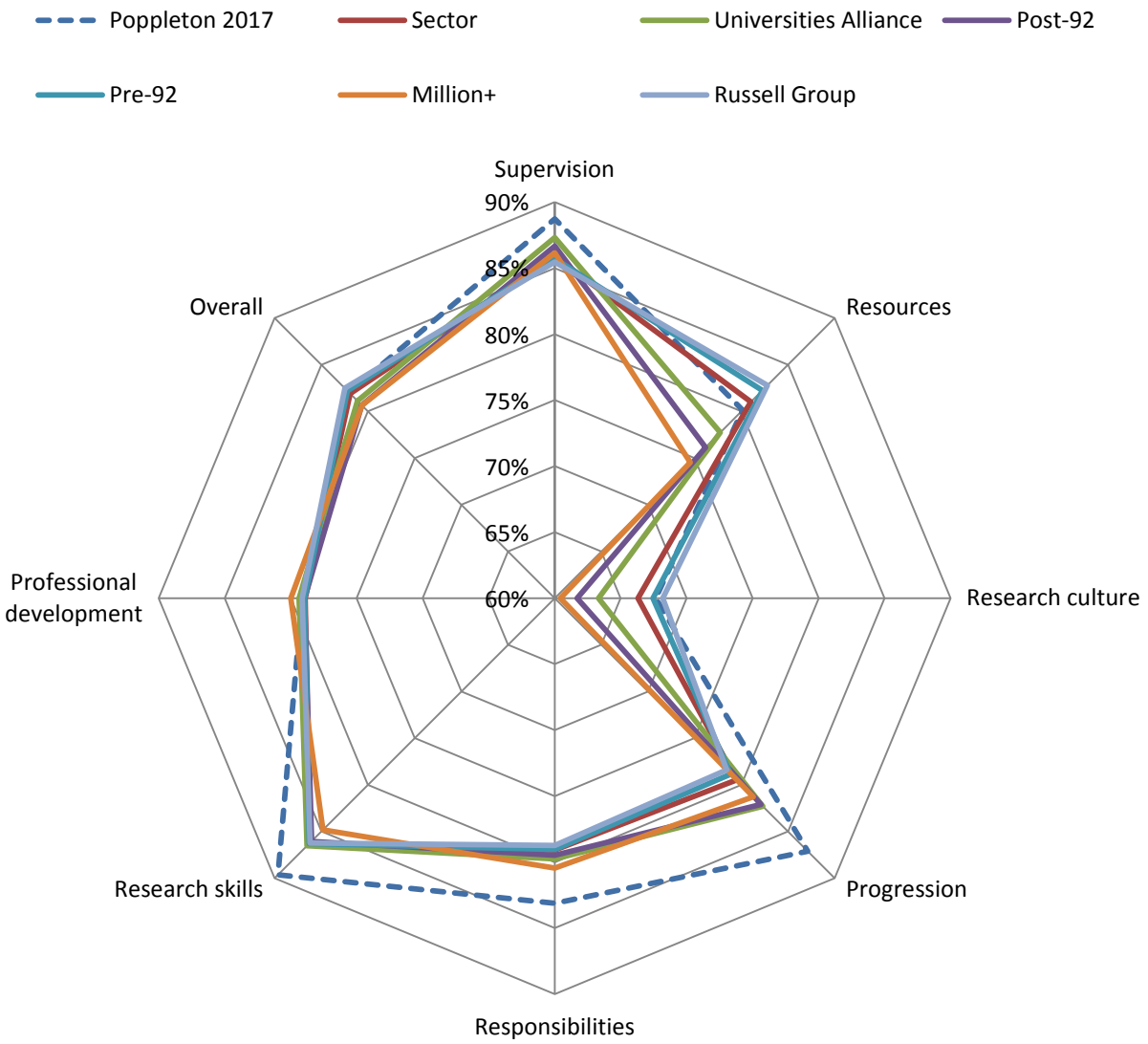
- This page illustrates the results for the 7 core areas within PRES (see above).
- On the whole, the results were positive, with **Research Skills** and **Supervision** being the most positive.
- **Professional Development** and **Research Culture** were the least positive scoring areas. However, they were the same or slightly more positive than the sector results.
- On the whole, the results were generally more positive than both the sector benchmark and 2015 results.
- This page also contains the 5 most positive and least positive scoring items. These reinforce positive perceptions of **Research Skills** and **Supervision** .
- They also highlight areas of opportunity around **Research Culture** and, as seen on the previous page, the University seeking and valuing student feedback.

The University's top 5 areas of strength and opportunity

Benchmark comparison

Insight

- The data collected nationally through PRES provides the opportunity to benchmark the University against the sector as a whole, and certain groups within the sector. The graph on this page illustrates the results.
- On the whole, the University's results were similar to, or more positive than, other benchmarking groups.
- Poppleton scored more positively than the other benchmarking groups in **Supervision**, **Progression**, **Responsibilities** and **Research Skills**. Whilst **Resources** scored less highly than the Sector, Pre-92 and Russell Group benchmarks.



Heatmap

The scores for each theme are presented below for subject areas and key demographics

● Over 3% above Uni. average ● Up to +/- 3% of Uni. Average ● More than 3% below Uni. Average

	Over-all	Female	Male	30 and under	31 and over	Disabled	No disability	Non-BME	BME	UK	Other EU	Non-EU	PhD	Prof. Doc.	Masters by Res	Full-time	Part-time	Face-to-face	Distance learner
Numbers	1000	468	499	433	522	83	900	643	322	695	35	204	623	217	84	551	432	578	392
Supervision	89%	88%	89%	90%	88%	78%	90%	88%	91%	87%	98%	93%	88%	91%	87%	89%	89%	89%	89%
Resources	80%	81%	80%	77%	82%	66%	82%	82%	81%	80%	88%	80%	77%	89%	74%	78%	83%	80%	80%
Research culture	68%	68%	69%	67%	68%	51%	70%	69%	69%	67%	81%	67%	64%	76%	66%	67%	68%	68%	68%
Progression	87%	90%	87%	86%	88%	82%	88%	88%	90%	86%	92%	91%	85%	93%	82%	87%	87%	86%	89%
Responsibilities	83%	85%	83%	82%	84%	80%	84%	84%	86%	83%	84%	85%	81%	90%	80%	82%	85%	82%	85%
Research skills	90%	89%	92%	86%	92%	88%	90%	90%	92%	89%	91%	92%	89%	94%	82%	88%	92%	89%	91%
Professional dev.	79%	80%	80%	80%	79%	70%	81%	80%	82%	78%	84%	83%	79%	81%	75%	78%	80%	81%	77%
Overall	82%	84%	83%	83%	81%	70%	84%	87%	81%	82%	94%	81%	77%	91%	88%	81%	84%	82%	84%

JACS Subject

	Over-all	Education	Allied to Med	Psychology	Bio. Science	Chemistry	Physical Science	Comp. Science	Engineering	Bus. & Econ.	Geography	Sociology et al.	Langs. and area studies	History & Phil.	Arts and Design
Numbers	1000	80	122	105	55	60	37	90	130	92	20	16	40	90	40
Supervision	89%	95%	90%	83%	80%	79%	90%	88%	94%	93%	91%	80%	88%	90%	82%
Resources	80%	78%	89%	83%	70%	46%	91%	85%	82%	83%	80%	31%	63%	73%	77%
Research culture	68%	73%	71%	70%	56%	75%	71%	64%	62%	80%	68%	47%	37%	77%	65%
Progression	87%	91%	91%	91%	79%	96%	89%	83%	87%	95%	88%	63%	88%	73%	80%
Responsibilities	83%	84%	88%	92%	75%	75%	82%	81%	83%	86%	86%	69%	65%	78%	75%
Research skills	90%	89%	93%	94%	79%	79%	92%	85%	97%	93%	86%	75%	84%	87%	91%
Professional dev.	79%	93%	84%	82%	74%	96%	76%	69%	87%	78%	76%	66%	59%	76%	70%
Overall	82%	89%	88%	89%	73%	58%	91%	68%	83%	87%	80%	63%	88%	80%	79%

About PRES

Purpose of PRES

PRES has been designed to aid and support enhancement of the student experience through providing key information to support strategic decisions and target areas for improvement.

Participation in PRES

PRES is now in its tenth year. Participation in the survey has grown since its initial launch and it is now well-embedded within the UK as a key method for exploring postgraduate research students' experiences within the context of the sector

For PRES 2017, 57,689 respondents took part from across 117 institutions. This represents around 53% of the UK's postgraduate research (PGR) student population

Further Information

For further information please email the HEA Insights team: surveys@heacademy.ac.uk

What PRES Measures

The survey contains seven core scales:

1. Supervision: questions relating to the supervisory relationship including supervisor's knowledge and skills.

2. Responsibilities: questions relating to student and supervisor responsibilities.

3. Resources: questions asking about working space, library provision etc.

4. Research skills: questions relating to tools, methodologies, creativity and research integrity.

5. Research culture: questions on issues around departmental community and research ambience.

6. Professional development: questions relating to project management and transferable skills.

7. Progress and assessment: questions about monitoring progress and procedures regarding the thesis.