

Enhancing doctoral employability: the Kingston University PGR internship initiative

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March 22nd 2024 8.45-9.15am Symposium

'Placements'

UKCGE conference, Bath

Topics to be covered

Context

Employment process

Project topics

Monitoring

Evaluation

Lessons learnt

Questions and topics for discussion

Context

**Funding available – RDP
Projects – long list!
Experience – opportunity for
PGRs to develop future skills,
particular related to academic
employability.**



Employment

University student job shop (HEAT/Handshake) – only open to those already registered

PGR students Invited to apply	10 applied – all employed	Work period Feb-July 2023 (300 hours)
Listed projects with description and named mentor	Students gave top three choices (sometimes paired them up)	and rationale for selection

Projects undertaken

- Enhancement and implementation of the PGR peer mentorship programme;
- Concordat action plan facilitation;
- Contract research staff ‘job description’ development;
- Action learning set facilitation and evaluation for Academies;
- PGR applicant research proposal bootcamp;

Projects undertaken

- Vitae gap analysis and enhancement of Vitae researcher training;
- Vitae case example submission;
- Exam system enhancement;
- Research ethics audit;
- GTA model scoping;
- Outcome analysis of studentship funding;
- Research culture enhancement.

Monitoring

The PGRs presented their work at a hybrid monthly meeting and received regular 1:1 mentoring.

Shared on social media: GRS LinkedIn group & report provided to University Committee



th You and 4 others

 **Professor Priscilla Harries** (She/Her) • You
Head of the Graduate Research School and Res...
★ Admin • Admin • 1yr • Edited

Enjoyed discussing some interesting topics with some of our PhD students yesterday - including Concordat action planning, engagement in our Research Leadership Academy, to developments in GDPR for Researchers and research ethics processes. Great meeting with you! [Lucrezia Bruno](#) [Charles Mondal](#) [Dordelly Daniel](#) [Richard Gray](#) [Rachel Graham](#) @Kamal Salami @Ahmed Malalla Lakshmi Sunita Nair

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Evaluation

Nine of the 10 interns completed an anonymous, online evaluation survey.

Eight gave a score 10 out of 10 to the experience

One gave a score of 8.

The experience was valued both in terms of skill development but also in terms of feelings of inclusion and community.

Evaluation

Feedback related to ‘experience and skill development’:

“this experience was helpful for my academic career; I can help benefit policymakers at my home institution to design appropriate researcher development training for staff.”

“Definitely, it made me more confident to take the challenge to learn something new and use that to finish the task. ”

“It was a breather from my PhD project!”

Evaluation

Benefitted from feelings of inclusion and community and an appreciation of the strategic work of the university:

“I enjoyed the variety of the projects and the chance to be involved in supporting the University's ventures. I really feel more involved with the University now, beyond my capacity as a research student working on my own project”.

“I am grateful for the connections I have made, and thoroughly enjoy the applied insight and feedback (consultancy) type work, so am grateful to have gained this experience. I hope to continue working with colleagues made within this role in some capacity.”

Issues/lessons learnt

- We couldn't provide them with the work fast enough!
- Should submit timesheets for each day worked....some submitted for all 300 hours offered..... rather than hours worked! Be explicit from the start.
- Productivity/need for support varied widely
- Some wanted step by step support; others worked independently
- Request written reports to capture progress – needed to set out at start
- Some reports just coming in now...
- Kept employment of the most capable- so was a useful trial period.

Questions and topics for discussion

What projects would you offer?

What experiences have you of employing students?

What do you find works best in terms of setting expectations/workload?

Future innovations in this area?