STFC ANNUAL STUDENT SURVEY 2018

In July 2018, the Office contacted all current students and their supervisors to request them to complete the survey. The deadline for completion of the survey was 20 August 2018. A total of 802 students responded out of the 896 students who were contacted (89.5% response).

Percentages are based on the numbers of students that responded to the questions. Answers don't always add up to 100% due to rounding.

The main points are as follows:

77% of students met with their supervisor at least once a week.
89% of students rated their supervision that they received as 4 or 5 (i.e. good/excellent)
83% of students had received formal training in the first year
55% of students wished to pursue a career in academia.
98% of students rated their overall training as good/adequate.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

General Field of Research

- Astronomy 296 (37%)
- Nuclear Physics 46 (6%)
- Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology 72 (9%)
- Particle Physics Experiment 187 (23%)
- Particle Physics Theory 98 (12%)
- Solar System Science 99 (12%)
- Global Challenge 4 (1%)
797 students were full time and just 5 part time.
Reasons for undertaking a PhD (1st year students only – 315 responses)

FUNDING PERIOD

92% of students confirmed their funding period was discussed and agreed with their supervisor at the beginning of their PhD.

How long is funded period?

PHD SUBMISSION - Questions asked of 3rd and 4th year students only

There were 262 third and fourth year students who completed the questionnaire.

Do you think have sufficient time within the funded duration of your studentship to complete your PhD, including writing up?
Breakdown of third and fourth year submission question “Do you think have sufficient time within the funded duration of your studentship to complete your PhD, including writing up?” by research area:

STFC expects student projects to be planned and supported such that they may be completed within the funded duration of the studentship. Do you consider your institution actively encourages students to complete their PhD, including writing up, within the funded duration of the studentship?

Breakdown of third and fourth year submission question “STFC expects student projects to be planned and supported such that they may be completed within the funded duration of the studentship. Do you consider your institution actively encourages students to complete their PhD, including writing up, within the funded duration of the studentship?” by research area:
### SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

#### Frequency of contact with supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

84% of students stated that they received help/advice from a second supervisor or other people in their department. Examples of those cited to be of help were Post Docs, other PhD students, collaborators and other members of the department.

#### Usefulness of Supervision

- **Poor**: 1, 0%
- **Satisfactory**: 66, 8%
- **Excellent**: 477, 59%

#### Rating of Induction Programme (1st year students only – 315 responses)

- **Good**: 113, 36%
- **Adequate**: 195, 62%
- **Inadequate**: 7, 2%
Attendance at group/departmental seminars

- Other: 27, 3%
- Monthly: 48, 6%
- Fortnightly: 76, 9%
- Weekly: 611, 76%
- Daily: 35, 4%
- Never: 5, 1%

83% of students attended group/departmental seminars once a week or more.

WELLBEING

Have you encountered problems or difficulties with your supervisory team, whether professional or personal?

- Yes: 748, 93%
- No: 54, 7%

Did you report this to your institution?

- Yes: 29, 54%
- No: 25, 46%

Of the 25 students that reported difficulties 19 students were satisfied with the way their problems were handled and 6 were not.
Have you encountered any problems or difficulties with other members of your department, whether professional or personal?

Did you report this to your institution?

Of the 10 students that reported the problems to their institution 7 were satisfied with the way their problems were handled and 3 were not.

**TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Formal training (e.g. lectures) provided during first year

Take up of technical, transferable and other disciplinary skills
81% of students cited that their department had a nominated Postgraduate tutor with overall responsibility for co-ordinating their research training.

Astronomy students’ attendance at the Introductory to Astronomy Summer School

296 Astronomy students responded to questionnaire
Solar students’ attendance at Introductory to Solar System Science Summer School

99 Solar System students responded to questionnaire

- Attended: 37%
- Plan to attend: 56%
- Neither: 7%

Solar students’ attendance at the Advanced Solar System Science Summer School

99 Solar System students responded to questionnaire

- Attended: 20%
- Plan to attend: 65%
- Neither: 15%

Particle Physics students’ attendance at BUSSTEPP – British Universities Summer School in Theoretical Elementary Particle Physics

98 Particle Physics Theory students responded to questionnaire

- Attended: 38%
- Plan to attend: 32%
- Neither: 31%
Particle Physics students’ attendance at High Energy Physics Summer School (HEP)
187 Particle Physics Experimental students responded to questionnaire

Nuclear Physics students’ attendance at Nuclear Summer School
46 Nuclear Physics students responded to questionnaire

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Communicated research to wider public audience

45% of students had communicated research to a wider public audience and many communicated to more than one audience.

‘Other’ forms of public engagement students mentioned were blogs, talks, debates, guided tours, written articles, press releases, radio, television and personal interactions.
Attendance at UK workshops or conferences by year

Attendance at overseas workshops or conferences by year

Research talks given within institution per year
Research talks given at conferences and or workshops per year

Research talks given at other external events

Average Number of Papers Published per student so far

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of Students</th>
<th>No of Papers Published</th>
<th>Average per student per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MONITORING

Rating of overall training

79% of students were required to submit a written progress report on their PhD in 2018. 24% of students stated that their progress report was assessed by an interview with their supervisor, 73% stated that the assessment was by interview with other staff, 20% of which were with more than one person. Other forms of assessments included; progression panel, poster presentation, presentation/seminar with Q&A, completion of thesis and viva.

FUTURE CAREER

Rating of career guidance available during PhD

Organisation wish to work for upon completion of PhD

55% Higher Education Institution
10% Other Government/Public Sector
26% Private Sector Business/Company
9% Other
Sort of role intend to work in upon completion of PhD

To what extent do you think your PhD will help you get a job?

INDUSTRIAL CASE STUDENTSHIPS

Frequency of contact with Industrial partner
12 Industrial CASE students responded to the survey

The CASE industrial students had varying amounts of contact with their CASE partner from a weekly contact to infrequent contact.

Time spent on premises of Industrial partner per year
11 Industrial CASE students responded to this question on the survey; 5 in their first year and 6 in their third year.

Students are expected to spend 3 months a year on average at their CASE Industrial Partner premises.