



Inclusive Transitions to Postgraduate Study

Project Aims

- Identify what support is needed for students transitioning from taught to research courses, with particular focus on neurodivergent PGR students, an underrepresented but growing population with distinct transition needs.
- Develop online resources, including a "survival guide" for incoming PGR students, that benefit the wider neurodiverse postgraduate research community.



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I am very pleased with the progress we have been making with the 'Inclusive Transitions to Postgraduate Research Study' project, and particularly that it has been **student-led** throughout. I believe that we have the opportunity to make a real difference for PGR students at one of the most challenging points in their academic careers.

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Project Rationale

- Significant research exists on the transition to undergraduate study, but little explores the shift from taught to independent postgraduate research.
- Neurodivergent students, an underrepresented but growing part of the PGR population, face particular challenges with this transition, yet little work has bridged this gap for them specifically.
- Addressing this matters for recruitment and retention of underrepresented PGR students, and for supporting research quality and wellbeing earlier in their courses.

Current Progress and Reflections

- Completed desk-based research and developed surveys for PGR students and supervisors; full ethical approval received, with surveys launching shortly (c.100 responses anticipated).
- The project has already raised the issue at various University committees, with support from the Doctoral College, Dean of Students' Office, and Faculty Education and Student Experience committees.

Next Steps

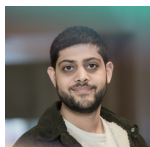
- Deliver focus groups building on survey findings, in Term 3.
- Produce a report on findings from the surveys and literature review to share within WIHEA and with external stakeholders.
- Seek further funding to develop resources for incoming PGR students ahead of the 2027/28 academic year.

Staff Advisors

- Jonathan Hickman-Heron** - Academic Director for Postgraduate Research, Honorary WIHEA Fellow
- Jagjeet Jutley-Neilson** - DSEP and Reader in Psychology, WIHEA Alumna
- Olympia Palikara** - Professor of Educational Psychology, researching neurodivergent PGRs



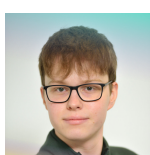
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