

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2012-16

Outcomes report

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Our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2012-16 has largely been successful in reaching its objectives. The strategy outlined our aims and approach in the following areas:

- Research degrees
- Taught postgraduate degrees
- Learning and teaching support
- Partnership working
- The ICR and the wider community
- Equality and Diversity

Achievement against our targets for Learning, Teaching and Assessment

A summary of our performance against Key Performance Indicators, aspirational targets and metrics for the period of the strategy can be found on page 6.

For our three KPIs for learning and teaching, a notable success for research degrees has been the increase in four-year submission rates, reaching 100% and 95% by the end of the period. The introduction of the four-year hard cut-off for thesis submission and initiatives to support students to write their thesis in a timely manner have helped us achieve this. Our 100% pass rate for PhDs has been maintained, and the KPI for registering students on our post-graduate taught course continues to be exceeded.

We set a number of aspirational targets, towards which we made significant progress. In particular, we saw increased rates of submission in four years amongst our MD(Res) students. Our aspirational targets regarding career destinations of our research degree students have been exceeded, with 63% of research students moving into research careers after completion, and 47% in research careers after three years. We consistently see over 90% of our MSc students leaving with a degree or continuing to the next part of the course.

Over the period we have monitored the number of entrants to research studentship each year to ensure that numbers do not fall below a critical mass. Numbers have been maintained predominantly through ICR and Cancer Research UK (CRUK) funding, and a key focus of the next period will be to increase our competitively won studentship funding.

External reviews

In January 2012 The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Institutional Review affirmed that academic standards and student learning opportunities at the ICR meet UK expectations. It also identified three features of good practice: the quality of the research environment for research students; the contribution that students make to quality assurance; and the monitoring of, and support for, research students' progress.

In 2015, HEFCE reviewed its allocation of institution-specific funding, an additional, discretionary fund currently provided to a small number of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions. It recognises the higher cost and distinctive nature of specialist higher education providers, and the public value that these institutions bring to the sector. The outcome of the review confirmed that the ICR's institution-specific funding allocation would continue and at an enhanced level from 2016-17. The award specifically recognised that the submission provided a compelling case that education and research were a connected continuum, and that ICR's collaboration with a world-leading cancer care provider gave the critical mass required for the institution to be operating at the very highest level for the discipline

In 2016 the ICR was awarded the Athena SWAN Silver Award, acknowledging support for careers of women in science, and in 2014/15 ICR was one of the first UK HEIs to successfully retain the HR Excellence in Research award from the European Commission at four years, following external peer review.

Specific achievements under each area of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Research degrees

Our achievements in the area of research degrees include:

- Running an ICR allocation process for CRUK Clinical Research Fellowships.
- Introducing a taught Bioinformatics course for research students.
- Introducing the four-year hard cut-off for thesis submission, moving from the consistent achievement of at least 70% of PhD submissions within four years to 100%.
- Assuming responsibility from the University of London for the examination of doctoral students' submission of their final theses.
- Conducting the second Periodic Review of research student training provision, implementing all of the recommendations.

Taught course degrees

Our achievements in the area of taught course degrees include:

- Revising the MSc in Oncology curriculum to lessen the assessment burden.
- Identifying a satisfactory off-site location for the MSc in Oncology and securing the accommodation until 2020.
- Implementing a new taught course management system to store and report on student data. This replaces a spreadsheet-based system to improve reporting and system integration.

- Conducting the second Periodic Review of the MSc in Oncology course with positive feedback and constructive suggestions from the review panel.

Learning and teaching support

Our achievements in the area of learning and teaching support include:

- Introducing a workshop and materials to support students during the second year 'project dip', as well as tools to manage project risk.
- Improving induction arrangements for MD(Res) students to ensure that they are on a par with those for MPhil/PhD students.
- Introducing lecture capture, allowing students to re-watch lectures as an aid to revision.
- Further developing *Skills*, our innovative platform for delivering transferrable skills training to research degree students. This is now being delivered to academic clinical trainees across London as "Research Clinician", in partnership with Health Education England.
- Transitioning our taught course virtual learning environment to Canvas. It features a much more modern, usable design, and closer integration with our current student management system.
- Piloting online submission and feedback for our MSc course, which is now being adopted across the all modules.
- Introducing a training needs screener for research degree students, to kick-start the creation of their personal development plan.
- Updating our Perspectives in Oncology cancer science training resource in collaboration with a large number of ICR scientists. As well as updating the content, we have made it clearer to read ensured greater consistency over module length.
- Undertaking a review of all aspects of provision against updates to the QAA UK Quality Code, to the timetable set by the QAA.
- Streamlining the 5 year rolling programme of QAE reviews, taking a more risk-based approach to the frequency of reviews of different quality assurance mechanisms.
- Improving the response rates to student surveys.
- Reviewing and strengthening Codes of Practice, Regulations and underpinning policies. For instance, we incorporated learning from the Woolf Report and implemented the introduction of a mandatory course on Research Integrity.

Partnership working

Our achievements with regards to partnership working include:

- Enhancing support for clinical academic career development via consultation through an ICR-Royal Marsden collaborative working group, and subsequent development of bespoke training programmes for clinicians.

- A joint agreement between the ICR and Imperial College London to create a virtual Cancer Research Centre of Excellence (CRCE).
- Participating in the establishment of a new MSc in Genomic Medicine, in collaboration with Imperial College and Brunel University.
- Developing a Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedure to enable joint funding bids with other HEIs for doctoral training centres and other teaching collaborations.

The wider community

Our achievements with the wider community include:

- Increasing the number of researchers engaged in the national STEM Ambassadors scheme.
- Running highly popular interactive ICR stands the Royal Holloway Science Festival in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- Continuing to offer a consistently oversubscribed vacation student scheme, hosting 65 vacation students between 2011 and 2015.

Equality and diversity

Our achievements in equality and diversity include:

- Conducting an Equality Impact Assessment on all Academic Services-owned policies and monitoring outcomes against equality criteria to report to the Equality Challenge Unit.

A key ICR-wide achievement in this area was being awarded the Athena Swan Silver Award in 2016 for our work supporting the careers of women in science.

Appendix 1: Progress against targets

The following pages outline our KPIs, aspirational targets and key metrics for the period, and our performance against these in further detail.

Key Performance Indicators

1. Achieving at least 80% of PhD submissions within the 4 year requirement, with an aspirational target to increase this to 90% within the period of this Strategy

Cohort	Submissions
2008/9	73% (19/26)
2009/10	71% (22/31)
2010/11	100% (18/18)
2011/12 (who have reached cut off)	95% (19/20)

2. Consistently achieving a 100% pass rate for PhD submissions

We have maintained our 100% pass rate - there have been no fails.

3. Registering at least 100 students annually on postgraduate taught course(s)

Academic year	Number registered on the programme
2011/12	154
2012/13	164
2013/14	171
2014/15	164
2015/16	148

Aspirational targets

Submission of 70% of MD(Res) theses on average within four years over a rolling three year period.

Cohorts	Submissions under 4 years	Submissions omitting students who transferred to PhD
2008/09 - 2010/11	17/29 (59%)	17/25 (68%)
2009/10 - 2011/12	20/28 (71%)	20/24 (83%)
2010/11 - 2012/13	18/28 (64%)	18/23 (78%)

50% of non-clinical research students' first destinations, and 40% of research students' destinations after 3 years, over a rolling period of 3 years, should be in a scientific research role.

	In research role
First destination (11/12 - 13/14 cohorts)	63% (53/84)
After three years (09/10 - 11/12 cohorts)	47% (37/78)

Ensuring that at least 90% of students registered on the MSc in Oncology exit with a postgraduate qualification.

Cohort	% leaving without qualification (actual)	% leaving with qualification (actual)	% continuing (actual)	% of total leaving with award or continuing (actual)
2008/09	5 (3)	86 (55)	9 (6)	95 (61)
2009/10	10 (6)	61 (36)	29 (17)	90 (53)
2010/11	11 (6)	61 (32)	28 (15)	89 (47)
2011/12	2 (1)	29 (54)	44 (24)	98 (53)
2012/13	2 (1)	25 (39)	59 (38)	98 (63)
2013/14	6 (3)	4 (3)	90 (47)	94 (51)
2014/15	0 (0)	2 (1)	98 (51)	100 (53)

Metric

Monitoring of the number of entrants to research studentship each year to ensure that numbers do not fall below a critical mass.

Funder	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
ICR	6	1	3	13	8
Cancer Research UK	1	6	5	7	6
The Wellcome Trust	4	4	4	0	0
Breakthrough Brest Cancer/Breast Cancer Now	3	1	0	0	1
MRC	4	1	0	0	0
EPSRC	2	1	1	0	0
The Royal Marsden	1	0	1	0	0
Other	1	4	0	4	6
Total	22	18	14	24	21