

HDR WERC Survey 2021 – How our candidates are coping

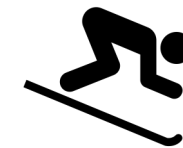
Challenges

and

Enablers



For our second survey, we asked over 1,500 Higher Degree by Research candidates across UQ about their well-being, engagement, and research culture



The experience some degree of burnout was common.

Well-being



Most have good life satisfaction and meaning in life

Support structures such as policies and financial support could be improved to support HDR well-being

Support



Most HDRs feel supported by their advisors and peers

Some HDRs struggled to manage work-life boundaries and unwind from HDR life

Balance



Nevertheless, many HDRs felt their work-life balance aligned with their values and priorities

HDRs feel a high pressure to publish and workplace expectations impact on their work-life balance

Research Culture



HDRs generally feel connected to their research/local group and the majority have a culture of collaboration

More than half of students experienced some degree of impostor syndrome and have concerns about future employment

Progress & Career



Most HDRs feel confident about their research skill development and their ability to complete their program

HDRs experience lower satisfaction & reduced engagement in response to wider UQ support mechanisms

Engagement



HDRs who feel a sense of belonging and those who identify with their UQ unit are more engaged

UQ WERC Survey Report

The University of Queensland

Total HDR Responses: 1492

Response Rate: 30%



Progress & Career

	Low (1)	Midpoint (4)	High (7)	Mean score for 2020	Mean score for 2021	Strength of relationship with WELL-BEING	Strength of relationship with ENGAGEMENT
HDR autonomy				5.33	5.38	.38	.27
Research confidence				-	4.96	.44	.32
HDR completion				5.32	5.39	.48	.36
Intent to stay in academia				4.47	4.36	.30	.36
Future employment security				-	4.91	.52	.39
Future employment distress*				4.32	4.14	-.57	-.13
Imposter Syndrome*				-	4.27	-.41	-.07

Support

External social support				5.69	5.77	.41	.19
HDR peer support				4.47	4.89	.17	.29
Principal advisor				5.72	5.76	.36	.37
Additional advisor(s)				5.85	5.55	.35	.26
UQ policies support research				5.18	5.00	.35	.41
UQ policies support well-being				4.48	4.36	.40	.47
Formal UQ Support				-	4.38	.40	.38
Financial support				4.61	4.45	.35	.17

Balance

HDR-life balance				3.71	3.56	.55	.21
Unwinding from HDR life				4.04	3.95	.45	.22
Boundary management				2.67	2.56	.16	.02
Balance reflects values				4.70	4.66	.50	.39

Research Culture

Belongingness				4.71	4.68	.38	.43
Individual value				4.73	4.75	.35	.36
Social identity				-	4.91	.33	.43
Identity compatibility				-	4.59	.49	.28
Promote HDR-life balance				3.98	3.87	.37	.30
Seminar participation				-	5.54	.13	.18
Excellence/innovation				4.94	4.85	.22	.37
Collaboration/integrity				5.10	5.16	.34	.41
Pressure to publish*				4.41	4.62	-.45	-.17

Data was collected Nov-Dec 2021; *Denotes negative variables; ^ Red bars denote a negative relationship. Mean score range is between 1-7. Well-being includes psychological distress, loneliness, burnout, meaningful life, life satisfaction and resilience. Engagement includes HDR satisfaction, HDR expectations and motivation.