

HDR WERC survey - how you felt...

Swimming

or

Sinking ?



For our inaugural HDR Well-being, Engagement and Research Culture (WERC) Survey, we surveyed 746 students across the university. Here is what we found:



Well-being was **above mid-point....**

Well-being



... but levels of **HDR burnout, loneliness, and psychological distress** are higher than average.

HDR experiences tend to be more **positive at the start** of candidature...

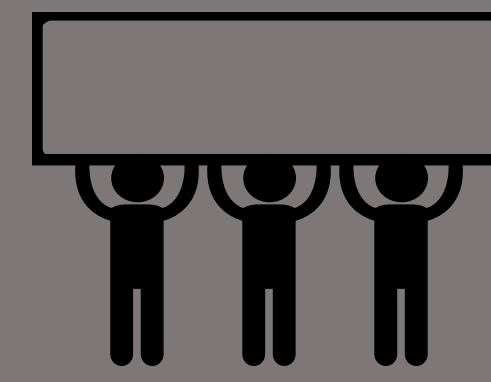
Overall experience



...but the experience is more **negative than initially expected** increasing burnout. Mental health challenges are **strongest at the end** of candidature.

Satisfaction with support resources was **generally good...**

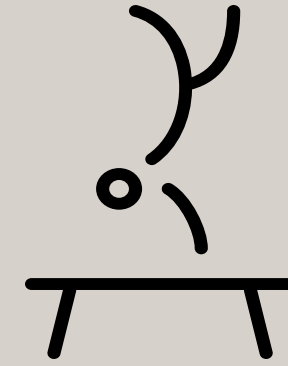
Support



...but you use some support resources **less frequently** such as **career support services**.

Many of you are **able to integrate work and life** and feel balanced...

Work-life - balance



..but the **pressure to publish and not being able to switch off** at home negatively impacts your well-being.

Peer support and sense of **belonging** to a research group decrease loneliness...

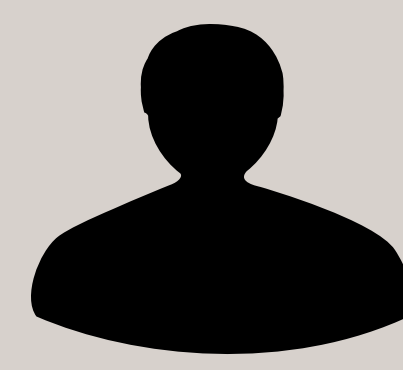
Peers & research group



...but your research group **affects** your **work-life balance**. Burnout was higher in research groups where work and leisure are integrated.

Many of you have **supportive advisors** that enhance your HDR experience...

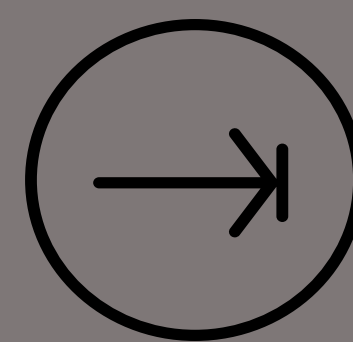
Advisors



...but you also **reported conflicts** within your advisory team.

Most of you are **confident to finish your studies ...**

Beyond the PhD



...but **career distress** was palpable in your answers. Fewer than **1/3 of you plan to stay in academia**.

Based on your answers key actions are underway:

Candidate support

- Dedicated counseling for HDRs
- Clear and consistent expectations of progress
- Shared expectations between candidate and supervisors
- HDR easy reference support guide



Candidate development and resources

- Increase well-being offerings in Career Development Framework
- HDR career advice services
- Individual Development Plans
- Roadmap resource of candidate journey



Research environment

- Strengthen HDR peer networks
- Work with local units to improve research environments
- Advocate for dedicated HDR space



Supervision

- Mental Health awareness training
- Advisor Development on inclusivity, well-being and career development
- Principal Advisor Registry
- Excellence in HDR Supervision awards incl well-being criteria
- Community of Practice for advisors to share good practices



Questions?
Contact us:

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Full report coming soon!



Participate in the next survey in November!