

# Postgraduate Forum Report

## Introduction:

On the 29<sup>th</sup> October, a postgraduate student forum took place to gain feedback on the postgraduate experience. Questions focused on academic guidance, term 2, graduation, employability and community.

## Communication

Postgraduate students would like an increase in relevant communications. Whilst the library was praised for providing useful Postgraduate guidance, there were many areas where students appeared negative towards communications.

Key themes for communications that came from the postgraduate forum:

- Lack of postgraduate specific communications
- Lack of Term 2 information
- Lack of graduation information
- Need for programmes to provide information more proactively

Students commented that communications are slow at time leaving them with not enough time to engage. Most students commented the need for more focused communications regarding the delivery of Term 2. Whilst students recognised that graduation was not necessarily an institution priority, communication regarding what the graduation provisions and alternatives would be beneficial.

When asked about support with employability, students mentioned that the information is spread across many different channels making it, at times, hard to navigate. It was suggested by students that employability communications could be embedded in the course.

*“COVID is not an excuse anymore, we know how learning has to be at the moment we just want clear communications”*

## Welfare and community

Students would like to see more opportunities to meet others in their cohort. It was specified that these need to be communicated far in advance to give postgraduate students opportunity to plan their time. Students on the Artificial Intelligence postgraduate programme suggested a matchmaking service/buddy system to connect them with their peers. Others suggested opportunities should be provided for students to cross collaborate with students from other programmes in online spaces. Praise was given to the activities during induction and Welcome. Students suggested these events should continue. Specific praise came from law students for the law job fair and employability talks.

*“PG students are mature, we have children, we need to be able to plan our time, we need information on time and it needs to be right.”*

## Academic issues

The Postgraduate Forum raised lots of programme specific academic concerns which should be passed to Student Reps. (See appendix 1.) Students generally spoke of confusion and a lack of certainty particularly towards term 2 delivery and assessment. Students also referred to a difficulty engaging in modules due to isolation away from peers.

## Recommendations

R1. Increase postgraduate employability communications from careers services. Lobby to ensure careers guidance and signposting to relevant services is embedded within the academic experience of postgraduate students on their programme.

R2. Explore ways to connect postgraduate students from across programmes to increase the sense of a postgraduate community at City.

R3. Ensure the programme specific comments are passed on to Programme Reps to follow up accordingly.

R4. Explore other ways for postgraduate students to meet their programme peers virtually beyond established teaching hours. Time should be focused on connecting students with others on their programme. This should aim to encourage academic collaboration to combat isolation.