



Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences PGR Supervisor Forum



FEPS PGR Supervisor Forum No. 2
Academic year 2023/24, 30 April 2024

Welcome from Alan McAlpine (FDoGS in FEPS)

- Second FEPS PGR supervisor forum. Replaces previous supervisor “training” events.
- Welcome to new and established PGR supervisors in FEPS.
- Purpose of the forum is to disseminate information for PGR supervisors and for doctoral supervisors to interact and share good practice.
- Planning to hold bi-annual supervisor forums, focusing on different topics.
- The topic of the second FEPS PGR supervisor forum is:

PGR Admissions and Recruitment

- Thank you to Doctoral College and CHEP team for helping to organize the forum.

Resources for PGR supervisors

The slides and other resources for supervisors are at:
<https://febspgrportal.soton.ac.uk/supervisors/>



Information for PGR Supervisors in FEPS

Last updated: 29th April 2024



- [Slides](#)
- [Case studies](#)



Professional development opportunities for supervisors (Paul Clarkson CHEP)

Solent Mind: Supporting Student's Mental Health for Supervisors and PIs

- Wednesday 1st May, 9:30 – 13:00 (Online)

Promoting Student Inclusion: Understanding and supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds for success at Southampton

- Tuesday 14th May, 12:00 - 14:00 (In-person)

Examining a Doctoral Thesis – June (Date TBC)

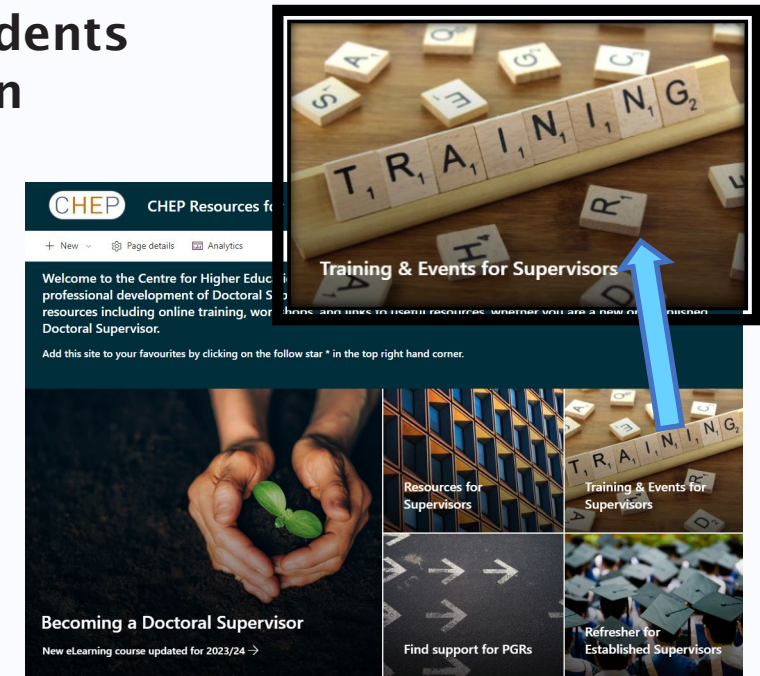
Progression monitoring & PGR Manager – June (Date TBC)

PGR Supervisor Induction

- Thursday 20th June, 13:00 – 16:00
- Repeated in mid-September (Date TBC)

Introduction to doctoral supervision eLearning course

- Updated in July, live from 1st August



<https://soton.ac.sharepoint.com/teams/ResourcesforDoctoralSupervisors>

Professional development opportunities for supervisors (Paul Clarkson CHEP)

UKRIO Introduction to Research Integrity online course for staff*

- 100 free places for staff
- More information at [UKRIOs 'Introduction to Research Integrity' online course \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Recordings available on Resources for Doctoral Supervisors Site

Supporting PGRs with their career development (for Doctoral/PGR Supervisors) (March 2024)

Progression Review and PGR Manager (April 2024)

Independent Chair Training for Viva Voce Examinations (November 2023)

*The UKRIO Introduction to Research Integrity was designed by [Rowena Lamb](#) and co-written with [Dr Magdalena Morawska](#) at University College London. The content has been adapted by UCL for UKRIO in collaboration with Dr [Mohi Ahmed](#) at UKRIO.

FEPS PGR Supervisor Forum

Tuesday 30th April 2024, 09.00 – 10.45

Agenda

Introduction

Alan McAlpine

PGR Admissions (Summary of University regulatory & policy information)

Marina Carravetta

PGR Funding (University/Faculty/School studentships)

Alan McAlpine

PGR Recruitment process

Kirsten Hall

Break

Case studies (breakout groups)

Feedback from breakout groups

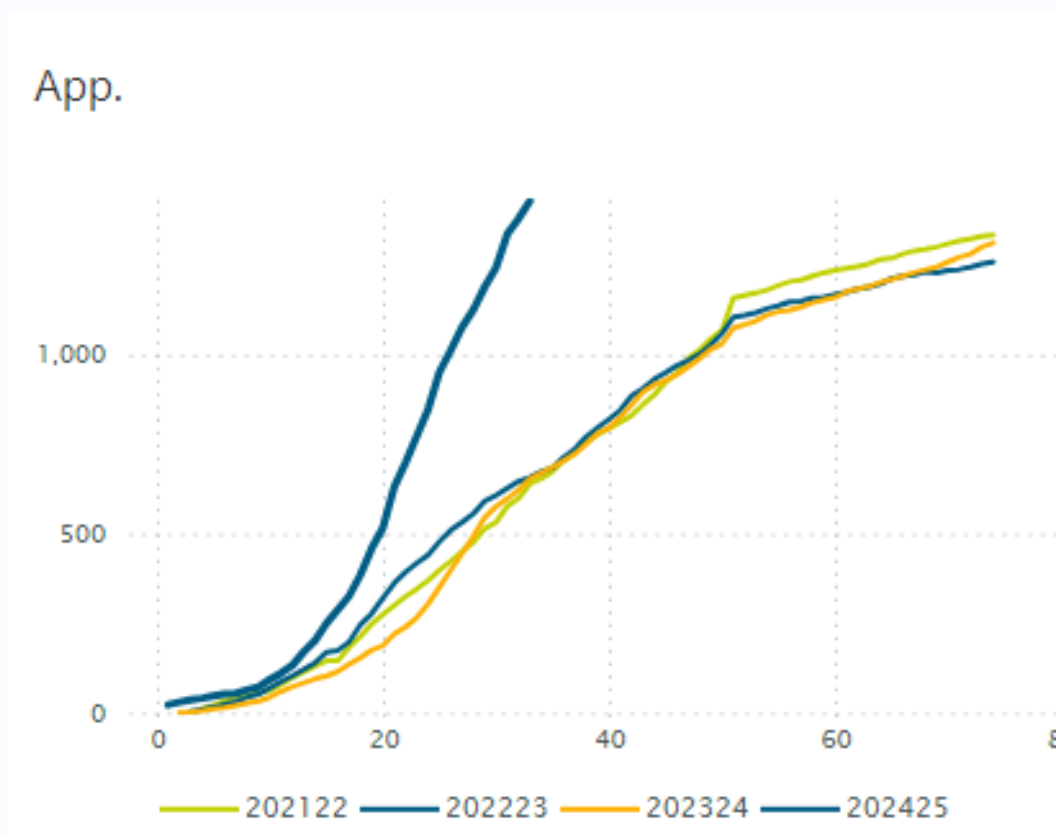
Discussion/Q&A

Introduction

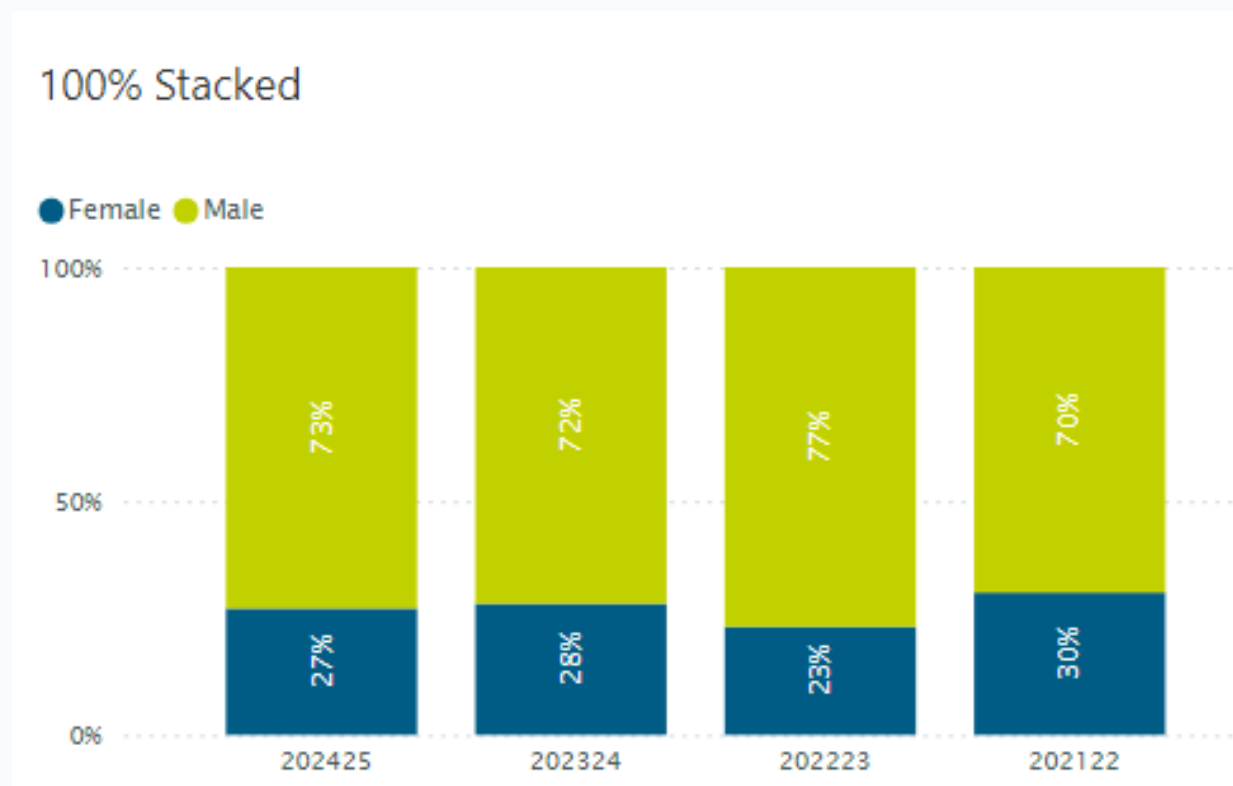
Alan McAlpine

Introduction

Applications in **FEPS** compared to previous years

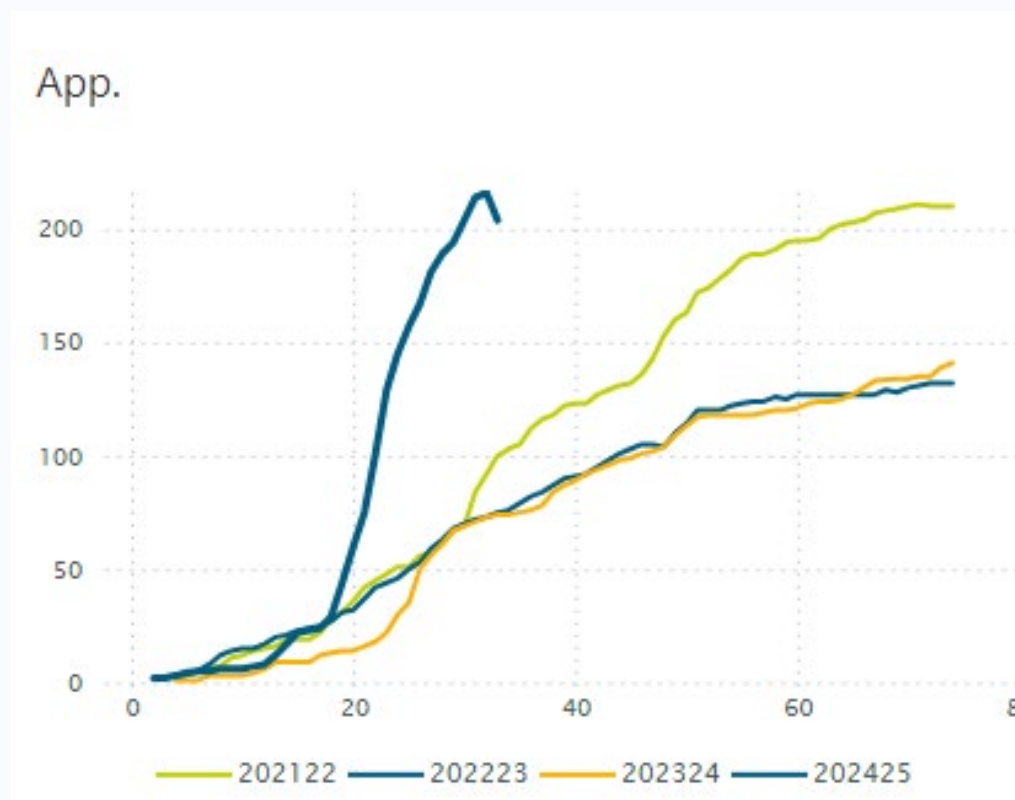


Gender split in **FEPS** compared to previous years

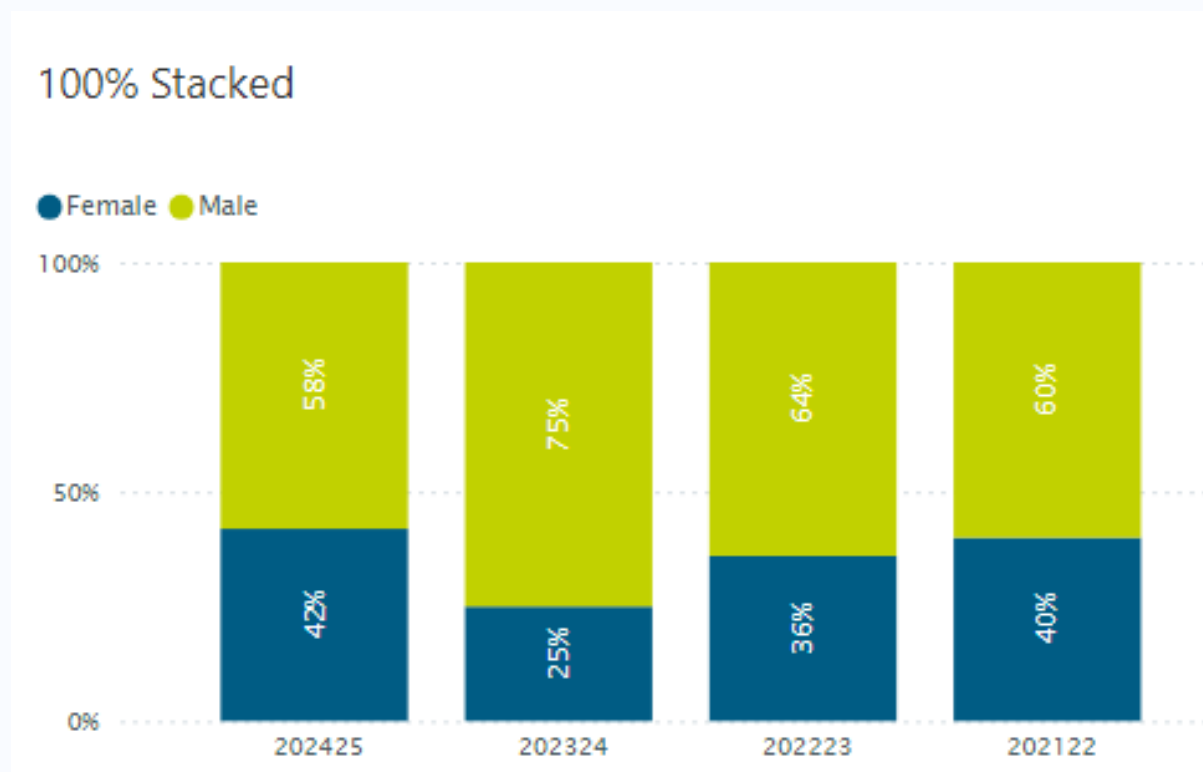


Introduction

Applications in **Chemistry** compared to previous years

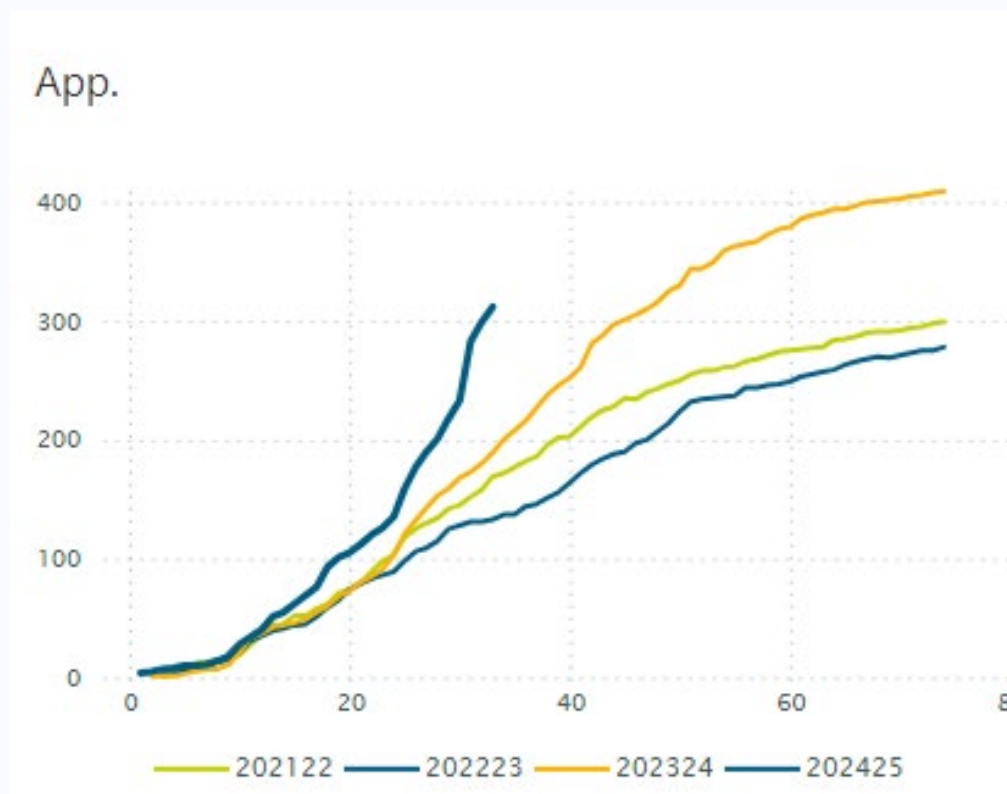


Gender split in **Chemistry** compared to previous years

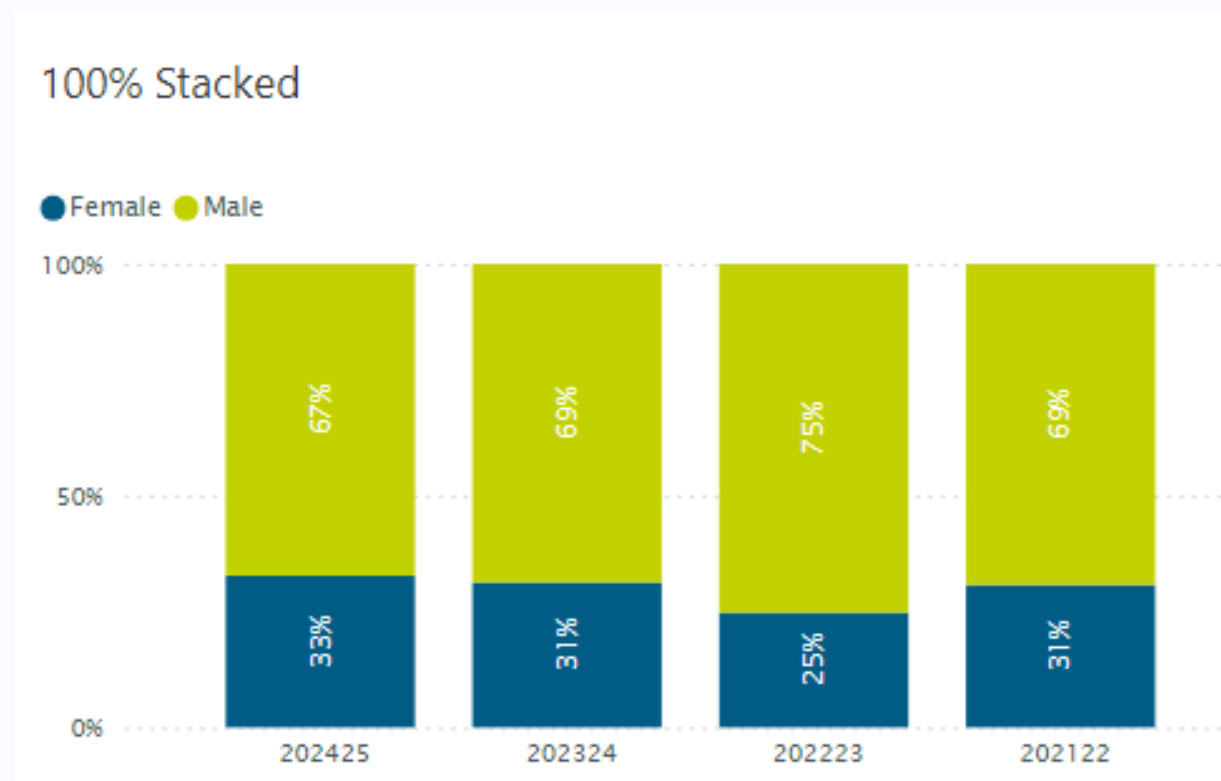


Introduction

Applications in ECS compared to previous years

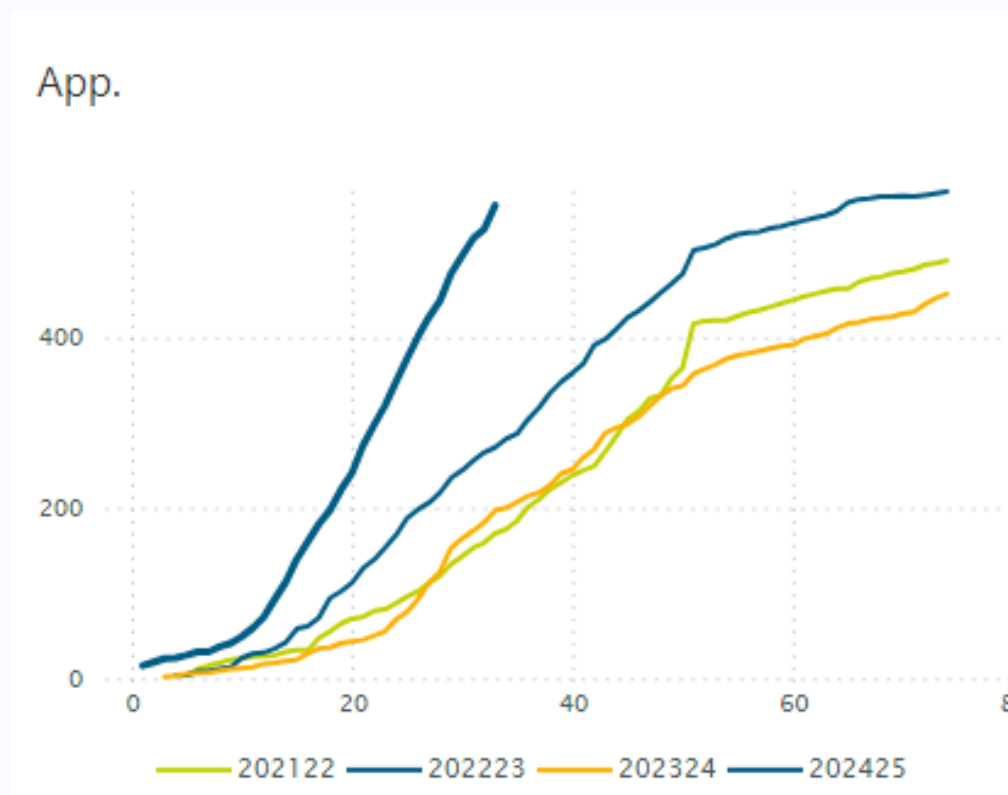


Gender split in ECS compared to previous years



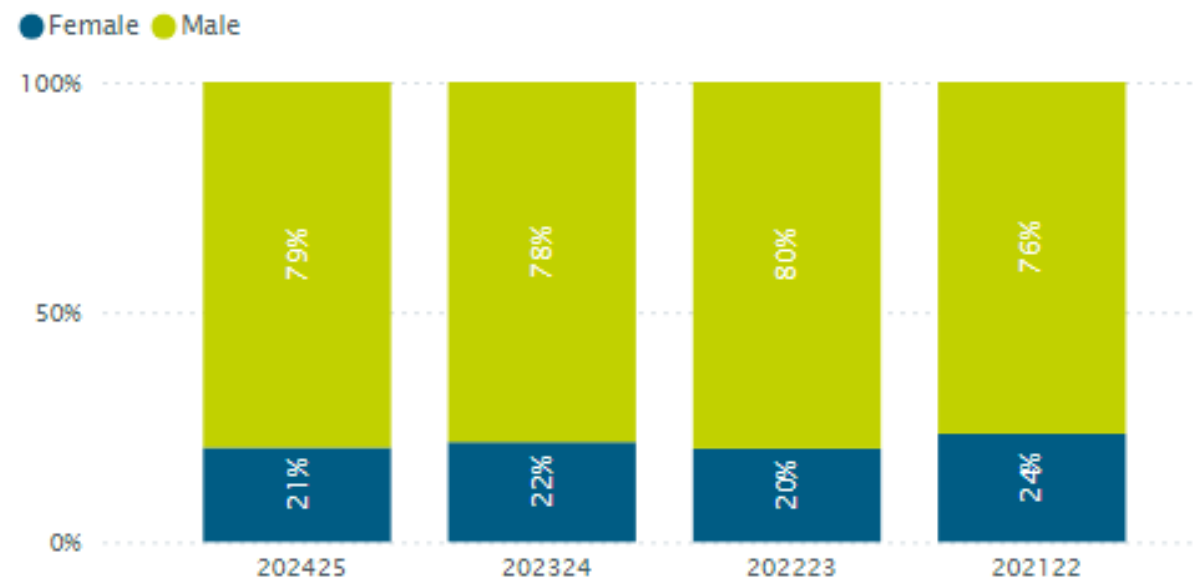
Introduction

Applications in **Engineering** compared to previous years



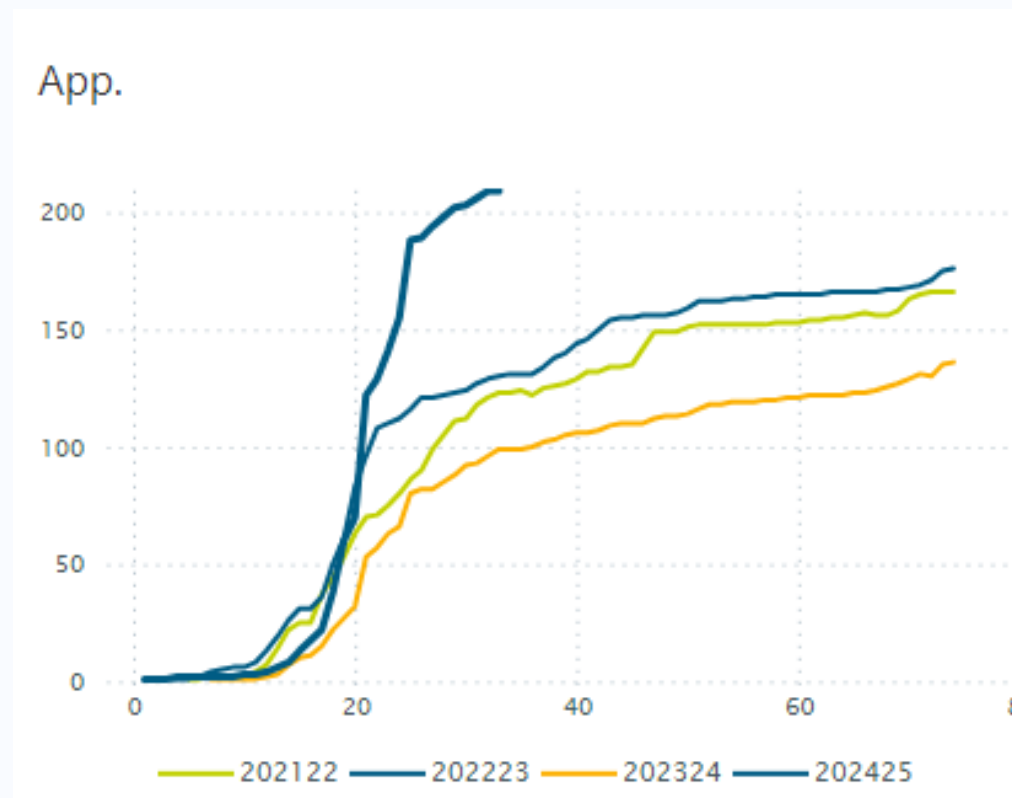
Gender split in **Engineering** compared to previous years

100% Stacked

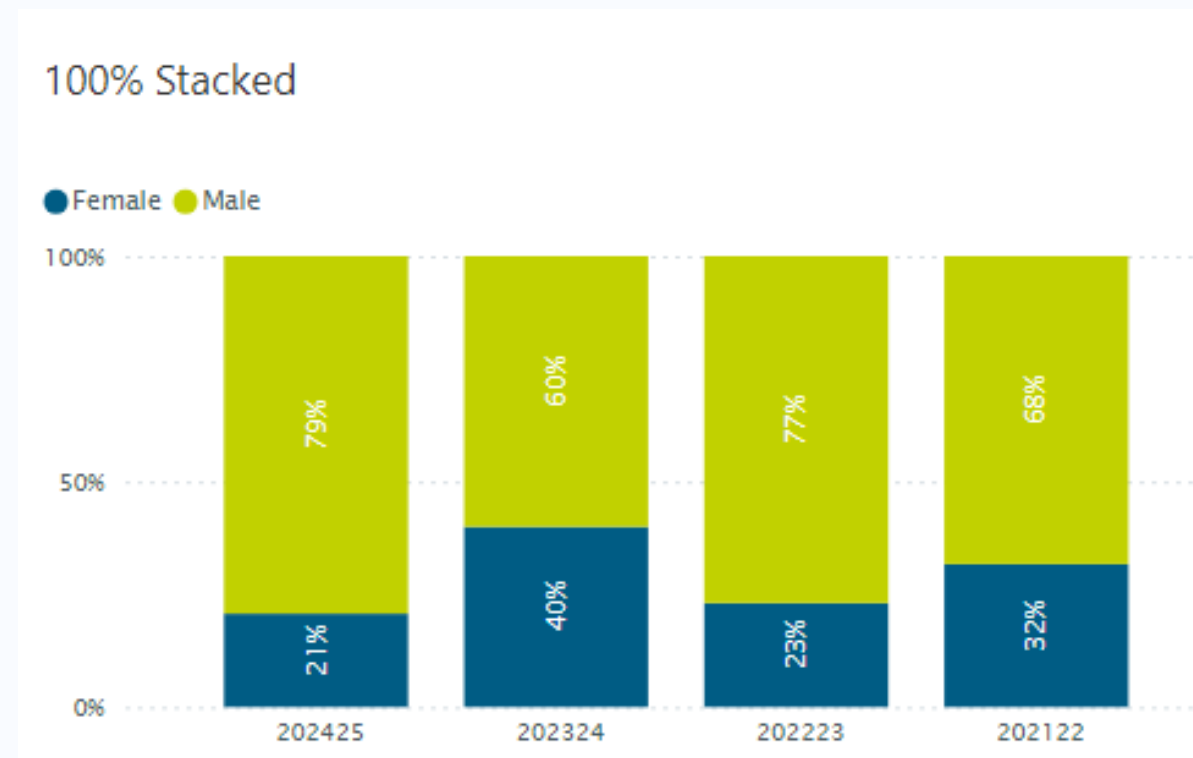


Introduction

Applications in **Physics & Astronomy**
compared to previous years

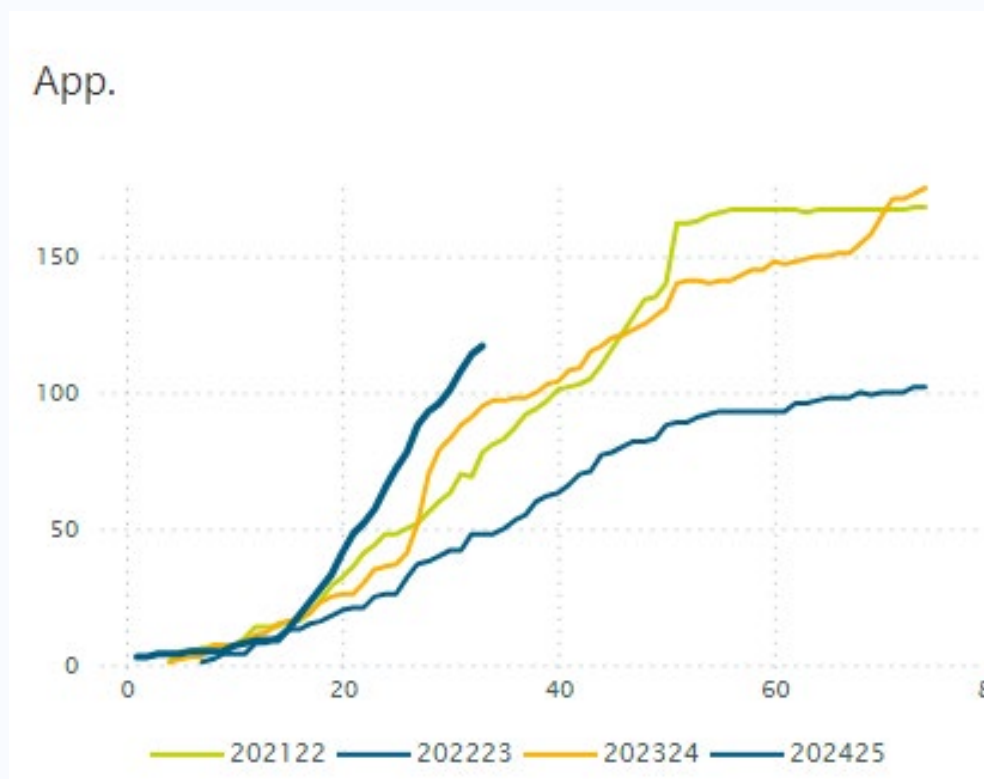


Gender split in **Physics & Astronomy**
compared to previous years

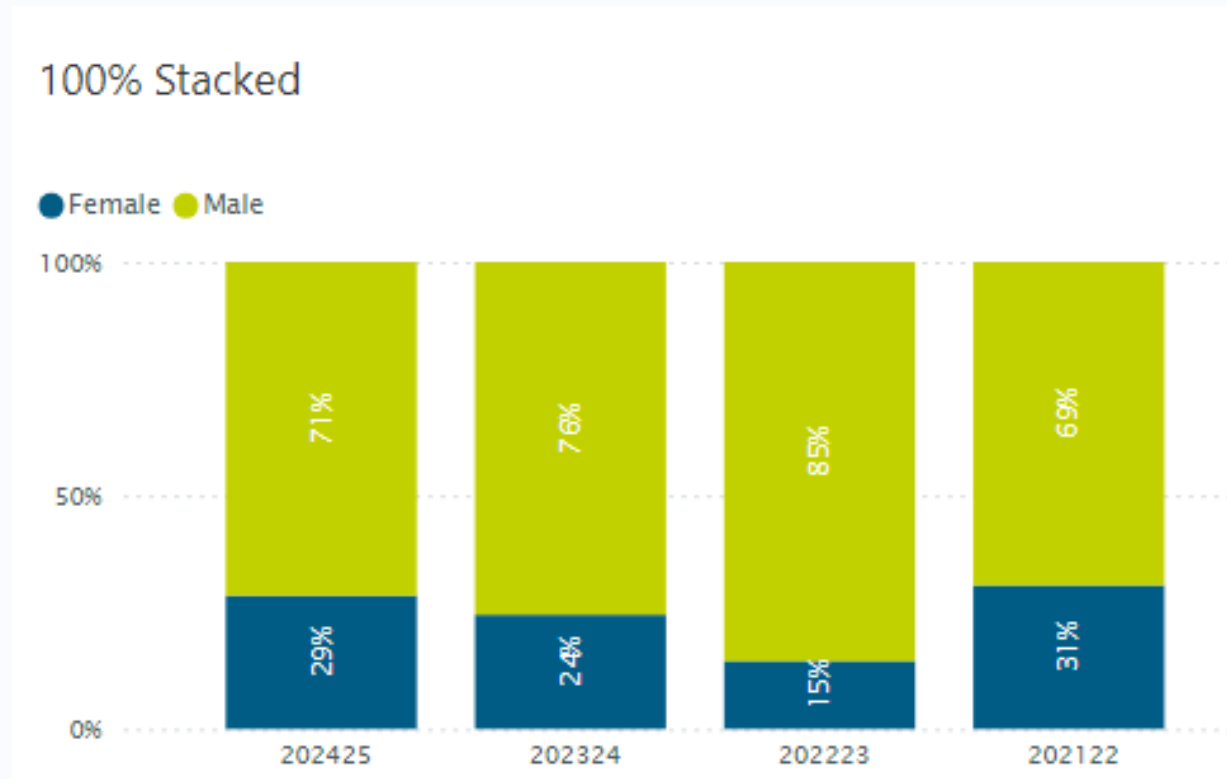


Introduction

Applications in the **Zepler Institute**
compared to previous years



Gender split in the **Zepler Institute**
compared to previous years



Introduction

University strategic plan for research 2022-27



Key Performance Indicator:

Increase PGR size by 25%

Increase diversity of PGR cohort:

Gender balance

Increase overall number of countries from which PGRs are recruited, and increase number of countries from which the UoS recruits > 10 PGRs

SUMMARY

Our world-class research has its foundations in curiosity-led research, disciplinary excellence, and

GOALS

- 1 PEOPLE (STAFF AND STUDENTS)**
Better reflect society by increasing the diversity of our research community and empower our

KPIs

KPI Metric	Target by 2027/28
Competitor rank in Research Income per T&R FTE normalised by cost centre staff - University KPI	Top 3

Introduction

Faculty PGR recruitment strategy:

- Following the University strategy, increase PGR size in FEPS.
- In the previous REF, up to 40% of the research outputs in FEPS were produced by PGRs.
- Recruiting new PGRs to start in 2024-25 is critical to ensure that their research papers can be included in time for the next Research Excellence Framework.
- **New FEPS PGR Recruitment campaign**
- **Additional PGR funding from the Faculty – Faculty bursaries for international students**
 - ✓ FEPS PGR Studentship panel with representation from all schools
 - ✓ Schools pre-rank their applicants for funding
 - ✓ Applicants ranked on academic quality and steers from the Doctoral College to increase the nationality diversity of the PGR cohort and under-represented groups within the research field
- Currently in FEPS the number of applications are up by 119% year-on-year and the number of offers are up by 53% year-on-year.



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Southampton**

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- Engineering
- Electronics
- Computer Science
- Physics
- Photonics & Optoelectronics

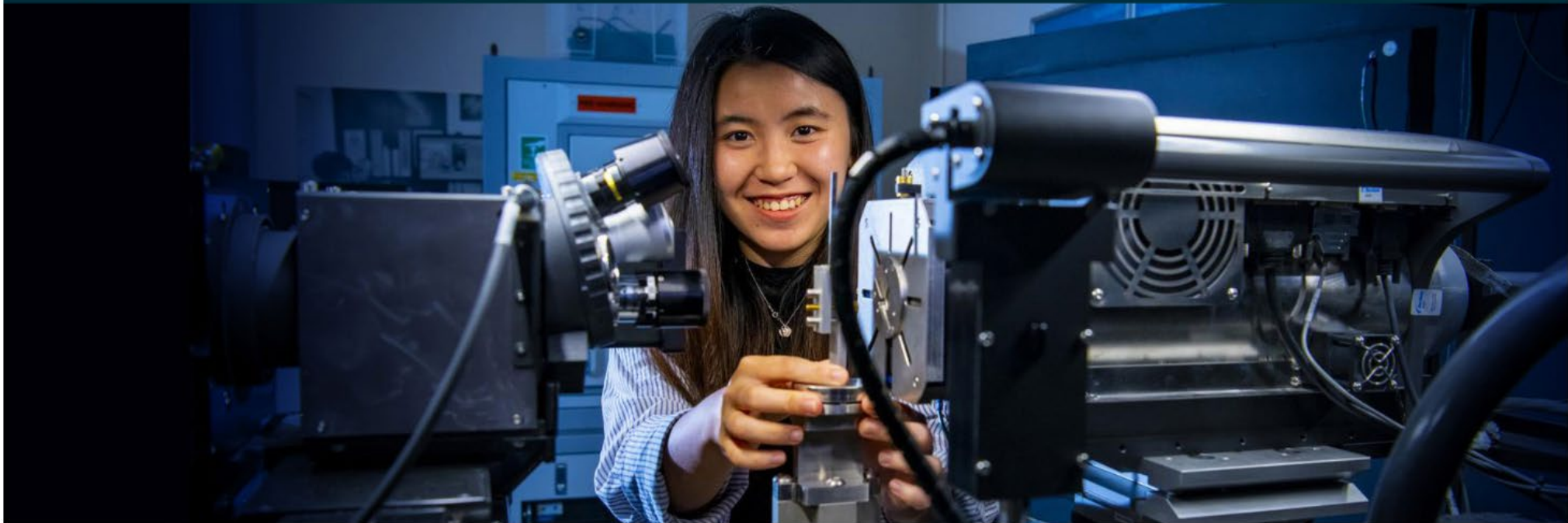
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University of Southampton



PhDs in Engineering and Physical Sciences





FutureData4EU

Training Future Big Data Experts for Europe

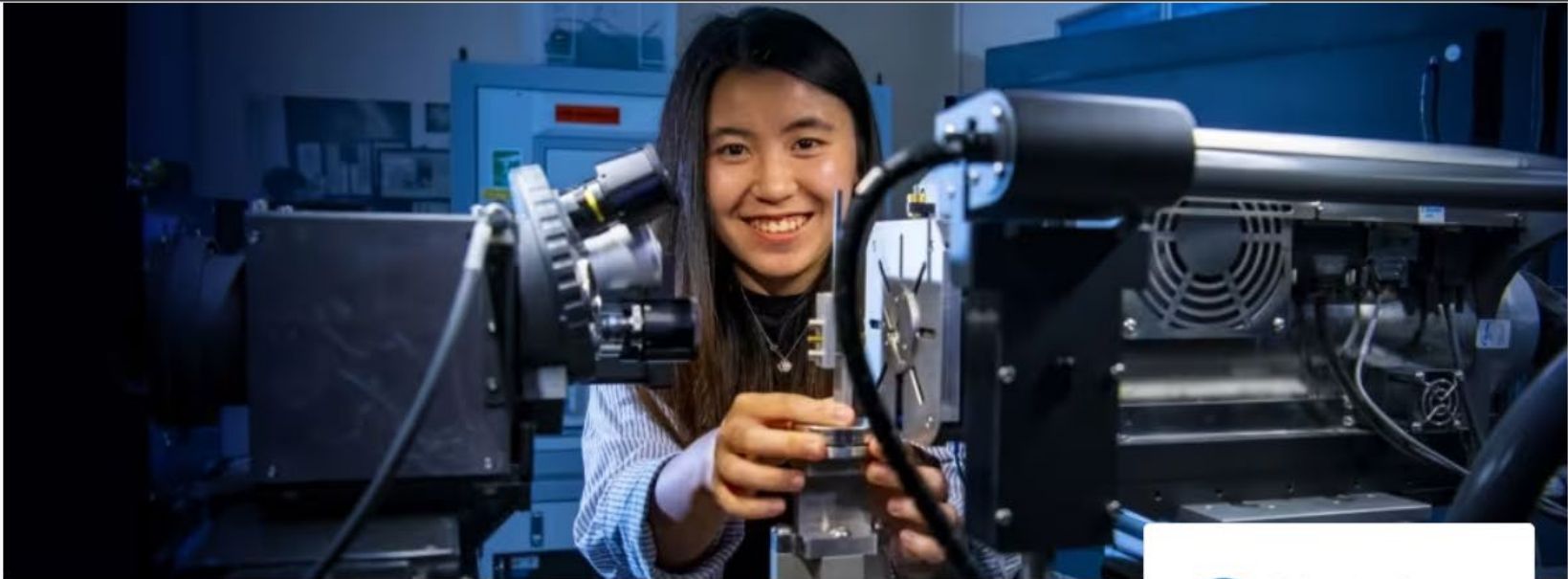
Your future PhD in Big Data is in Italy!
53 PhD positions fully funded by Research Fellowship grants

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 [PhDs at the University of Southampton](#)



PGR Admissions

Marina Carravetta

PGR Admissions

Regulatory information for PGR Admissions:

[Regulations for Research Degrees](#)

- Section 2. Admission

[Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#)

- Section 6. Selection and Admission of Research Students

PGR Admissions

Entry requirements:

- Academic qualifications – one of more of the following:
 - UG degree (normally equivalent to a 2:1 or higher) in a relevant subject
 - Master's degree in a relevant subject
 - Evidence of prior professional practice or learning (see the [University's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#))
- English Language proficiency
 - All courses stipulate a level of English proficiency which equates to one of the University's English Language bands
 - A range of UKVI secure English Language tests are accepted. IELTS is the most common.
- References
 - Two academic references. Referees should not normally be the applicant's potential supervisor.

PGR Admissions

English Language proficiency:

- PhD programmes in Chemistry, Electronics & Computer Science and Engineering
 - BAND C
 - IELTS = 6.5, Listening = 6.0, Reading = 6.0, Writing = 6.0, Speaking = 6.0
 - Evidence of prior professional practice or learning (see the University's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy)
- PhD programmes in Physics & Astronomy and the Optoelectronics Research Centre
 - BAND A*
 - IELTS = 6.0, Listening = 5.5, Reading = 5.5, Writing = 5.5, Speaking = 5.5

Date restrictions apply. Further guidance can be found [here](#).

PGR Admissions

Selection procedures:

- All staff involved in the selection and admission of applicants must be familiar with:
 - University regulations (connected to the relevant degree programme)
 - Admissions and Recruitment guidance in the [CHEP Resources for Doctoral Supervisors](#)
- The selection of applicants should involve at least two members of academic staff
 - Interviews must be used as part of the selection process
 - Staff responsible for interviewing applicants must have received training in inclusion, diversity and equality, and should be familiar with support available for applicants with a disability and/or additional support need.
 - We recommend all staff involved in PhD student shortlisting and interviews to undertake the dedicated [super-recruiter training](#).
 - Before making a formal offer, applicants must be made aware of the costs of the planned research, and any available financial support.

PGR Admissions

Accepting an applicant:

- Prior to approving a recommendation to admit an applicant:
 - The selection procedures must have been complied with in full
 - Applicant's subject for research, their qualifications, experience and English Language proficiency must have been assessed
 - The applicant is judged to have the motivation and potential to undertake the research project and produce a thesis for examination
 - The applicant will be supported by a suitable **supervisory team** and there is access to the required resources and facilities within the research group.
- Supervisory team (minimum of two academic staff)
 - At least one member must have prior experience of supervision which has led to a doctorate
 - Staff new to supervision should gain experience by working closely with an experienced supervisor
 - Main/coordinating supervisor should not be on probation.
 - Limits on overall workload of supervisory staff.

PGR Admissions

Formal offer letter:

- Selectors should NOT inform an applicant that they will receive a formal offer letter from the University. (Advise an applicant that they will be recommended for an offer.)
- A formal **academic offer letter** can only be issued by the PGR Admissions team once all the necessary checks have been completed.
- The formal offer letter is the basis of the contract between the applicant and the University.
- The formal offer letter can be conditional or unconditional.
- The Faculty has quarterly start dates.
- Any funding (PhD studentship) is distinct and independent of the offer of a place on the programme.
- Any offer of funding is detailed in a separate **PhD studentship letter** that must be approved by the Finance department.
- The PhD studentship letter may be accompanied with an addendum providing additional information and constraints which are specific for different PhD programmes.

PGR Admissions

Visa and immigration:

- Academic staff must NOT give visa and immigration guidance to an applicant.
- Applicants should be directed to the **Visa and Immigration Student Advice Service (VISAS)** at the University.
- To study certain subjects in the UK, an **Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)** certificate is required.
- ATAS applies to all students with a visa unless they are from an exempt nationality.
- ATAS clearance is required before the visa application.
- The main supervisor will be asked to provide a project title and short paragraph to describe the research that can be used for the application for ATAS clearance. This is included in the **academic offer letter**.
- Subsequently the scope of the project must not be changed, otherwise a new ATAS certificate will be required.
- The ATAS and visa application processes can take several months to complete.

University PGR Funding

Alan McAlpine

University PGR Funding

- University (Doctoral College)
- Faculty
- CDT/DTP
- School
- External/self-funded

Summary of PGR Funding is available on the FEPS Sharepoint site (in the Research section)

[PGR Funding Information for 2024 Entry](#)



Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences

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Professional Services ▾

Research ▾

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Following

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Published 10/01/2024 Share Edit

PGR Funding Information for 2024 Entry



Benjamin Paget-Woods
Research and Enterprise Manager, Faculty Central (FEPS) (staff)

- ▾ Doctoral College studentships
- ▾ EPSRC Doctoral Prize
- ▾ EPSRC CASE Conversion
- ▾ Other University PGR funding schemes

Deadlines

Presidential Bursaries
for overseas students

In time for
Schools to
rank by Fri
26th Jan
2024

Chinese Scholarship
Council (CSC)

In time for
Schools to
rank by
Friday 26th
Jan 2024

PGR Funding

Doctoral College studentships

- Innovation and Social Impact Scholarship (1x FEPS)
- Black Futures Scholarships (6x FEPS)
- Fee bursaries for EU and Horizon-associated countries (eligibility based on residency). No quota
- Presidential fee bursaries for overseas students (6x FEPS)

University PGR schemes

- Chinese Scholarship Council (CSC) – UoS PhD partnership scheme

PGR Funding

Centres for Doctoral Training

- New CDTs recruiting for 2024 entry

[AI for Sustainability](#)

[Quantum Technology Engineering](#)

Complex Integrated Systems, Defence and Security

EPSRC Doctoral Training Partnership funding

- CASE Conversion
- DTP funding allocated to Schools (30% rule)

PGR Funding

Faculty

- Faculty fee bursaries for overseas students

School

- Each school is allocated a PhD studentship budget (in addition to the DTP allocation)
- The school studentship budget is general funds that can be used to fully-fund or partially-fund new PhD students. The schools decide how to allocate the school studentship budgets and the processes for supervisors to apply for the funding.
- Mayflower scholarships scheme (currently Chemistry and P&A)

External/self-funded

- “Externally-funded” students receive funding, but the funding is not administered by the University. Common examples are PhD students with a national government scholarship or PhD students funded by their employer (taking a career break to study for a PhD). Guidance for students from the International Office ([click here](#))
- “Self-funded” students fund their studies from their personal finances

PGR Recruitment




Kirsten Hall

FEPS PhD Admissions







Please direct all forms and queries to the FEPS Doctoral College Admissions Office.

Email: feps-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk; Ext. 23782, Building 13 Room 2043.

Policies

- 
Code of Practice for...
- 
Regulations for admission to...
- 
Admission Policies |...

Further Information

- 
Doctoral College
- 
PGR Handbook
- 
Visa, CAS and ATAS...
- 
English Language...
- 
PGR Fees
- 
Visiting Students

Dos and Don'ts

- **Adverts:** please strictly adhere to the word limits on our advertising form. These are prescribed by jobs.ac.uk who can only post your advert for free for 3 months. We will notify you when they are live on Find-a-PhD and jobs.ac.uk.
- **FEPS student selection form:** please ensure all boxes are completed, without this information we cannot process your offer and they will be returned. The studentship letter cannot be created unless the information in the funding table is correct (even if you are nominating/requesting for funding). Funding from a research contract needs to be identifiable by our Faculty Finance team.
- **Rejecting applicants:** please do not send an email directly to the candidate. Email feps-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk with the candidate ID and the reason for the rejection so we can process it on Banner and communicate with the student with a template email used across the Faculty.
- **Always email the feps-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk account:** When you receive a notification from Sharepoint notifying you of a new applicant, please reply to the generic account and not the personal account.

PGR Recruitment Process

- The supervisor emails us the **FEPS Doctoral College Advertising Form**. Our team processes the advert and sends to jobs.ac.uk, Find-a-PhD (external providers) and the internal Digital team for the Southampton website.
- An applicant applies on the University application portal. The next working day, the team downloads the application, uploads it on Sharepoint and notifies the prospective supervisor/admissions tutor.
- The supervisor/admissions tutor conducts an interview along with a secondary member of staff and completes the **FEPS Doctoral College Student Selection Form**.
- Once the team receives the form, we will issue an academic offer cc'ing the main supervisor.
- The student must then accept their offer and formally enrol at the University
- Our team creates the studentship letter and sends to the Faculty Finance Team for approval and signature. It is then returned to us to forward to the student, cc'ing the main supervisor.
- For students subject to UK immigration, the student may need an ATAS and a Visa which is the student's responsibility. All Visa enquiries should be directed to the Visa team (visa@soton.ac.uk).
- The student will need to clear all conditions with enough time to obtain a Visa (if necessary).

PGR Recruitment Process

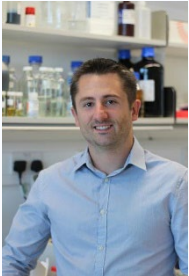
[FEPS PhD Admissions Application Portal](#)

- Links to University regulations and policies
- Information on Visa, CAS and ATAS
- Information on English Language Proficiency
- Information on PGR Fees
- Information on Visiting Research Students
- Faculty PGR Admissions forms
- Links to Applications (organised by School)

PGR Recruitment Process

School PGR Admissions tutors

Chemistry



Matt Baud

ECS



Leonardo Aniello

Engineering



Gustavo de Almeida

Physics and Astronomy

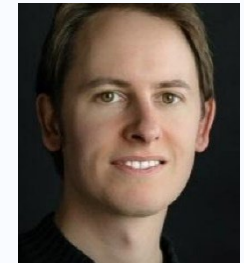


Vasilis Apostolopoulos

Diego Altamirano

Pasquale Di Bari

ORC



Eric Plum

FEPS PGR Admissions team

feps-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk

PGR Recruitment Process

Planning a new project

- The prospective main supervisor develops a new project idea
- What is the project title and brief?
- What is the scope of the project?
- What academic background should applicants have?
- What equipment, resources will be needed?
- What facilities and technical support will be needed?
- How will the project be funded?
- Who can be the second supervisor?
- Discuss with Head of Research Group

PGR Recruitment Process

PhD Advert

- The Faculty can advertise new PhD projects on the following sites:

[University of Southampton postgraduate research projects](#)

[Find A PhD](#)

[jobs.ac.uk](#)

- Complete the **FEPS Doctoral College Advertising form** to request that a new advert is posted.
- Completed forms should be returned to the FEPS PGR Admissions team
feps-pgr-apply@soton.ac.uk
- If you wish to extend the closing date, please contact the team.

PGR Recruitment Process

Guidance for writing a PhD Advert

- Please strictly follow the word limits for each section on the **FEPS Doctoral College Advertising form**. These are prescribed by the external websites.
- You will need a title and a short paragraph on the planned research project.
- Other information includes who to contact, entry requirements, closing date, funding, how to apply, what documents to include, and the School/Faculty EDI statement.
- The **FEPS Doctoral College Advertising form** contains guidance notes on how to write a clear and concise PhD advert and details on all the other information that should be included in the advert.
- The University has a [Job Advert Library](#) Sharepoint site. Although all the examples are for staff positions, there are various advert templates to help write inclusive adverts. The EDI advert guidance on the Job Advert Library is applicable for PhD and staff adverts.

PGR Recruitment Process

Shortlisting and interviewing applicants

- After the closing date, the applications should be shortlisted for interview.
- The prospective supervisor will be able to access the applications via the [FEPS PhD Admissions Application Portal](#)
- A minimum to two academic staff must be involved in shortlisting and interviewing.
- An interview must be part of the selection process.
- The University HR has a [Recruitment](#) Sharepoint site. This contains guidance on [Shortlisting](#) and [Interviewing](#). Although the examples are for staff positions, the guidance, examples etc are equally applicable for PhD and staff positions.
- Selectors can advise an applicant that they will “recommend that the University offers them a place on the PhD programme” but the formal decision to offer requires approval by the director of graduate school or nominee once all the recruitment checks (including document checks) have been completed.

PGR Recruitment Process

Request an academic offer and a studentship offer

- All prospective PhD students require a formal **academic offer letter** from the Doctoral College PGR Admissions team.
- The offer letter is the formal contract between the student and the University. It contains key information including the PhD programme, title, project description, supervisor, start date, duration of candidature, offer conditions, fees classification and advice on obtaining ATAS clearance and a visa.
- The title and project description are used by the student to apply for ATAS clearance. Other information such as programme and dates are needed for the visa.
- Some prospective PhD students will receive studentship funding administered by the University. A studentship can provide 100% of the fees and stipend (tax-free maintenance), or partial funding that covers some but not all of the fees/stipend costs. A common example is a tuition-fee studentship that only covers the tuition fees.
- Prospective PhD students with studentship funding administered by the University will receive a separate **studentship offer letter**. The studentship letter is sent by the Doctoral College PGR Admissions team, but the funding is checked and approved by the Faculty Finance team.
- Requests for an academic offer letter and (if required) a studentship offer letter are actioned by completing the **FEPS Doctoral College PhD Student Selection Form**

PGR Recruitment Process

Request an academic offer and a studentship offer

- The following information is required to complete the **FEPS Doctoral College PhD Student Selection Form**
 - ✓ Student name, ID, School, Research Group, start date (quarterly), full-time/part-time, main supervisor and co-supervisor (and %loadings), project title, project description and the offer conditions.
 - ✓ Interview record
 - ✓ Funding information
- The Funding information is provided in a table. This splits the funding into the tuition fees and stipend. There are columns for each year of the PhD.
- The information in the funding table is used by the Finance team to approve all studentships that are administered by the University.
- Funding from a research contract should have a subproject code (it is not necessary to provide a code for funding from the Doctoral College, Faculty or School studentship budgets).
- Funding can be from a variety of different sources – this type of mixed funding model can be captured on the table.
- Also complete the funding table for self-funded students and students with an external scholarship (not administered by the University)

BREAK

Case Studies

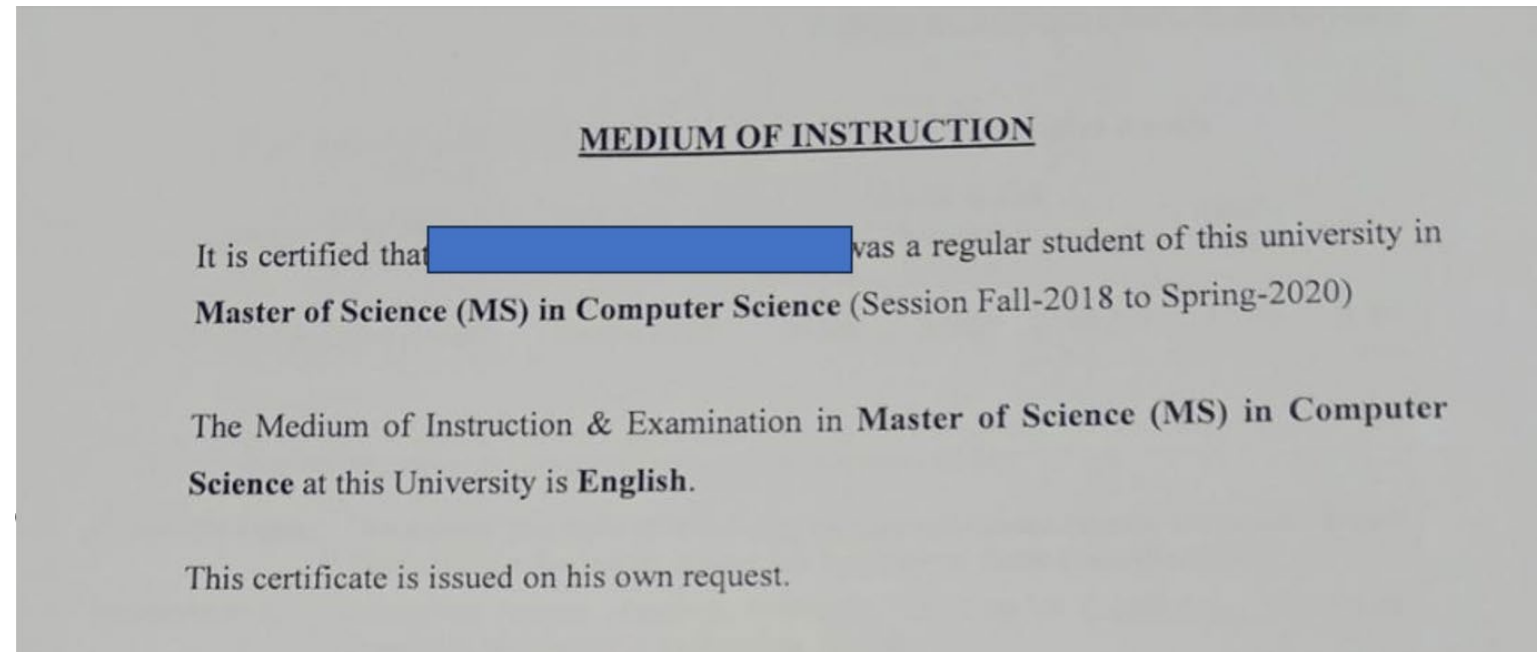
Discussion in breakout groups

Case Study 1

A student from Pakistan has applied to study a PhD in Computer Science due to start 23rd September 2024. The high-achieving student completed their Masters at a University which was taught in English. Following the interview the supervisor requested an unconditional offer.

Looking at the evidence, why can the offer not be unconditional?

If an unconditional offer was sent, what repercussions could this have when the student applies for a VISA?



Case Study 2

A student from India has applied on the 16th July 2024 for a commencement date of the 23rd September 2024. The supervisor has interviewed the student on the 20th July and sent the forms to the Doctoral College Faculty team on the 21st July.

What potential problems do you anticipate with the timeline of this application?

The project description provided by the supervisor is very detailed and they advise it may change during the PhD.

What impact could this have on the student?

Discussion/Q&A

Thank you for attending the second FEPS
PGR Supervisor Forum