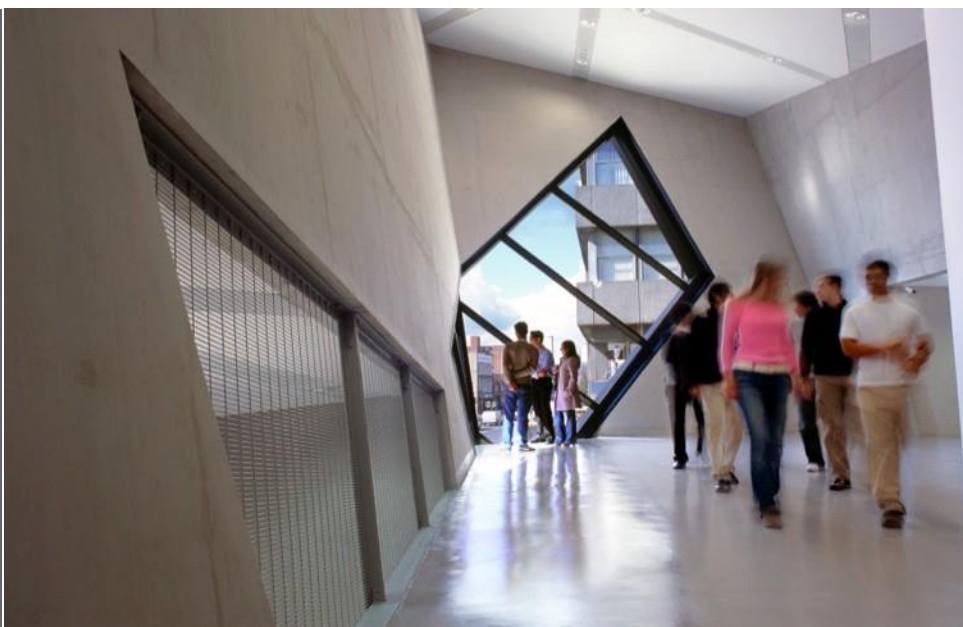




April 2020



Research Newsletter no. 2

Welcome to the Spring newsletter from the Research and Postgraduate Office.

Despite the Coronavirus pandemic, and in some respects because of it, the first three months of 2020 have been busy for London Met's research community. Moving over to online working has been a challenge, though its one which we have risen to.

Students and staff have been involved in a number of exciting and impactful events; we have developed and launched interdisciplinary initiatives and collaborative partnerships both locally and further afield; and, in the current health climate, our science staff have become regular faces and voices in the media.

[Read more about recent news stories on our Research and Knowledge Exchange pages](#) and some highlights of achievements from London Met's research community in this newsletter.

Best wishes, stay safe and stay connected.

Research at London Met

Researching the rainbow

PhD candidate, Cinar Aydogan presented his research '*Stages of Disclosure: The Role of Social Media in the Identity Development of Transgender Individuals*' at this year's [National Student Pride](#). Read more about this in the PGRS newsletter further down.

London Met wins grant from the GLA

London Metropolitan University will deliver the GLA's 2020 Social Integration and Regeneration Learning Network.

[Diana Stirbu](#), from the Policy and Governance area in the School of Social Professions, will lead a multidisciplinary team to curate and deliver a programme of activities throughout 2020.

Developing research at London Met

Three new research initiatives were launched to bring staff and postgraduate students together in the pursuit of intellectual enquiry:

The Interdisciplinary Research Forum (IRF)

Convened by [Svetlana Stephenson](#) (SSSC) and [Gary McLean](#) (SHSC), the IRF builds upon a wide range of research activities at the university. It aims to explore common areas of interest, which cut across narrow disciplinary, professional and geographical interests thus laying the foundations for productive dialogue, exchange and cooperation.

The Interdisciplinary Research Forum aims to provide a focal point within the university for research concerning key contemporary societal trends and issues, based on LMU researcher areas of expertise and contributions from external colleagues.

The forum will invite academic participants from across the university and PhD students. External participants and speakers will also be invited.

The IRF's successful inaugural event, '*Public Shaming - Past and Present*' took place on 20 February and proved to be very popular, attracting students and staff engaged in research across a wide range of disciplines.



Keep an eye out for details of the IRF's next events:

'Varieties of Nationalism and Diaspora'

'Adolescent Mental Health'

The Centre for Life Writing and Oral History (CLiOH)

Launching on 10 March with an event entitled '*Writing Black Lives*', CLiOH gives London Met an opportunity to develop its significant expertise in these areas, and to welcome a wide range of local people into the university, deepening our links with the community and demonstrating how our research can serve them.

CLiOH is led by [Professor Anne Karpf](#), [Professor Jenny Harding](#) and [Professor John Gabriel](#).

Details of the next event, '*A Bite of the Apple - On Publishing Women and Women in Publishing*' will be released soon.

The Higher Education Research Group (HERG)

[HERG](#) is a University-wide alliance to foster, support and disseminate research into higher education.

Open to all interested staff engaged in or planning to undertake higher education research studies or projects.

Members are encouraged to apply for research funding from Schools and/or to put in bids for external research grants.

HERG is coordinated by [Professor Jan Bamford](#), [Professor Digby Warren](#) (Co-Directors) and [Dr Sheelagh Heugh](#) (Deputy-Director). Further event details will be announced soon.

[Email CPED for details.](#)



The London Met Student and Staff Research Conference

Launched in February, the conference theme is 'Between Tradition and Innovation: New Research at London Met' and is the culmination of a number of initiatives introduced in 2019/20 in response to feedback from the PGR community and the overall strategic plan to strengthen student and staff partnership.

Planning for the conference is overseen by the recently launched, PGR Student - Staff Liaison Forum, in cooperation with the PGR Society and the Research Office.

Scheduled for Tuesday 14 July, plans for the conference continue despite Coronavirus. We will review the situation in the coming weeks and if necessary, will look at either running it remotely or postponing.

We welcome submissions from all PGR students and staff in any area of research, including, of course, interdisciplinary research.

Joint submissions are possible and positively welcome - student-student, staff-staff, student-staff and there is still time to get your proposal in by the deadline.

Please [submit your proposals via Student Zone.](#)

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey

The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) launched on Monday 2 March for a period of three weeks.

The number of participants doubled this year and overall approval rates are up compared to 2018/19.

What we will focus on now are the areas with room for further improvement. In order to do this we will continue to work with you, the London Met research community, via the PGR Student and Staff Forum, research committees and

other initiatives, which support and encourage student/staff partnership and open dialogue.

Key points from the survey and the actions we plan to implement based on the results will be shared with you in the coming weeks.

During this unprecedented time, we were also very happy to be able to deliver some good news to the two lucky winners of the prize draw. Congratulations again to them! The Apple iPad Minis are winging their way to them at the time of writing.

Supporting PGR research

PGR Training Programme

In collaboration with academic and professional services staff and on occasion, external speakers, the Graduate School delivered a further 14 sessions in the first three months of 2020. The training programme aims to cover a broad range of subjects designed to support PGR students during their time at London Met but also develop their skills beyond their research degree.

Topics continue to be wide ranging, from an 'Introduction to Research Impact' presented by the RPO's [Dr Diane Smith](#), Impact Manager to 'Employability – Beyond the Research Degree', led by London Met Career Consultant, Tiffany Platt. The programme continues to develop with planned sessions based on student feedback in the first and second term.

With the COVID-19 situation rapidly developing during the first two weeks of March, we were able to successfully switch to online via Blackboard Collaborate, from Tuesday 17 March without a break.

Remember, you can still access any sessions you might have missed on Weblearn.

Upcoming sessions include:

- *Case Study Research* delivered by Prof Jan Bamford on 5 May
- *Gathering and using qualitative data: focus groups and deliberative discussion groups* with Prof Alistair Ross on 12 May

Links to join online sessions will be published closer to the time – [please continue to register via the RPO's Eventbrite page](#).

Coronavirus: important information for PGR students

Updates can be found on the [Coronavirus information page on the website](#) and we will continue to communicate any developments directly to you as well. If you have any questions, reach out to your supervisors and the RPO. A few key reminders for now:

Submissions

The deadline for progress submissions has been extended to 8 June 2020.

Research Student Progress Groups (RSPGs) scheduled for the summer will be taking place as planned for now, whether on campus or online, and you should continue to work towards these. You should indicate on the forms if anything has affected your progress due to the Coronavirus situation.

Soft-bound thesis submissions will be accepted online in pdf format during this period and you should continue preparing your hardbound thesis as planned. Once you have completed this, please let us know and we will advise on the best way to deliver it based on the situation at the time.

Vivas

Vivas that have been scheduled to take place within the next few weeks will be conducted online. If you would rather wait for your viva to be rescheduled so that you can be present, please let your supervisor know as soon as possible. If this has any consequences for registration periods, the necessary adjustments will be made.

Other London Met initiatives to help keep us all happy and healthy:

It's also important to have fun and relax during this unprecedented period.

London Met staff and students have been finding inventive ways to connect with each other and share ideas.

- The London Met Gym and Sports team have a daily schedule including fitness tips and online yoga and meditation classes. [Check out their Facebook page](#) to see what's on and sign up.
- Head of School of Social Professions, Kelly Cooper is posting regular tips on how to keep your children occupied during lockdown.
- The AAD's Patrick Brill (AKA Bob and Roberta Smith) is posting [daily art challenges](#).
- [Green London Met](#) is providing short lunchtime gardening sessions.
- And don't forget to keep an eye out for #LondonMetPets! See what our furry friends are up to while we're all working from home.

Keep checking [London Met's Twitter](#) and the Student and Staff Zones.

We're all in this together so if you have any fun ideas or are organising online group activities – please share them with the Communications team at comms@londonmet.ac.uk.

[@LondonMetUni](#)

facebook.com/londonmetuni/

Staying connected during the closures

Get in touch:

If you have any questions, please email the RPO at research@londonmet.ac.uk and we will respond as soon as we can.

News and updates:

Please visit [London Met's Coronavirus information web page](#), which is updated regularly and is an excellent source of news and support.

Updates are also regularly posted on Weblearn and emailed to students – please check your @my.londonmet.ac.uk inbox regularly.

London Met has introduced a Live Chat option via the [Student Zone](#) for questions relating to the current situation.

Additional support, including counseling, visa information and software for students can be found on Student Zone.

Live Q&A sessions:

Deputy VC, [Donna Whitehead](#) and SU President-elect, Chrystalle Margallo have hosted a number of “Ask Me Anything (AMA)” sessions since the building closures.

[Don MacRaid](#) and [Klaus Fischer](#) held a PGR specific live chat on 25th March.

You can listen to previous ones on the [Coronavirus support page](#) with more sessions covering different topics added regularly.



Resources and information for staff

IT support

London Met's IT team is working to ensure that systems and are updated to make remote working and teaching easier.

You can access training and guidelines to help you navigate recently provided platforms, like Microsoft Teams, Blackboard Collaborate and V-Scene.

Information on BB Collaborate and V-Scene can be found on [this online delivery guide](#).

LinkedIn Learning provides [Microsoft Teams Essential Training](#).

Support for staff during the closures

[A new page in the Staff Zone](#) with helpful information and guidance for staff while we are all working remotely. The tools provided and additional measures outlined include contributions from Human Resources, the Academic Quality and Development team, IT services and the Health and Safety team.

This page is constantly updated – coming soon, a quick guide to building online student communities which includes information and resources on:

- virtual field trips
- tutorials with success coaches
- online virtual book and movie clubs

Centre for Professional and Educational Development (CPED)

As well as a wide range of staff training essentials, CPED will continue to deliver their

comprehensive Researcher Development Programme. Find out more here or contact cped@londonmet.ac.uk.

External resources

The [UK Council for Graduate Education](#) (UKGCE) is providing free online resources for educators during the Coronavirus pandemic, including webinars on delivering online teaching. Visit their website to register for upcoming events.

Research Professional*

You can continue to access Research Professional remotely via your institutional log in and in addition, RP have curated a list of funding opportunities relevant to COVID-19, which can be accessed [on the portal](#).

Supporting external funding bids

If you have identified a funding opportunity in line with the guidance on the [website](#), please email the RPO at bidsupport@londonmet.ac.uk.

Postgraduate Research Society Newsletter



The PGRS continue to support the PGR student community by giving students a platform to connect with each other, give feedback on their experiences and organising social gatherings.

London Met's PGRS at the 2020 National Student Pride

The Postgraduate Research Society's Treasurer and Historian, Cinar Aydogan, presented his research '***Stages of Disclosure: The Role of Social Media in the Identity Development of Transgender Individuals***' at National Student Pride (NSP).

The event was held at the University of Westminster on Saturday 22 February 2020. His presentation formed part of a panel on queer culture labelled as "Researching the Rainbow".

Cinar's research explores issues that transgender individuals face in constructing and validating their identity through online

disclosure and the impact that using social media has on the coming-out experience.

Cinar's fellow PGRS members were there to support him and the presentation was well received.





The Postgraduate Research Society's social evening at Karaoke

Just because we are PhD candidates, it doesn't mean that we can't have fun and enjoy ourselves from time to time. And Karaoke is an excellent way of doing this.

On Monday 24 February 2020, we went to the Islington Lucky Voice Karaoke Bar and sang for two hours.

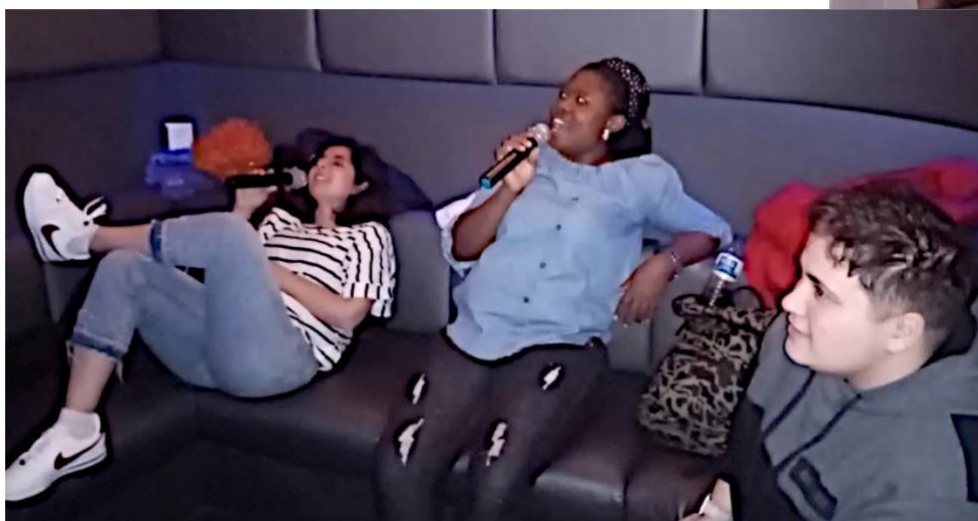
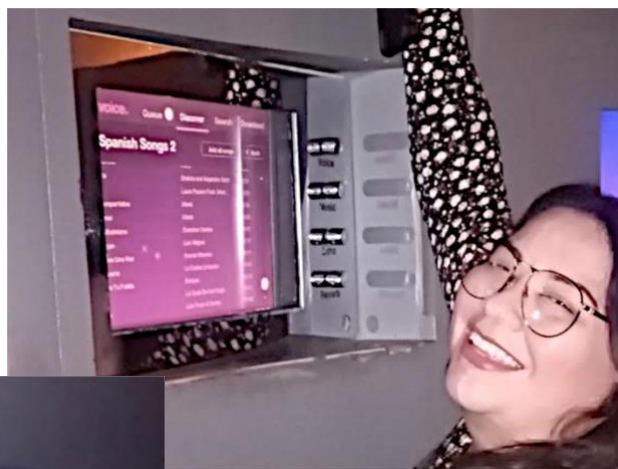
It was just what we needed after spending our days writing and researching. We were pleased to have such a big selection of songs to sing, including songs in English, Spanish, French and Arabic, so it was a truly international affair.

Of course, we enjoyed a few drinks too to help us let loose on the microphone! As you can see, we all had a lot of fun and plan to host another evening like this once the Covid-19 lockdown is behind us.

Get in touch with the PGRS for news on upcoming events.

Join the PGRS:

- [Find us on Facebook](#)
- Subscribe to updates at: londonmetpgrsociety@gmail.com
- [Also, check our Student's Union page](#)



Please note the University will be closed from
Thursday 9 to Monday 13 April inclusive.
We'll be back on Tuesday 14 April.

Wishing you all a very restful Easter break.

The Graduate School and Research & Postgraduate Office teams