Key findings

Context

Profile of respondents

Working hours

Time for research activities

Impact on research

External peer reviewing activities
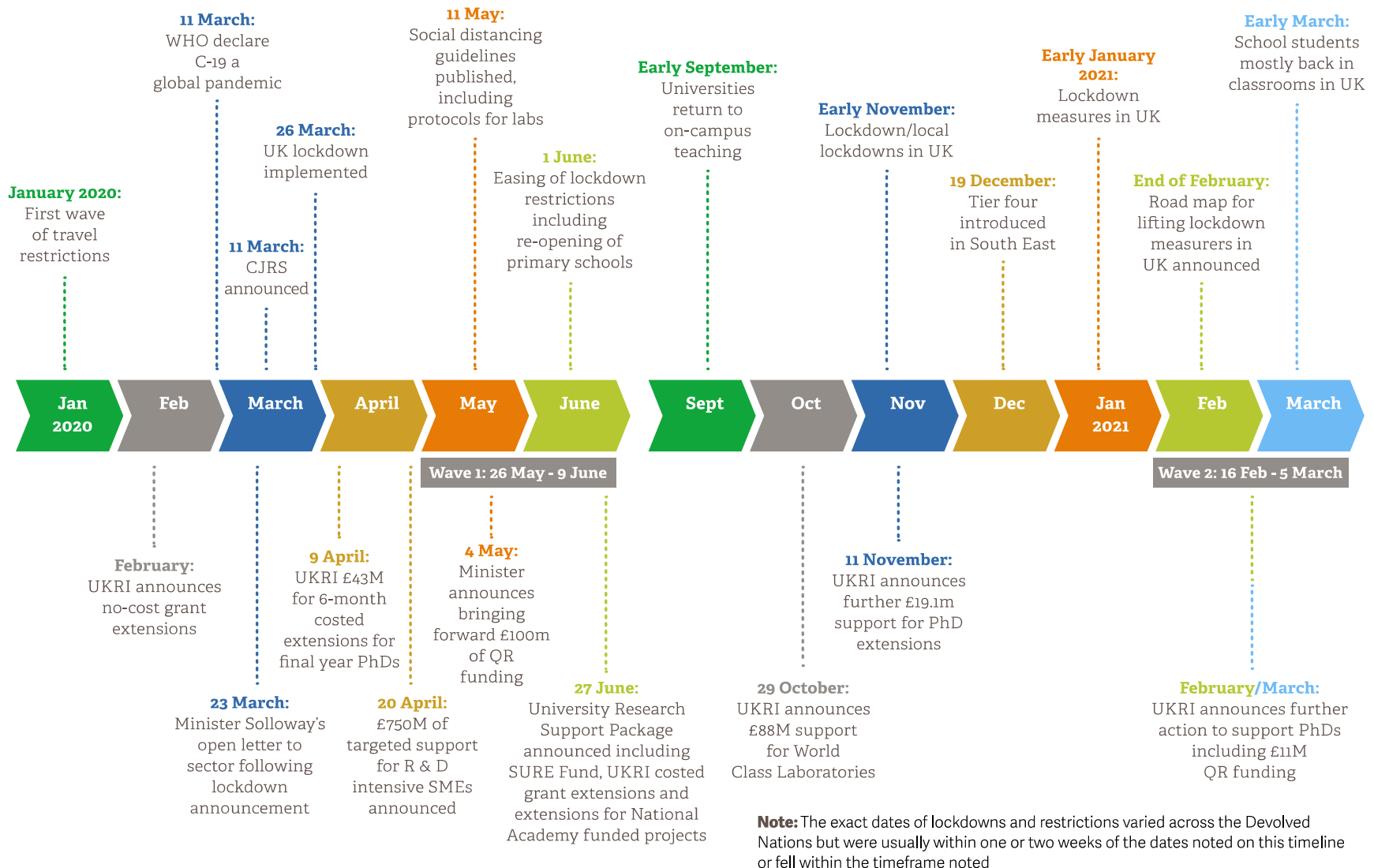
Funder support

Health and wellbeing

Next steps

Context for survey

- On 26 March 2020, the UK government introduced a complete 'lockdown' to reduce the transmission of the Covid-19 virus. Since this time, Covid-19 restrictions have impacted researchers and research activities. This research, funded by UKRI and BEIS, aims to inform policy responses to support the research and development (R&D) sector.

- The survey consisted of two waves: wave one in May/June 2020. followed by a second wave in February/ March 2021. This presentation presents the results from the second wave. The results from the Wave 1 survey can be found at: https://www.vitae.ac.uk/impact-and-evaluation/the-impact-of-the-covid19-pandemic%20on-researchers-in-universities-and-research-institutes

- 3312 respondents from Wave 1 who had provided permission to be recontacted (from a total of 10,408 respondents) were invited to complete the Wave 2 survey in February 2021. 1347 (41%) provided valid responses that were matched back to Wave 1 data on an individual basis. The demographic profile of these respondents is given on slides 10 - 12.

- A sub-set of 843 respondents provided complete responses to questions in Waves 1 and 2 relating to their working hours at different points in time and the proportion of their time spent on different activities. This enabled comparison of working pattens at three different points: Pre-Covid-19 restrictions; May/June 2020; and February/March 2021. The demographic profile for this subset is given at slide 12.

- Respondents were primarily researchers in universities (89%) and research institutes. Respondents self-identified their career stage, which were used to explore any differences by career stage. The data was also examined by REF Panel, gender and by caring responsibilities. The sample was too small to analyse by ethnicity. Where the data refers to researchers this equates to respondents.

- The survey provides indicative data. It is unweighted and not fully representative of all UK researcher's experiences during Covid-19 restrictions. However, it is a relatively balanced sample by gender, nationality and career stage of academic staff when compared to HESA data (slide 12). There is an over-representation Ref Panel A respondents and an under-representation on PGRs, who were not specifically targeted in the survey.

Environment for survey Waves 1 and 2
2020 - 2021

vitae
realising
the potential
of researchers

11 March:
WHO declare
C-19 a
global pandemic

26 March:
UK lockdown
implemented

11 May:
Social distancing
guidelines
published,
including
protocols for labs

Early September:
Universities
return to
on-campus
teaching

Early November:
Lockdown/local
lockdowns in UK

**Early January
2021:**
Lockdown
measures in UK

Early March:
School students
mostly back in
classrooms in UK

January 2020:
First wave
of travel
restrictions

11 March:
CJRS
announced

1 June:
Easing of lockdown
restrictions
including
re-opening of
primary schools

19 December:
Tier four
introduced
in South East

End of February:
Road map for
lifting lockdown
measurers in
UK announced

Jan 2020	Feb	March	April	May	June	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2021	Feb	March

Wave 1: 26 May - 9 June

Wave 2: 16 Feb - 5 March

February:
UKRI announces
no-cost grant
extensions

9 April:
UKRI £43M
for 6-month
costed
extensions for
final year PhDs

4 May:
Minister
announces
bringing
forward £100m
of QR
funding

11 November:
UKRI announces
further £19.1m
support for PhD
extensions

23 March:
Minister Solloway's
open letter to
sector following
lockdown
announcement

20 April:
£750M of
targeted support
for R & D
intensive SMEs
announced

27 June:
University Research
Support Package
announced including
SURE Fund, UKRI costed
grant extensions and
extensions for National
Academy funded projects

29 October:
UKRI announces
£88M support
for World
Class Laboratories

February/March:
UKRI announces further
action to support PhDs
including £11M
QR funding

Note: The exact dates of lockdowns and restrictions varied across the Devolved
Nations but were usually within one or two weeks of the dates noted on this timeline
or fell within the timeframe noted
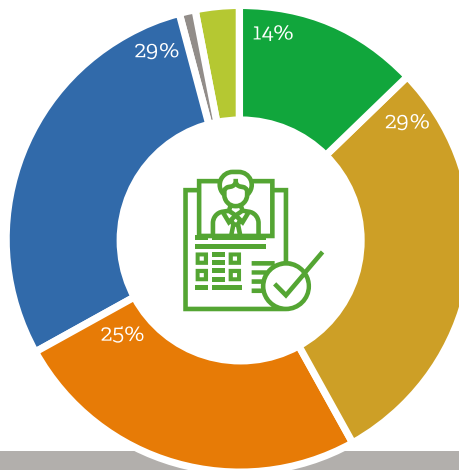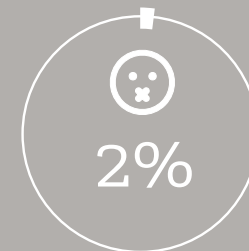
Profile of responses

3312 contacted from Wave 1

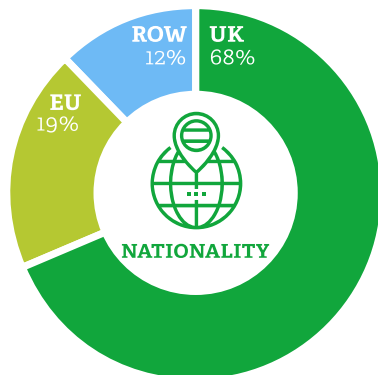**1347** matched back to Wave 1 to form the basis of these results

- **Postgraduate researchers (PGRs)**
- **Research staff**
- **Mid-career researchers**
- **Senior researchers**
- **Technicians**
- **Other**

14%
29%
29%
25%

Gender:

52%

46%

2%

Prefer not to say (PNS)

NATIONALITY

UK 68%
ROW 12%
EU 19%

Caring responsibilities: 43% (no gender differences)

Ethnicity:* **93%** white; **5%** ethnic minorities

Disability: 18% disclosed an impairment or health condition

* Ethnicity data is for UK nationals only.

Due to very small numbers, no analysis has been undertaken by ethnicity or for technicians and other respondents.

Estimated 95% confidence interval for the sample is 2 - 2.5%.