



Adelaide University  
Postgraduate Students'  
Association

# 2003 Intellectual Property Survey

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## *Table of Contents*

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Analysis of survey respondents</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 <i>School and Course Enrolment</i> .....	5
2.2 <i>Faculty and Course Enrolment</i> .....	7
2.3 <i>Faculty and Enrolment Status</i> .....	8
2.4 <i>Faculty and Year of Enrolment in Program</i> .....	8
<b>3. Analysis of survey responses</b> .....	<b>9</b>
3.1 <i>Question 1: Have you encountered intellectual property issues that have affected your study?</i> .....	9
3.2 <i>Question 2: Are you involved in a group collaboration project?</i> .....	9
3.3 <i>Question 3: Does your research have commercialisation potential?</i> .....	10
3.4 <i>Question 4: If yes, at what stage was this potential identified?</i> .....	11
3.5 <i>Question 5: Have the issues been resolved?</i> .....	12
3.6 <i>Question 6: How useful has your supervisor(s) been in assisting you with intellectual property issues?</i> .....	12
3.7 <i>Question 7: How useful has your Department/School been in assisting you with intellectual property issues?</i> .....	13
3.8 <i>Question 8: Have you signed an IP agreement?</i> .....	14
3.9 <i>Question 9: Has your supervisor/Department/School placed pressure on you to sign an IP agreement?</i> .....	15
3.10 <i>Question 10: If yes, how was this pressure placed on you?</i> .....	16
3.11 <i>Question 11: Adelaide Research and Innovation (ARI) is an organisation that deals with intellectual property at the University of Adelaide. ARI deals with:</i> .....	17
3.12 <i>Question 12: Have you dealt with ARI?</i> .....	18
3.13 <i>Question 13: If you have dealt with ARI, how would you rate your experience?</i>	
(a) <i>Accessibility</i> .....	18
(b) <i>Level of assistance</i> .....	19
(c) <i>Satisfaction with negotiations</i> .....	19
3.14 <i>Question 14: The University has a contract called a “Student Project Participation Agreement” (SPPA), which is designed to assist with issues such as those surveyed here. Are all students required to sign an SPPA when they commence their study?</i> .....	20
3.15 <i>Question 15: Can you negotiate the terms of an SPPA with ARI?</i> .....	21
3.16 <i>Question 16: If you do not sign an SPPA, and your project has commercialisation potential, what happens?</i> .....	22
3.17 <i>Question 17: Does the University provide legal advice for students to assist with IP negotiations</i> .....	23
<b>4. Discussion</b> .....	<b>24</b>
4.1 <i>Summary</i> .....	24
4.2 <i>Suggested Action</i> .....	27
4.3 <i>Improvements to the Survey</i> .....	28
<b>Appendix A: Copy of Survey</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix B: Comments of Survey Respondents</b> .....	<b>34</b>

## ***Abstract***

From mid-May to mid-June 2003, the PGSA conducted a survey of its members that examined their knowledge of, and issues encountered that involved intellectual property. Areas examined included the level of assistance that respondents had received from academics and academic Schools with IP issues, their knowledge of intellectual property commercialisation issues, and whether they are involved in group collaboration projects. 106 individuals completed the survey.

The responses received to the survey suggest that postgraduate students at the University of Adelaide do not have a firm understanding of the intellectual property issues examined in the survey. Of particular concern is the lack of knowledge about intellectual property commercialisation and the level of assistance that many students have received from academics and academic Schools in dealing with intellectual property issues. Also of concern is the significant number of survey respondents, who stated that they had encountered intellectual property issues that have affected their studies.

It is clear that an education campaign needs to occur, in order to better inform postgraduate students at the University of Adelaide about their rights involving intellectual property issues. The PGSA has already started a campaign to so do; however, the University of Adelaide also needs to play an active role in educating its postgraduate students.

## ***1. Introduction***

This report summarises the responses received from postgraduate students at the University of Adelaide to the Postgraduate Students' Association's (PGSA) intellectual property (IP) survey that was placed on the PGSA's web site from May 23 to June 17, 2003. The survey was advertised in the PGSA's email bulletins that were sent to all enrolled postgraduate and honours students during the survey dates. A copy of the web page is provided in Appendix A of this report.

The survey was designed in response to the increasing number of contacts that the PGSA has had from its members during 2003 about IP issues. It was clear that a large number of these students had little or no idea about their IP rights, particularly concerning the commercialisation of their IP. In addition, a worrying number of students had contacted the PGSA because of issues that they had encountered concerning the protection of their IP, particularly in connection to the signing of a Student Project Participation Agreement (SPPA). The survey had the primary aim of investigating the knowledge that postgraduate students have about their intellectual property rights. A secondary aim was to learn the frequency, with which students have encountered issues, and the degree to which their supervisors and Schools of enrolment have assisted them in resolving them.

The survey was aimed at all levels of PGSA membership, although it was expected that the majority of respondents would be enrolled in research programs, especially PhDs. To encourage members to respond, every person, who so wished, was placed in a draw to win a \$50 meal voucher for Sagarmatha Nepali Restaurant. 106 people responded to the survey.

The survey consisted of seventeen questions, plus two sections for comments, as well as questions about non-identifying details about the respondent's enrolment details. Most of the seventeen questions used checkboxes and menu items to select answers, so that responses could be standardised and compiled quickly. The two comment sections provided respondents with the opportunity to provide more in-depth information about the issues addressed, including their own experiences.

This report provides only a quantitative summary and analysis of the data; qualitative data is provided as comments in Appendix B, with any possible comments that could be used to identify individual students removed. Only those comments that contribute relevant information have been included.<sup>1</sup>

This report is divided into three sections. The first describes the sample of the 106 students, who completed the survey, who are part of approximately 4300 postgraduate and honours students enrolled at the University of Adelaide. The second section is a presentation of the survey's quantitative results. The first two sections' responses have been compiled according to Faculty. The third section provides a discussion of the survey's results, and incorporates comments provided in Appendix B.

Questions 1 – 10, 12 and 13 ask for information about the respondent's personal experience; questions 11, and 14 – 17 deal with the respondent's knowledge of intellectual property topics. Questions 6, 7, 13a, 13b and 13c use a 1-10 scale, with 1 being very low and 10 very high, to provide a method of scale assessment of the responses.

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<sup>1</sup> Comments such as "I have nothing to add" have been excluded.

## 2. Analysis of survey respondents

### 2.1 School and Course Enrolment

Table 1: Level of enrolment, sorted by School of enrolment

Department	Honours	Graduate Diploma	Masters (Coursework)	Masters (Research)	PhD	Grand Total	Total Number in School	%age Response
Agriculture & Wine				1	10	11	254	4.3
Adelaide Grad. School of Business			4		1	5	983	0.5
Applied Mathematics					2	2	38	5.3
Chemical Engineering					3	3	31	9.7
Chemistry & Physics					2	2	100	2
Civil & Environmental Engineering					3	3	30	10
Computer Science	1				1	2	89	2.2
Dental					1	1	73	1.4
Earth & Environmental Sciences					10	10	228	4.4
Economics	1					1	77	1.3
Electrical Engineering					1	1	68	1.5
History & Politics	1		2		2	5	238	2.1
Humanities	2		2		2	6	208	2.9
Mechanical Engineering		1			1	2	148	1.4
Medical	3		2	2	22	29	970	3.0
Molecular & Biomedical Sciences	3				5	8	185	4.3
Music					1	1	67	1.5
Petroleum Engineering				2	2	4	12	33.3
Pure Mathematics					1	1	13	7.8
Social Sciences	1		1	1	3	6	209	2.9
Not identified		1	1		1	3	N/A	N/A
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>4393<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2.4</b>

<sup>2</sup> Total number of honours and postgraduate students at the University of Adelaide in semester 1, 2003. Source: "2003 March Student Load Enrolment (persons) pivot table", available at <[http://www.adelaide.edu.au/opd/stats/student/enrolment\\_pivot2003Marchweb.xls](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/opd/stats/student/enrolment_pivot2003Marchweb.xls)>.

Of the 106 students, who completed the survey, 103 identified the School, in which they are enrolled. Responses that named a discipline within the new School-based structure of Faculties have been changed to the School's name.

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents (75.5%) are enrolled in research programs, with most (69.8%) in PhD courses. 26 (24.5%) survey respondents are enrolled in coursework programs, including 12 (11.3%) honours students. The most responses (29, 27.4%) were from students enrolled in the Medical School, with 11 (10.4%) in the School of Agriculture and Wine, and 10 (9.4%) in the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences. 3 students (2.8%) did not identify their School of enrolment. The highest percentages of responses were from respondents enrolled in the School of Petroleum Engineering (4, 33.3%), Civil and Environmental Engineering (3, 10%), and Chemical Engineering (3, 9.7%). Of the Schools, from which respondents completed the survey, the lowest percentages were from the Adelaide Graduate School of Business (5, 0.5%), Economics, (1, 1.3%) and Mechanical Engineering (2, 1.4%). No responses were received from five Schools (Architecture, Centre for Australian Indigenous Research and Studies, Commerce, Graduate School of Education, and Law).

## 2.2 Faculty and Course Enrolment

Table 2: Course of enrolment, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	Honours	Graduate Diploma	Masters (Coursework)	Masters (Research)	PhD	Grand Total	%age of Respondents	Total Number in Faculty	%age Response
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	1	1		2	14	18	17.0	400	4.5
Health Sciences	3		2	2	23	30	28.3	1043	2.9
Humanities & Social Sciences	4	1	5	1	8	19	17.9	723	2.6
Professions	1		5		1	7	6.6	1437	0.5
Sciences	3			1	28	32	30.2	779	4.1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4393<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Total Number in Program</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>1178</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>1255</b>	<b>4393<sup>4</sup></b>			
<b>%age Response</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>			

Table 2 shows that the largest group of survey respondents (32, 30.2%) were from the Faculty of the Sciences, followed by the Faculty of Health Sciences (30, 28.3%), the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (19, 17.9%), the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (18, 17.0%), with the Faculty of the Professions having the smallest number of responses (7, 6.6%).

The highest percentage of respondents was from the Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (18, 4.5%), the Faculty of the Sciences (32, 4.1%), with the Faculty of the Professions having the lowest response rate (7, 0.5%).

The course level with the highest response rate was PhDs, with 5.9% (74) of enrolled students responding to the survey. Masters by Research students (6, 2.7%) were slightly ahead of honours students (12, 2.3%), with around one percent of Masters by Coursework students responding (12, 1.0%) and a small fraction of Graduate Diploma students as well (2, 0.3%). No students enrolled in other postgraduate programs responded to the survey.

<sup>3</sup> Total figure includes eleven students enrolled through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Provost, none of whom responded to the survey.

<sup>4</sup> Figure includes Graduate Certificates and Professional Certificates, although no survey responses were received from students enrolled in these courses.

## 2.3 Faculty and Enrolment Status

Table 3: Enrolment status, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	Coursework		Research		Grand Total
	Full	Part	Full	Part	
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	1	1	15	1	18
Health Sciences	4	1	23	2	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	8	2	7	2	19
Professions	3	3	1		7
Sciences	3		28	1	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>106</b>

The majority (93, 87.7%) of students, who completed the survey, are enrolled full-time. Of those enrolled in research programs, most (74, 92.5%) were full-time students, whereas a smaller percentage of coursework program students (19, 73.1%) studied full-time.

## 2.4 Faculty and Year of Enrolment in Program

Table 4: Year of enrolment in program, sorted by Faculty of Enrolment

Faculty	pre-1996	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences				1	1	2	1	2	11	18
Health Sciences				1	4	3	3	6	13	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	2		1	1		2	2	2	9	19
Professions							1	2	4	7
Sciences					6	3	6	6	11	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>106</b>

Nearly half (48, 45.3%) of survey respondents were in the first year of their course, with the next largest group first enrolling in 2002 (18, 17.0%). There were two students (1.9%), who first enrolled before 1995.

### 3. Analysis of survey responses

#### 3.1 Question 1: *Have you encountered intellectual property issues that have affected your study?*

Table 5: Responses to question 1, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	12	2	4	18
Health Sciences	17	5	8	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	12	4	3	19
Professions	5		2	7
Sciences	20	2	10	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>106</b>

Just over one quarter (27, 25.5%) of survey respondents stated that they had encountered intellectual property issues that had affected their study, with a smaller number (13, 12.3%) uncertain whether they had. The majority (66, 62.3%) had not encountered any issues. Students in the Faculty of the Sciences (10, 31.3%) and the Health Sciences (8, 26.7%) were more likely than students enrolled in other Faculties to have had intellectual property issues.

#### 3.2 Question 2: *Are you involved in a group collaboration project?*

Table 6: Responses to question 2, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	13	5	18
Health Sciences	20	10	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	17	2	19
Professions	3	4	7
Sciences	11	21	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>106</b>

Nearly forty percent (42, 39.6%) of survey respondents stated that they were part of a group collaboration project. A majority of students enrolled in the Faculty of the Sciences (21, 65.6%) answered the question in the affirmative. A similar percentage of students in the Health Sciences (10, 33.3%) and the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (5, 27.7%) were part of a group project. The majority of students enrolled in the Faculty of the Professions (4, 57.1%) were also part of group projects; however, the large number of group assignments in the

Adelaide Graduate School of Business, in which all students must enrol, can explain this. Only a small number (2, 10.5%) of survey respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences were involved in group projects.

### 3.3 Question 3: *Does your research have commercialisation potential?*

Table 7: Responses to question 3, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	4	5	9	18
Health Sciences	12	9	9	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	10	5	4	19
Professions	4	2	1	7
Sciences	9	9	14	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>106</b>

Nearly thirty-five percent (37, 34.9%) of survey respondents stated that their research has commercialisation potential. A majority of students in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (9, 50%) responded in the affirmative, with a further group (4, 25%) unsure about the commercialisation possibility of their work. Over forty percent of survey respondents enrolled in the Sciences saw commercialisation potential for their research (14, 43.8%), with nearly thirty percent uncertain about the commercialisation potential that their research had (9, 28.1%). Thirty percent (nine respondents) in the Health Sciences saw commercialisation possibilities for their research, with the same number uncertain about it.

Table 8: Responses to question 3, sub-divided into group collaboration status

Faculty	Not involved in a group project			Subtotal	Involved in a Group Project			Subtotal	Grand Total
	No	Unsure	Yes		No	Unsure	Yes		
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	3	3	7	13	1	2	2	5	18
Health Sciences	9	7	4	20	3	2	5	10	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	10	4	3	17		1	1	2	19
Professions	1	1	1	3	3	1		4	7
Sciences	5	3	3	11	4	6	11	21	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>106</b>

Comparing the commercialisation potential of respondents' research, according to whether they are involved in a group collaboration project reveals a different picture. Of respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical

Sciences, a larger proportion of students working alone saw commercialisation potential for their research (7, 53.8%) than those involved in group projects (2, 40%). In contrast, survey respondents in the Faculty of the Sciences were more likely to state that their research had commercialisation potential if they were part of a group project (11, 52.4%) than if they were working alone (3, 27.3%). A similar trend exists in respondents from the Health Sciences, with half of respondents working in groups seeing potential for commercialisation (5, 50%), but only a fifth of respondents working alone saw any potential (4, 20%).

### 3.4 Question 4: *If yes, at what stage was this potential identified?*

Table 9: Responses to question 4, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	Prior	<3mths	<1yr	1<2yrs	>2yrs	NA	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	8		1				9
Health Sciences	3	3			2	1	9
Humanities & Social Sciences	3	1					4
Professions	1						1
Sciences	9	1		1	3		14
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>

Thirty-seven respondents (34.9%) of the survey answered question 3 in the affirmative; these students' responses to question 4 are listed in the above table. Almost all respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences stated that the commercialisation potential of their research was identified prior to their commencement (8, 88.9%), with one respondent's research identified as having commercialisation potential within the first year of their enrolment (11.1%). Only one third of respondents enrolled in the Health Sciences had the commercialisation potential of their research identified prior to their commencement (3, 33.3%), with the same number stating that it had been identified within three months, with two respondents stating that it took over two years to be identified (22.2%). A majority of respondents enrolled in the Sciences (9, 64.3%) stated that the commercialisation potential of their research had been identified prior to their commencement, with three stating that it took more than two years to be identified (21.4%).

### 3.5 Question 5: *Have the issues been resolved?*

Table 10: Responses to question 5, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	4		3	7
Health Sciences	1	3	6	10
Humanities & Social Sciences	1	4		5
Professions				
Sciences	3	8	6	17
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>39</b>

39 respondents answered this question – one more than had stated that they had encountered intellectual property issues or were uncertain about whether they had (question 1). Of the respondents, who answered this question, 15 (38.5%) stated that the issues had been resolved, the same number were unsure whether they had been, and 9 (23.1%) stated that the issues had not been resolved. The largest percentage of respondents, who stated that the issues had been resolved were from the Faculty of Health Sciences (6, 60%), with a substantially lower proportion of students from the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (3, 42.9%) and the Sciences (6, 35.3%) reporting that the issues had been resolved. However, over half (4, 57.1%) of respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences stated that the issues that they had encountered had not been resolved.

### 3.6 Question 6: *How useful has your supervisor(s) been in assisting you with intellectual property issues?*

Table 11: Responses to question 6, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Grand Total	Mean
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences		2	1		5		5	3		2	18	6.17
Health Sciences	6		1	1	10	1	3	5	1	2	30	5.30
Humanities & Social Sciences	10		1	1	2	3	1	1			19	3.16
Professions	4					2	1				7	3.29
Sciences	6		2	2	5	4	3	6	1	3	32	5.53
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>5.00</b>

Respondents in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences rated the assistance that they had received from their supervisor(s) regarding IP the highest of the means of each Faculty (6.17), with supervisors in the Faculty of the

Sciences achieving almost as much praise (mean 5.53). Respondents in the Health Sciences rated their supervisors' assistance almost as highly (mean 5.30). Respondents in the Faculties of the Professions and the Humanities and Social Sciences did not rate the assistance that they had received very highly (means of 3.29 and 3.16 respectively), with most respondents rating the level of assistance below average (less than 5 on the scale).

**3.7 Question 7: *How useful has your Department/School been in assisting you with intellectual property issues?***

*Table 12: Responses to question 7, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Grand Total	Mean
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	1	3	1		7	1	2	1		2	18	5.17
Health Sciences	12	4	1		4	1	3	2	3		30	3.77
Humanities & Social Sciences	10	1	1	1	2	1		2	1		19	3.16
Professions	5						1	1			7	2.86
Sciences	13		1	1	9	2	1	4		1	32	3.94
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>3.89</b>

Survey respondents in all Faculties felt that their Schools had not been as useful as their supervisors had been in assisting with intellectual property issues. The Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences was again rated by respondents as being the most useful (mean 5.17), with the Sciences ranked second (mean 3.94), although over a third of respondents from this Faculty felt that it had been not at all useful (13, 40.6%) in assisting. A similar percentage of respondents in the Health Sciences held similar views about the assistance that their Faculty has rendered them (12, 40%), with even higher percentages in the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences (10, 52.6%) and the Professions (5, 71.4%) holding similar views.

### 3.8 Question 8: Have you signed an IP agreement?

Table 13: Responses to question 8, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	12	2	4	18
Health Sciences	17	3	10	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	12	5	2	19
Professions	6	1		7
Sciences	20	4	8	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>

Almost a quarter of survey respondents (24, 22.6%) stated that they had signed an IP agreement, with a further group (15, 14.1%) unsure as to whether they had. Respondents in the Faculty of Health Sciences were more likely to have signed an agreement (10, 33.3%) than respondents in the Faculty of the Sciences (8, 25%) or Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (4, 22.2%). Only two students (10.5%) in the Humanities and Social Sciences had signed an agreement, and not a single respondent in the Faculty of the Professions had.

Table 14: Responses to question 8, sub-divided according to level of assistance from respondent's supervisor(s)

Faculty	IP agreement not signed										Total	Unsure if IP agreement signed										Total	IP agreement signed										Total	Grand Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences		2	1		4		3	1		1	12											1	1	2				1		1	1	4	18	
Health Sciences	3		1		4	1	3	3	1	1	17				1	1				1		3	3	3				5		1		10	30	
Humanities & Social Sciences	7		1			2	1	1			12	2			1	1	1					5	1	1				1				2	19	
Professions	3					2	1				6	1										1		1								1	7	
Sciences	5		1		3	4	1	4	1	1	20			1	1	1				1		4	1	4			1	1	2	1		8	32	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>				
	<b>Mean</b>										<b>4.87</b>											<b>4.67</b>											<b>5.58</b>	<b>5.00</b>

In cases, in which an IP agreement was signed, respondents rated the assistance that they had received from their supervisors higher (24, mean 5.58) than cases, where no IP agreement had been signed (67, mean 4.87), or when the respondent was uncertain (15, mean 4.67).

Table 15: Responses to question 8, sub-divided according to level of assistance from respondent's Department/School

Faculty	IP agreement not signed										Total	Unsure if IP agreement signed										Total	IP agreement signed										Total	Grand Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences		3	1		5	1	1			1	12					1		1					2	1				1			1		1	4	18
Health Sciences	6	1	1		1	1	3	1	3		17	1	2										3	5	1			3			1			10	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	7	1				1		2	1		12	2		1	1	1							5	1				1						2	19
Professions	4						1	1			6	1											1												7
Sciences	7		1	1	7	1	0	2		1	20	2				1			1				4	4				1	1	1	1			8	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>		
<b>Mean</b>											<b>4.10</b>											<b>3.13</b>											<b>3.75</b>	<b>3.89</b>	

In terms of receiving assistance from their Department/School, respondents who had not signed an IP agreement were more likely (67, mean 4.10) to have received a higher level of assistance than those, who had signed an agreement (24, mean 3.75), or than those, who were uncertain whether they had signed (15, mean 3.13).

### 3.9 Question 9: Has your supervisor/Department/School placed pressure on you to sign an IP agreement?

Table 16: Responses to question 9, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	14		4	18
Health Sciences	27	2	1	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	17	2		19
Professions	7			7
Sciences	26	2	4	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>106</b>

A small proportion of students (9, 8.5%) reported having been subjected to pressure to sign an IP agreement. Four (22.2%) survey respondents in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences stated that they had had pressure placed on them; the same number (12.5%) in the Faculty of the Sciences answered the question in the affirmative, with a further two (6.3%) unsure. A single respondent (3.3%) in the Health Sciences stated that s/he had had pressure placed on them, with a further two (6.7%) unsure.

Table 17: Responses to question 9, sub-divided according to whether an IP agreement has been signed

Faculty	IP agreement not signed				Unsure if IP agreement signed				IP agreement signed				Signed subtotal	Grand Total
	No pressure	Unsure	Pressure	Not signed subtotal	No pressure	Unsure	Pressure	Unsure subtotal	No pressure	Unsure	Pressure	Unsure subtotal		
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	11		1	12	2			2	1		3	4	18	
Health Sciences	16	1		17	2	1		3	9		1	10	30	
Humanities & Social Sciences	11	1		12	4	1		5	2			2	19	
Professions	6			6	1			1					7	
Sciences	18		2	20	3	1		4	5	1	2	8	32	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>	

Of the survey respondents, who had signed an IP agreement, one quarter (6, 25%) stated that they had been placed under pressure to sign, whereas nearly three-quarters (17, 70.8%) were not, and one respondent (4.2%) was unsure. Respondents, who had not signed an IP agreement, were far less likely to have been subjected to pressure to sign (3, 4.5%).

### 3.10 Question 10: *If yes, how was this pressure placed on you?*

For this question, survey respondents were given the opportunity to enter a brief comment about how the pressure was placed on them. Eleven respondents (10.4%) provided a statement, although only nine respondents answered question 9 in the affirmative. These statements were:

- “[..] scholarship contingent on signing IP agreement”;
- “[Made to feel] uncomfortable”;
- “Agreement needed to be in place before enrollement [sic]”;
- “I was not allowed to commence the project unless I agreed to sign the IP agreement”;
- “I was sent letters until I had signed a project participation agreement”;
- “[..] pressure from project sponsor”;
- “[T]old it was mandatory”;
- “[T]hrough meetings and memos”;
- “[N]eed to sign in order to do the project”;
- “All parties met to discuss implications before I signed”;
- “Told to sign it by [my] department”.

**3.11 Question 11: Adelaide Research and Innovation (ARI) is an organisation that deals with intellectual property at the University of Adelaide. ARI deals with:**

Survey respondents were given a list of four items, with which ARI may or may not deal, as well as a fifth option to type in any other areas that they felt that ARI handled. Respondents could select as many or as few as they thought were correct.

*Table 18: Responses to question 11, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	IP Commercialisation	Plagiarism	IP Management	Legal assistance for IP issues	Other issues	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	16	5	13	10	2	18
Health Sciences	26	17	23	20		30
Humanities & Social Sciences	16	12	15	11		19
Professions	4	4	5	4		7
Sciences	26	18	26	23	3	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>%age of total respondents</b>	<b>83.0%</b>	<b>52.8%</b>	<b>77.4%</b>	<b>64.2%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	

A majority of survey respondents (88, 83.0%) correctly stated that ARI deals with IP commercialisation, with similar levels of correct answers from each Faculty. Most respondents also correctly identified that ARI also deals with IP management (82, 77.4%), again with similar levels of correct responses from each Faculty. However, the majority of survey respondents incorrectly stated that ARI deals with plagiarism issues, with the highest percentage so claiming in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (12, 63.2%). An even larger proportion of survey respondents incorrectly stated that ARI provides legal assistance to students with IP issues, with the highest percentage in the Faculty of the Sciences (23, 71.8%). Five respondents stated that ARI dealt with other issues. These were:

- “Disbursing royalties”;
- “PVR”( Plant Variety Rights);
- “Contracts”;
- “Protection of IP rights”;
- “Stonewalling negotiations”.

Eight respondents (7.5%) did not select any of the available options.

### 3.12 Question 12: *Have you dealt with ARI?*

Table 19: Responses to question 12, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	14	1	3	18
Health Sciences	24	2	4	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	17	1	1	19
Professions	7			7
Sciences	21	4	7	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>106</b>

The majority of survey respondents (83, 78.3%) stated that they had not dealt with ARI, with a further group (8, 7.5%) uncertain whether they had. Only fifteen respondents (14.2%) had dealt with ARI. Almost half of this group of respondents (7, 46.7%) were enrolled in the Faculty of the Sciences.

A higher percentage of respondents in the Sciences had had dealings with ARI (7, 21.9%) than respondents in the Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (3, 16.7%) or those in the Health Sciences (4, 13.3%). Almost all respondents in the Humanities and Social Sciences had not had, or were uncertain about whether they had, contact with ARI (1, 5.3%). Nobody from the Professions had had contact with ARI.

### 3.13 Question 13: *If you have dealt with ARI, how would you rate your experience?* (a) *Accessibility*

Table 20: Responses to question 13a, sorted by Faculty of enrolment

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Grand Total	Mean
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences			1		1			1			3	5.33
Health Sciences			1		1	1	1				4	5.25
Humanities & Social Sciences					1						1	5.00
Professions												
Sciences	1		2	1	1		2				7	4.29
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>15</b>	<b>4.80</b>

Due to low number of respondents, who had had dealings with ARI, the statistical significance of the responses to the three parts of question 13 is low. From the responses to part (a), it is apparent that the experiences of individual students vary considerably when dealing with ARI, with the majority (10, 66.7%) rating the

accessibility of ARI as average (five on the scale) or lower. This could be accounted for by the fact that ARI prefers to deal with supervisors in the first instance, only including students at a later stage in negotiations.

***(b) Level of assistance***

*Table 21: Responses to question 13b, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Grand Total	Mean
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences			1		1			1			3	5.33
Health Sciences					1	1	2				4	6.25
Humanities & Social Sciences												
Professions												
Sciences		2		2			2			1	7	5.14
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5.50</b>

Survey respondents rated the level of assistance that ARI provides higher than its accessibility, with responses split evenly between the 1-5 and 6-10 sides of the scale. Again, the responses suggest the individual experiences vary considerably.

***(c) Satisfaction with negotiations***

*Table 22: Responses to question 13c, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Grand Total	Mean
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences			1		1						2	4.00
Health Sciences				1	1	1	1				4	5.50
Humanities & Social Sciences						1					1	6.00
Professions												
Sciences	2			1			2	2			7	5.14
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>14</b>	<b>5.14</b>

Survey responses were again split evenly between the 1-5 and 6-10 sides of the scale. Once more, the responses suggest the individual experiences vary considerably.

**3.14 Question 14: The University has a contract called a “Student Project Participation Agreement” (SPPA), which is designed to assist with issues such as those surveyed here. Are all students required to sign an SPPA when they commence their study?**

*Table 23: Responses to question 14, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	No	NA	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	9		7	2	18
Health Sciences	15	1	9	5	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	7		9	3	19
Professions	2		5		7
Sciences	13		13	6	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>106</b>

A large minority of survey respondents (46, 43.4%) correctly stated that the University does not require that students sign an SPPA when they commence their study. However, almost as many students (43, 40.6%) were unsure as to whether this is the case – presumably despite their own experiences (only 39 indicated that they had signed an IP agreement, or were uncertain whether they had). A group of respondents (16, 15.1%) thought that signing an SPPA is compulsory. Respondents in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences were more likely to know that they do not have to sign an SPPA if they did not wish (9, 50%), than respondents in the Health Sciences (15, 50%) were. The knowledge of respondents in the Sciences (13, 40.6%) and the Humanities and Social Sciences (7, 36.8%) was similar.

*Table 24: Responses to question 14, sub-divided into whether respondent has signed an IP agreement*

Faculty	IP agreement not signed				Unsure whether IP agreement signed				IP agreement signed				Signed total	Grand Total
	No	Unsure	Yes	Not signed total	No	Unsure	Yes	Unsure total	No	NA	Unsure	Yes		
Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences	6	5	1	12		1	1	2	3		1		4	18
Health Sciences	11	3	3	17	1	2		3	3	1	4	2	10	30
Humanities & Social Sciences	7	5		12		4	1	5				2	2	19
Professions	2	4		6		1		1						7
Sciences	9	7	4	20		4		4	4		2	2	8	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>

Six respondents of those, who had signed an IP agreement (25%), stated that all students are required to sign such an agreement. The remainder of those, who had signed, were either unsure (7, 29.2%) or stated that all students are not required to sign an SPPA (10, 41.7%). Conversely, eight students, who had not signed an IP agreement (11.9%), stated that the University required all students to sign such a document, and two students, who were unsure whether they had signed an IP agreement (13.3%), that thought signing an SPPA was required by the University.

### 3.15 Question 15: *Can you negotiate the terms of an SPPA with ARI?*

*Table 25: Responses to question 15, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	No	NA	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
<i>Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences</i>	1		13	4	18
<i>Health Sciences</i>	4	1	15	10	30
<i>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</i>	1		17	1	19
<i>Professions</i>	1		6		7
<i>Sciences</i>	4		21	7	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>106</b>

Survey respondents were mostly unaware as to whether it is possible to negotiate the terms of an SPPA with ARI (72, 67.9%). Around one-fifth of respondents correctly stated that it is possible to negotiate the terms (22, 20.8%), whereas half this number thought that it is not possible (11, 10.4%). Respondents enrolled in the Faculty of Health Sciences were far more likely to know that negotiation about the terms of an SPPA is possible (10, 33.3%) than those from the other Faculties were. Most students from the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences (13, 72.2%) did not know whether it is possible to negotiate, with almost as high a percentage of students in the Sciences (21, 65.6%), and almost all students in the Humanities and Social Sciences (17, 89.5%) and the Professions (6, 85.7%) not knowing.

*Table 26: Responses to question 15, sub-divided by whether the respondent had signed an IP agreement*

Faculty	IP agreement not signed				Unsure if IP agreement signed				IP agreement signed				Grand Total	
	No	Unsure	Yes	Subtotal	No	Unsure	Yes	Subtotal	No	N/A	Unsure	Yes		Subtotal
<i>Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences</i>	1	8	3	12		2		2			3	1	4	18
<i>Health Sciences</i>	3	7	7	17		3		3	1	1	5	3	10	30
<i>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</i>	1	10	1	12		5		5			2		2	19
<i>Professions</i>	1	5		6		1		1						7
<i>Sciences</i>	2	12	6	20		4		4	2		5	1	8	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>67</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>106</b>

Of the survey respondents, who had signed an IP agreement, only five (20.8%) stated correctly that it is possible to negotiate the terms of an SPPA. A small proportion of respondents, who had signed an IP agreement (3, 12.5%), stated that it is not possible to negotiate the terms of an SPPA, and an additional group (15, 62.5%) were unsure about the matter. Of the respondents, who had not signed an IP agreement, just over a quarter (17, 25.4%) stated correctly that it is possible to negotiate the terms of an SPPA, with eight (11.9%) thought that it is not possible, and most (42, 62.7%) uncertain about the issue. None of the respondents, who were unsure as to whether they had signed an IP agreement, knew whether it is possible to negotiate terms.

**3.16 Question 16: *If you do not sign an SPPA, and your project has commercialisation potential, what happens?***

*Table 27: Responses to question 16, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	Assists with commercialisation	Legal problems if money earned	No	Negotiation	Project halted	Sign one later	Student forced to sign	Student gets 50% of profit and credit	Student given new project	Student loses rights to IP	Student loses rights to royalties	Student owns IP	Unsure	Grand Total
<i>Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences</i>					1					1	1	3	13	19
<i>Health Sciences</i>				1	1	1		1		4		1	21	30
<i>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</i>			1							1		1	16	19
<i>Professions</i>													7	7
<i>Sciences</i>	1	1			1		2		2	5	2	2	18	34
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>109 (106)</b>

Survey respondents were required to suggest an answer to this question, rather than selecting from a pre-defined list of answers, with three responses suggesting answers that fell into more than one category, and were therefore placed into two categories. However, for the purposes of compiling the statistics, each individual was counted once. The vast majority of respondents (75, 70.8%) stated that they were unsure as to what happens if a student does not sign an SPPA, with the highest percentages being from the Faculties of the Professions (7, 100%) and the Humanities and Social Sciences (16, 84.2%). Respondents from the Sciences were least likely to state that

they were unsure (18, 56.3%). Seven respondents (6.6%) stated that the student owns the IP produced, if an SPPA is not signed, whereas eleven (10.4%) thought that the student loses the rights to the IP. Two respondents (1.9%) stated that the student is given a new project, a further three stated that the project is halted, and another three suggested that the student loses the right to royalties if an SPPA is not signed. Other responses were only suggested by individual students.

**3.17 Question 17: *Does the University provide legal advice for students to assist with IP negotiations***

*Table 28: Responses to question 17, sorted by Faculty of enrolment*

Faculty	No	Unsure	Yes	Grand Total
<i>Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences</i>	1	10	7	18
<i>Health Sciences</i>	2	10	18	30
<i>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</i>	2	11	6	19
<i>Professions</i>		6	1	7
<i>Sciences</i>	4	15	13	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>106</b>

Only a small proportion of survey respondents (9, 8.5%) stated correctly that the University does not provide legal advice for students to assist with IP negotiations. Over two-fifths (45, 42.5%) thought that the University did provide legal advice, and nearly half of all respondents (49.1%) were unsure about the issue. The level of knowledge varied little between respondents of different Faculties, with only a slightly better level shown by those enrolled in the Sciences (4, 12.5%) than those in all other Faculties. Respondents in the Health Sciences were most likely (18, 60%) to think that the University does provide legal assistance.

## ***4. Discussion***

### **4.1 Summary**

106 individuals (approximately 2.4% of the PGSA's total membership of 4393 students<sup>5</sup>) completed the survey. Given the nature of the survey, the majority of survey respondents were, as expected, from the Faculties of the Sciences and the Health Sciences, with the smallest group of respondents from the Faculty of the Professions. The Faculty of the Sciences enrolled students also had the highest rate of response to the survey. Similarly, it was expected that the majority of respondents would be enrolled in PhD programs, and would be enrolled full-time, which was confirmed by the survey responses in both instances. Almost half of survey respondents were in the first year of enrolment in their current course, which is a far higher response rate than for those enrolled for greater than one year. A consequence of the number of responses to the survey is that detailed analysis in some areas is not statistically significant. Whilst it would have been desirable to receive a greater number of responses, the response rate was nonetheless significant enough to suggest trends and to draw conclusions.

It is interesting to note that the PGSA's 2001 survey on departmental resources had a very similar rate of response, when analysed according to Faculty, as shown in Table 2 (p.7).<sup>6</sup> This suggests that the poor level of response from students in the Faculty of the Professions has little to do with the type of survey being conducted. Indeed, one would expect students in the Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences to have responded in greater numbers to the current survey than they did to the 2001 survey, given the topic of the current survey.

A significant number (27, 25.5%) of students stated that they had encountered intellectual property issues that have affected their study, with an additional group (13, 12.3%) uncertain about whether they had. The second response indicates an

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<sup>5</sup> Figure derived from the University's "2003 March Student Load Enrolment (persons) pivot table", available at <[http://www.adelaide.edu.au/opd/stats/student/enrolment\\_pivot2003Marchweb.xls](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/opd/stats/student/enrolment_pivot2003Marchweb.xls)>.

<sup>6</sup> *Report on the Postgraduate Students' Association's 2001 'Survey of Departmental Resources and Faculties* (Adelaide, PGSA: 2002): 12. Since the survey was conducted, the Faculties of Agriculture & Natural Resources and Science have been merged to form the Faculty of the Sciences.

issue, namely that there exists a lack of knowledge about the intellectual property rights of postgraduate students. Of the respondents, who provided an answer as to whether the issues had been resolved, a large group (15, 38.5%) stated that the issues had been resolved, with the same number uncertain about whether they had. Such responses also suggest a lack of knowledge about the IP rights. Of more concern are the respondents (9, 23.1%), who stated that the issues had not yet been resolved.

In terms of the level of assistance that survey respondents had received from University employees and academic divisions, there is a clear indication that respondents felt that supervisors had provided a higher level of assistance than did their Department/School, with a marked difference between science/engineering areas and humanities/professional areas. This is of no surprise, as IP issues are more likely to be encountered in such area. However, the survey responses suggest that the level of assistance provided is not consistent across the Schools in each Faculty, as there exists large variations in the assessments provided. Responses also suggest that when an IP agreement has been signed by survey respondents, they felt that their supervisor had provided a higher level of assistance than other respondents had received who had not signed an agreement. However, in contrast, survey respondents rated the level of assistance that their Department/School of enrolment had provided as being lower if they had signed an agreement than if they had not. Survey respondents, who were uncertain as to whether they had signed an IP agreement, rated the level of assistance that their supervisors and Department/School had provided lower than other respondents. This is not surprising, given that they were uncertain as to whether they had even signed an IP agreement.

Whilst most survey respondents had not had pressure placed on them to sign an IP agreement, a concerning number (9, 8.5%) had. Only a small proportion of these students had resisted the pressure to sign an agreement. In a few cases, the responses provided about the type of pressure placed suggest that the respondents had been misled about the non-compulsory nature of signing an IP agreement.

Most survey respondents (83, 78.3%) had not dealt with ARI. The highest percentage of those who had was enrolled in the Faculty of the Sciences. Seven respondents from this Faculty stated that they had dealt with ARI – almost as many as had stated that

they had signed an IP agreement. Of the respondents from the other Faculties, who had signed an IP agreement, around half from each Faculty had dealt with ARI. The number of dealings with ARI and the assistance received from supervisors and Departments/Schools regarding IP issues correlates to the level of knowledge that survey respondents displayed about the areas, with which ARI deals. Survey respondents from the Faculty of the Sciences generally possess a better knowledge of the operations of ARI than their colleagues in other Faculties do. In terms of the level of assistance that respondents felt that they had received from ARI, the low number of contacts prevents any conclusions about this issue from being drawn; however, the responses received suggest that the experience varies.

In terms of the general knowledge that survey respondents have about IP issues and contracts, responses suggest that the level of knowledge is low. Whilst almost half of survey respondents (46, 43.4%) knew that it is not compulsory to sign an IP agreement, almost as many (43, 40.6%) did not know. Of particular concern were the six students, who thought that signing an IP agreement was compulsory, and had themselves signed one. Two respondents of this group are enrolled in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and with one other respondent from this Faculty, who was unsure whether s/he had signed an IP agreement, were the only individuals from the Faculty, who thought that all students had to sign contracts. However, there seems to have been some confusion caused by the wording of the questionnaire, in that the terms 'IP agreement' and 'SPPA' were used to describe the same type of contract. This confusion is apparent in the responses to question 14, in that eight (7.5%) thought that signing an SPPA is compulsory, even though they themselves had not signed any form of IP agreement.

A similar level of ignorance was demonstrated about whether the terms of IP agreements can be negotiated and the consequences of not signing such an agreement when commercialisation potential exists. As most survey respondents had not signed an IP agreement, it is not surprising that the majority did not know about either of these areas. Only a small number of respondents, who had signed IP agreements, knew that it is possible to negotiate the terms of an agreement, with most uncertain about the issue, and a few believing that it is not possible to negotiate. Respondents, who had not signed IP agreements, displayed a similar lack of knowledge.

Also of concern is the belief that the University provides students with legal advice to assist with IP negotiations. Only a small fraction stated correctly that the University does not provide assistance in this matter, with no evidence that respondents from a particular Faculty had a better knowledge of the topic than individuals from any other Faculty had. Whilst nearly half of survey respondents admitted that they did not know whether the provided legal advice for students, almost as many thought that it did.

## **4.2 Suggested Action**

The responses received to this survey suggest that the level of knowledge about intellectual property issues that postgraduate students at the University of Adelaide have is not very high. Whilst only a fraction of students will encounter issues that will impact heavily on their research, a larger number will be affected in some way – and perhaps without even realising what their rights are. The PGSA is concerned about this matter, and seeks to educate its members about their rights; however, this cannot be achieved by the PGSA alone, and the organisation wishes to work in conjunction with the University to address the issues raised by the survey.

As a first step in educating postgraduate students about IP issues, the PGSA has produced a pamphlet that addresses many of the areas covered by the survey. The pamphlet was first available on June 27, 2003, and has been advertised only once, as well as given to all new research postgraduate students at the second semester inductions. It has been downloaded from the PGSA web site at a steady rate since this time, albeit less frequently than the PGSA would like.<sup>7</sup> Suggested future plans include the staging of information seminars that address specific areas such as the legal considerations of IP commercialisation, IP protection, and IP and joint projects. Such seminars could be staged in conjunction with the University or independently by the PGSA.

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<sup>7</sup> The pamphlet is available is available at  
<<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/pgsa/publications/booklets/ippamphlet.pdf>>.

### 4.3 Improvements to the Survey

The electronic format of the survey works well, as not only does it allow individuals to complete it with a minimum of fuss, as they do not need to print a copy of it or pick one up from the PGSA office, and then return it. Furthermore, the electronic responses can be entered quickly and easily entered into a spreadsheet for analysis using pivot tables. The responses received to the survey indicate that the questions were, on the whole, well formulated; however, three specific areas need improvement in future surveys on this issue. Firstly, it is possible that some survey respondents did not realise that an IP agreement is the same as an SPPA. Whilst this is in itself revealing, there exists the possibility that confusion created by this issue affected the responses to question 14 – particularly as a small number of students, who stated that they had not signed an IP agreement thought that all students are required to sign an SPPA. Secondly, the number of responses to question 13 means that no statistical significance can be drawn from the responses received. This issue could be addressed by providing only one question, rather than the three parts offered in the current study; however, there would be an associated loss of detailed knowledge with any such change. A higher number of responses would be desirable, but cannot be predicted. Thirdly, question 10 may benefit from having a list of options provided, rather than allowing respondents to type in a response.

The response rate to the survey was pleasing; however, in future it would be desirable to maximise the publicity of the survey. The current survey was publicised in emails to all postgraduate students and a link was placed on the main page of the PGSA web site. Other methods of promotion were not used. In future, promotion in the following media could be used:

- *The ‘Clever Country’ Journal*, the PGSA’s quarterly newsletter;
- The Adelaide University Union’s “Cloisterphobia” web page;
- The Adelaide Graduate Centre’s newsletter;
- *The Adelaidean*;
- *On Dit*;
- “Inside Adelaide”.

## Appendix A: Copy of Survey



[PGSA Home](#)

### *Intellectual Property Survey*

[About the PGSA](#)

The PGSA is currently preparing a submission on intellectual property and its commercialisation, in regard to the effect the issue as on postgraduate study. In recent months, the PGSA has dealt with an increasing number of queries and complaints about issues involving intellectual property, and is concerned that they are not isolated incidents. The intention is to submit the completed report to Professor Neville Marsh, Dean of the Adelaide Graduate Centre.

[News](#)

[Postgraduate Rights](#)

Intellectual property is concerned with protecting applications of ideas, information and creative output that are of commercial value. It includes copyright, trade marks, industrial designs, patents, layout designs of integrated circuits, and trade secrets. Copyright is broadly defined as original authorship of written material or software, music or artwork. It is the form of intellectual property of most relevance to postgraduate and honours students. For example, you own the copyright in your thesis.

[Academic Services](#)

[Welfare Services](#)

[PGSA Publications](#)

Other activities that may lead to the generation of copyright include the composition of a piece of music, writing computer programs, and designing a questionnaire. As the owner of a copyright work you have the right to bring an action against a person who infringes or breaches your copyright. Other forms of IP are generally the result of inventions or scientific discoveries and are more commonly protected through patents or trade marks.

[PGSA Council](#)

[PGSA Events](#)

Regardless of whether you have experienced intellectual property-related issues during the course of your study, we would appreciate if you would spend a few minutes filling out the survey below. In other words, even if you have had no problems, your response is nonetheless valuable.

[PG Coursework Quality List](#)

As an incentive, the PGSA is offering the chance to enter a draw for a meal, up to the value of \$50, at Sagarmatha Restaurant at Stepney for people who fill in the survey. If you do not wish to enter the draw, there is no need to provide your name. Your identity will be used **ONLY** for the prize draw, and all survey responses will be separated from this section to preserve anonymity.

[Links](#)

[Contact us](#)

Please remember that if you DO experience problems with intellectual property ownership, you should contact the PGSA for assistance and advice. This can take the form of an informal chat through to representation and direct advocacy.

[Site Map](#)

Murray  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF ADELAIDE  
SA 5005  
AUSTRALIA

[Email](#)

Telephone: +61 8  
8303 4114  
or 8303 5898  
Facsimile:  
+61 8 8303 3507

Your name (optional):

Your email address (optional):

(required for entry to prize draw - all responses will be kept anonymous.  
If you do not wish to enter, leave the spaces blank)

---

School (Department):

(Note: all categories from this point on must be completed to submit the form)

Faculty:

Course (Phd, MA, etc.):

Research or Coursework degree?

Full-time or part-time enrolment?

Year of enrolment:

1. Have you encountered intellectual property issues that have affected your study?

2. Are you involved in a group collaboration project?

3. Does your research have commercialisation potential?

4. If yes, at what stage was this potential identified?

5. Have the issues been resolved?

6. How useful has your supervisor(s) been in assisting you with

intellectual property issues? (1 - very low; 10 - very high)?

7. How useful has your Department/School been in assisting you with intellectual property issues? (1 - very low; 10 - very high)?

8. Have you signed an IP agreement?

9. Has your supervisor/Department/School placed pressure on you to sign an IP agreement?

10. If yes, How was this pressure placed on you?

11. Adelaide Research and Innovation (ARI) is an organisation that deals with intellectual property at the University of Adelaide. ARI deals with (please select all items that you believe are correct):

- IP commercialisation
- Plagiarism & IP theft issues
- IP management
- Legal assistance for IP issues
- Other (please state)

12. Have you dealt with ARI?

13. If you have dealt with ARI, how would you rate your experience (1 - very low; 10 - very high)?

(a) Accessibility

(b) Level of assistance

(c) Satisfaction with negotiations

The University has a contract called a "Student Project Participation Agreement" (SPPA), which deals is designed to assist with issues such as those surveyed here.

14. Are all students required to sign an SPPA when they commence their study?

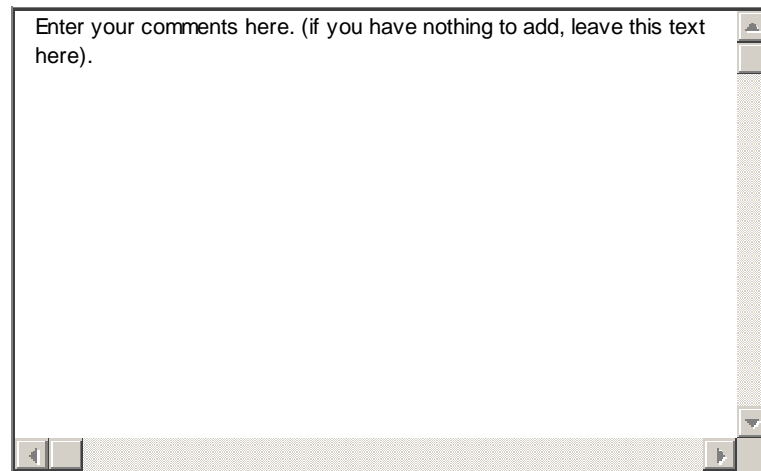
15. Can you negotiate the terms of an SPPA with ARI?

16. If you do not sign an SPPA, and your project has commercialisation potential, what happens?

17. Does the University provide legal advice for students to assist with IP negotiations?

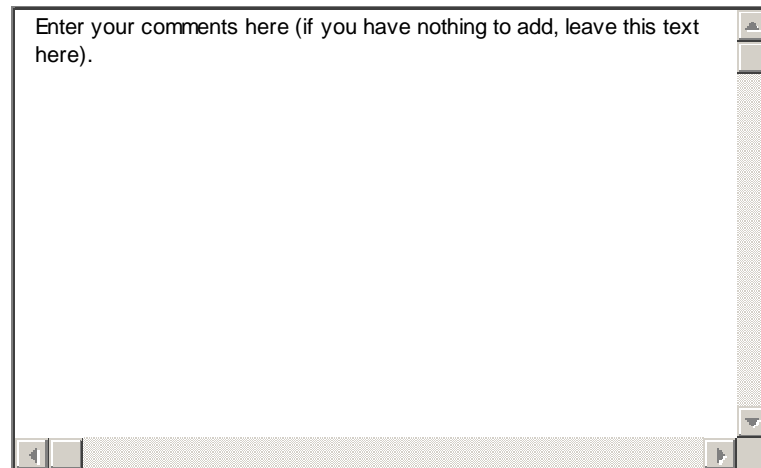
18. Please add any anecdotal evidence you wish in this box (any information provided will not be used in a way that could reveal your identity):

Enter your comments here. (if you have nothing to add, leave this text here).



19. Please add any other comments you wish in this box:

Enter your comments here (if you have nothing to add, leave this text here).

(Note: confirmation of the form's submission is presented as a list of values - you will not receive email notification)

We thank you for taking the time to filling out this survey.



## ***Appendix B: Comments of Survey Respondents***

As noted previously, all identifying information has been removed from the responses listed below, and obvious grammatical and typographical have been corrected.

“I’m not really sure about any of this - I remember going to a seminar held at the Levels campus a few years ago, and deciding that there were no IP issues, and therefore haven’t worried about it since. Also I may have signed IP forms mentioned above – can’t remember!”

“IP issues were with an outside organisation. Were handled within Department and by the funder.”

“I read on the uni web site that as a post-grad student I needed to sign one of these IP agreements with the university, and downloaded and filled in the form. It has not been submitted, mainly because none of us could work out exactly who was supposed to sign it, or where it was supposed to go. As it isn’t expected that my research project is going to generate any IP for commercial use I haven’t chased it up any further.”

“IP is unlikely to result from my work - it’s what a large engineering/defence industry company might consider funding as "blue-sky research". (My supervisor certainly discounts financial benefit.) On the other hand, the results of my research could conceivably be valuable in mechanical engineering. Also, the computer codes I write may be of some public value - especially if I were to place them in the Public Domain as freeware. In my enrolment documents I state that my "Core Research Program" (which I have defined in my Research Proposal) does not offer prospects for commercialisation. (Should anything change, it will be noted on my re-enrolment Form.)”

“I’m not sure if I’ve signed an IP agreement or not. I thought that the SPPA was in fact an IP agreement. Obviously this is as clear as mud. To their credit, the CRC which funds my scholarship is running a on-day workshop on IP and Commercialisation for all the PhD students it supports.”

“IP issues are something that I may have to face later on. To date, nothing has been discussed or resolved so I have no particular comments to make about the relationship between students and the Uni. I intend to talk about these issues with my supervisors when my research is a little further down the track.”

“Only started here 3-4 weeks ago so am still finding things out. The topic has not really come up in the context of my project. Anecdotally I have had some experience of IP issues as a friend in \*\*\* is still going thru legal manoeuvres to make a University there admit its neglect to protect \*\*\* work from a staff member who illegally tried to sell the product overseas...(since \*\*\* has tenure no-one wants to do anything to admit liability and the case drags on...\*\*\* years already!!!)”

“I have found ARI to be very slow in responding to enquiries. I understand they are under-staffed for the amount of work they are trying to take on. I find the wording of the SPPA extremely broad -- it makes no distinction between IP developed in conjunction of "the project" which is presumably in collaboration and IP, which may be developed independently. The SPPA does not take into account any background intellectual property. This is a significant flaw. There is no specification for what the student can reasonably expect ARI to do in exchange for assigning IP ownership. In my experience, it takes a long time for them to do anything, possibly longer than a student will spend at the University. The motivation to contact them is therefore minimised.”

“The question of IP does not arise with H&SS students. I believe that our faculty thinks that publishing does not denote that there is IP involved - simply that 'someone chose to publish your work so "lucky you"' rather than that this shows an economically viable product. Our department doesn't consider that my writing has any worth as a product:

- I joined an association that I found on the Internet
- I joined it to attend a conference
- I wrote an abstract and submitted it
- I had it accepted
- I booked myself for the conference/accommodation etc
- one of my supervisors asked me about getting into the conference (I see \*\*\* encourage other students so I expect \*\*\* doesn't think that my work is good enough!)

- I can't wait for my supervisors to suggest that I present at a conference as they don't seem to be interested but I am resourceful and will do it myself. It would be nice to have their support but it won't stop me succeeding!!!!
- contributing to a conference record will be my idea obviously
- I'll also find publishers!!!

... so you can see that I fail to see why this university should have any entitlements to anything that I may gain from my writing!!!! Perhaps if some of the \*\*\* staff had attended \*\*\*\*'s inaugural professorial lecture (\*\*\*\*) they might know that \*\*\* earn more money for Australia than most recognised economic commodity 'money spinners.’”

“I had an experience with the start of my PhD that could have been disastrous if it wasn't for the generosity of my supervisor and department head. I'm a postgrad with the department of \*\*\*, and now have a \*\*\* grant with the industrial sponsor. We have an agreement in place, but it took an awfully long time, during which I was supported by work from my supervisor. The history of it all is long and convoluted, and I'd have to go back and look at some of the documentation to make sure I get everything right, but I remember at the time being incredibly frustrated, thinking - OK, we've got an industrial partner that wants to set up a scholarship for me, we've got a department and two supervisors trying to arrange everything from their end, but everything is moving so slowly. 1) how am I going to survive! 2) I can see why industry can't see the advantage of working with universities when it is this hard! What I estimated would take a month ended up taking 7 or 8 (or more - I have a memory of starting talking in January and having the agreement by the December - by which time the \*\*\* grant had come in...)

I've looked back through my emails: We started talking (\*\*\*, \*\*\* and \*\*\* from \*\*\*) on the \*\*/1/2000 – that was my first meeting with \*\*\*. We had a meeting at \*\*\* soon after (within 2 weeks). We (\*\*\*, \*\*\* and me) wrote a \*\*\* grant application and that was submitted soon after April \*\*, 2000. The aim was to organise a short term scholarship that was to be paid for by \*\*\* until we found out whether the scholarship came in. This never got put in place as an intellectual property agreement took ages to put in place, and by this time I was working for my supervisors and the \*\*\* grant had come through. An agreement was formulated and sent to \*\*\*, but the first meeting between \*\*\*'s lawyer and Luminis was on the \*\*/12/2000, there was then some to-ing

and frowning and eventually the IP agreement was finalised in late March and I enrolled on \*\*\* 2001. I thought this was an excessive amount of time, and I would have been stuffed financially, I would have had to look for another job in the interim. Luckily \*\*\* offered me some work and I was able to survive. I wasn't too concerned with the delays after the first meeting with \*\*\* and Luminis, as I was busy with work for \*\*\*, but I was really concerned with the time taken to initiate the agreement - especially considering that the agreement was basically a pro-forma (I think). As I said before, I think this kind of experience is enough to put industry off working with the university, as it was very difficult and time consuming.”

“In general discussions I have had with supervisors in the past it seems they are more concerned about getting academic acknowledgement, ie being the FIRST to get the "discovery" published and the associated "fame" and recognition for the group (the group head)! Any commercial considerations are not given much import if it wasn't them that came up with it in the first place. Of course once it is published anyone (a commercial group) can financially benefit from the information with no remuneration(s) for the "inventor/discoverer"!”

“I am embarrassed to admit I am very unclear about intellectual property, THINK I signed something pertaining to it in 2001 and will ask my supervisors to refresh my memory about university requirements. I have been advised as I am writing my thesis that I have to be very careful about referencing such that anything even vaguely verbatim is preceded with Brock (1999) proposes that..., rather than followed by it, in case I have allegations of plagiarism ( albeit quite unintentional) levelled against me.”

“I understand that there is a service provided to deal with these issues. I would like to investigate commercialisation issues further as I progress with my project.”

“It is my understanding that this affects science students more than arts students...”

“I had difficulty with this issue at my previous university when I discovered that a former supervisor used my research (unacknowledged) in one of \*\*\* published papers and quoted it as \*\*\* own. I still think there is little you can do about it.”

“The IP seminar was great as an introduction. Held at about the right time of year for me too. I was wondering though if there could potentially be one directed more towards PVR and ag research areas etc.”

“ARI have been a major impediment, costly, slow, bureaucratic and cumbersome. I drafted my own IP/Copyright/Funding agreement with the 3rd party project sponsor to protect everyone’s interests of which ARI were eventually forced to sign after much 'handballing' and delay on their part (including processing of an invoice!). The SPAA states that the university shares the IP with the student. As a full fee paying student with no scholarship assistance, any IP I generate (and funding income for university projects!!) with commercial potential is my property. I am happy to publish much of this IP with the university's and supervisor's name on it however it will remain mine. That is why I refuse to sign an SPAA. ARI may still try to get me to sign an SPAA however they do not have a leg to stand on.”

“I believe IP issues are foremost when writing at any time. Hope this all makes a difference.”

“[I am] concerned about intellectual property as I am doing a thesis which potentially has applicability to \*\*\* and \*\*\* which are provided for them. And as I suppose that there will be results which Govt departments may be interested in, I want to ensure that any new info or results I find (and their corresponding discussion) remains my own property.”

“I think there are terms given in the enrolment papers which say the uni gets everything by default.”

“There has been vague talk regarding copyright issues in the course work but nothing useful really and I am not sure about the returns or royalties regarding another publication which will be out at the end of the year, not much info has been forthcoming.”

“Doesn't all research have commercialisation potential? eg. into a book or journal article - do they count as commercialisation?”

“Luminis/ARI appears to be very slow and fuggy in processing invoices for outside work when considering the percentage of sub-commercial returns that is taken out for their operation. (this may or not be true it is a perception I have).”

“I have an oral agreement with my supervisor on authorship issues and grant money allocation and this has worked for us extremely well. While large scale commercialisation issues may apply to a few students, funding issues apply to most of us. And while funding issues may appear peripheral to IP, they proceed (and are essential for) the creation of IP. Here is a story how postgrad funding happens in our discipline. A student repeatedly requested for expenses to come out a certain grant, while the Finance area took it out of another grant, which somehow was more profitably to the finances (but stuffed up all the budgeting of the student and created other problems). In our school the postgrad funding (both external and internal) is seen as an easy target for "creative accounting". Clear guidelines are required not only for the postgrad to justify the money spent, but also for the department to detail how funding was spend. We (including the academics) haven't seen any detailed account statement in years. Imagine if your bank refuses to send you an account statement, saying it's too busy or the software won't do it. I would love to see a general university policy on accountable financing as part of issues affecting postgrads that also run into IP issues. Thanks.”

“I haven't had any obvious IP issues thus far. However, if IP issues arose I have faith that they'd be handled professionally by my supervisor and department. I realise from this survey that there are many grey areas though in my understanding of IP policies at this university.”

“I have heard that they can put pressure on you to sign an agreement very early on, and I have also heard that one could be in place for your project without you knowing it already if you are in a larger group project. I have heard that as a student you own all of your IP, but they will suggest you sign a contract and then you go halves so to speak.”

“I have never, in my whole university life, come across or been made aware of such issues.”

“There were conflicting documents provided and the whole process took over 3 months to sign off then the process was repeated and drawn out.”

“ARI has stated they are there for the university. A request for a non-disclosure agreement was met with 'why would we protect the university from something which doesn't affect them'? This was an obvious request to assist a student, which eventually was provided after 'pushing' and provided "as an act of goodwill" - and I thought this was their job. Their attitude to IP negotiations was to push the 'sign a SPPA' point, work from the attitude of getting as much as possible for the university and seem to make little if any effort to help out a student - unless pushed.”