1. Encourage active reading
Undergraduates can be involved in research in two key ways: through their courses or via established research projects. Currently, 86% of King’s undergraduates report reading research publications as part of their coursework. Importantly, 90% of King’s students already report looking beyond their reading lists when studying. Course reading says a lot about a discipline; it maps a field, identifies primary and secondary texts, and models the academic process of attribution. Highlighting existing and new research through reading lists validates and transmits new knowledge. This gives students access to the contested theoretical spaces and the debates that characterise research expertise in action.

Put it into practice: Assign current and new research publications to reading lists alongside core texts. Encourage active reading; research shows there is a need to develop critical reading of research in practice contexts in particular. Develop your students’ ability to evaluation and critique research literature, epistemologies and methodologies. Ensure your students develop the skills to find relevant resources. Demonstrate search techniques for precise and targeted research (for example, using Google Advanced Search or Google Scholar with search operators).

Model and encourage in-depth engagement with subject literature; make sources visible to students, identifying particular journals, industry publications, research networks and societies, media, blogs and other key locations where new research is published and discussed. Highlight the importance of international and non-Western literatures, alongside interdisciplinary texts for gaining new perspectives at the developing edges of your field.

2. Discuss your research with students
Teaching and research share a symbiotic relationship in a learning community. One of the attractions of studying at a Russell Group university is the perceived benefit of being taught within a research-rich environment. A substantial 82% of students state that they have been exposed to academic staffs’ own research at King’s. Students respond strongly to staff research. At the undergraduate level, where staff research is integrated, students perceive courses to be current and intellectually exciting. This can be tempered with criticism of course curricula being distorted toward staff research and researchers being less available to students for contact hours; be aware of this tension to maximise benefits to students.

Put it into practice: Be explicit about when and where your own academic research and research from your Department and School is used in teaching. Outside the classroom make the most of modes of dissemination aimed at undergraduates to give visibility to research work taking place in the department.

3. Involve students in your research
At present, only 8% of undergraduate students have worked with academic staff on a research project over the course of their studies. A further 34% plan to do this during their time at King’s. Research experiences have a positive impact on academic performance, cognitive skills, intellectual growth and retention. They also give students a sense of their subject beyond the undergraduate lecture, lab and seminar. Research experience develops skills that cannot be gained in the classroom.

Put it into practice: Consult colleagues on the ways in which they may already engage undergraduates in their research activity to see how undergraduate researchers can be involved in your work. Write undergraduate student researcher funding into grant proposals. As you work through research problems, keep a running list of mini-projects/problems that might be suitable for undergraduates. When students become involved, have clear expectations, an activity timeline and a projected means of evaluation for their work. Plan and submit a project for a King’s Undergraduate Research Fellowship. This scheme supplies funds to support undergraduate work on academic projects. This annual programme begins this year, with over 80 undergraduate fellowships being undertaken in summer 2014.
4. Highlight co-curricular research opportunities

Some disciplines lend themselves more easily to research opportunities than others. As such, be sure your students apply for a King’s Undergraduate Research Fellowship. The Fellowship takes place over the summer break and gives students experience of academic research at King’s, developing skills, paths to postgraduate study and employability.

**Put it into practice:** Encourage students to apply for the King’s Undergraduate Research Fellowship, in addition to the Fellowship, successful applicants are enrolled onto the King’s Experience Research Award which is assessed and gives recognition for research activities. Help students to recognise the wealth of research opportunities available to them at King’s, both within the university and in the city at large.

5. Make the most of King’s

Survey results indicate that undergraduate students do not always make the most of the resources available to them at King’s in terms of attending talks and presentations which are not part of their curriculum. A third of King’s undergraduates have never attended talks or presentations outside of their timetabled studies.

**Put it into practice:** Encourage students to engage more broadly with talks and presentations taking place across the College. Highlight public events, visiting speakers and guest lecturers taking place within your department and the wider School. Invite undergraduates to research seminars and plenaries. Signpost event information on the King’s website to ensure students can manage their diaries appropriately.

6. Identify research-based activities in London

London is a global capital offering a vast array of sites, activities and experiences that will expand students’ learning in the arts, humanities and sciences. At present only 37% of students report participating in field-trips, off-site activities and visits relating to their studies.

**Put it into practice:** Highlight exhibitions, talks, debates, activities and other events that will enrich students’ experiences of their subject area and give visibility to wider research culture and activities, such as dissemination of research across different audiences.

7. Develop students’ research activity through conferences and publications

Where students are already doing their own research as part of, or alongside their course, encourage them to realise and develop their research in new ways. Conferences and publications are a central part of academic research activity that can be made visible to undergraduates.

**Put it into practice:** There are an increasing number of peer-review journals and conferences focussed on undergraduate research across disciplines. Encourage students to investigate these avenues and offer to mentor those wishing to write for academic publication and present papers or posters at conferences for the first time. Consider co-authoring a paper, poster or article with your students. If there are no journals or events for undergraduates in your field, build this capacity within the College to develop your students and raise the profile of undergraduate research within your department at a national and international level. Successful examples include the KCL Think Tank, the first student-led policy institute in London and its’ journal *The Spectrum*.

**Find out more**

- King’s Undergraduate Research Fellowships [www.kcl.ac.uk/ugrad-research-fellowship](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ugrad-research-fellowship)
- King’s Learning Institute student internships [www.kcl.ac.uk/ke-internship](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/ke-internship)
- KCL Think Tank [www.kingsthinktank.com](http://www.kingsthinktank.com)
- British Conference of Undergraduate Research [www.bcur.org](http://www.bcur.org)
- *Examples of London institutions with research-based programmes*
  - British Film Institute [www.bfi.org.uk](http://www.bfi.org.uk)
  - British Library [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)
  - National Theatre [www.nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk)
  - Royal Institution [www.rigb.org](http://www.rigb.org)
  - Royal Society [www.roylalsociety.org](http://www.roylalsociety.org)
  - Southbank Centre [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)
  - Tate galleries [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

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