

# Postgraduate Student Engagement with Professional Development

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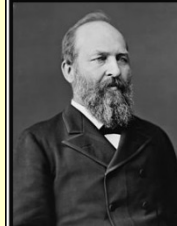
# Postgraduate Student Engagement with Professional Development

Why is this a necessary agenda?

How might we facilitate / this?

What do we deliver?

What have we achieved?



The ideal college is Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other.

(James A. Garfield)

# Postgraduate Student Engagement with Professional Development

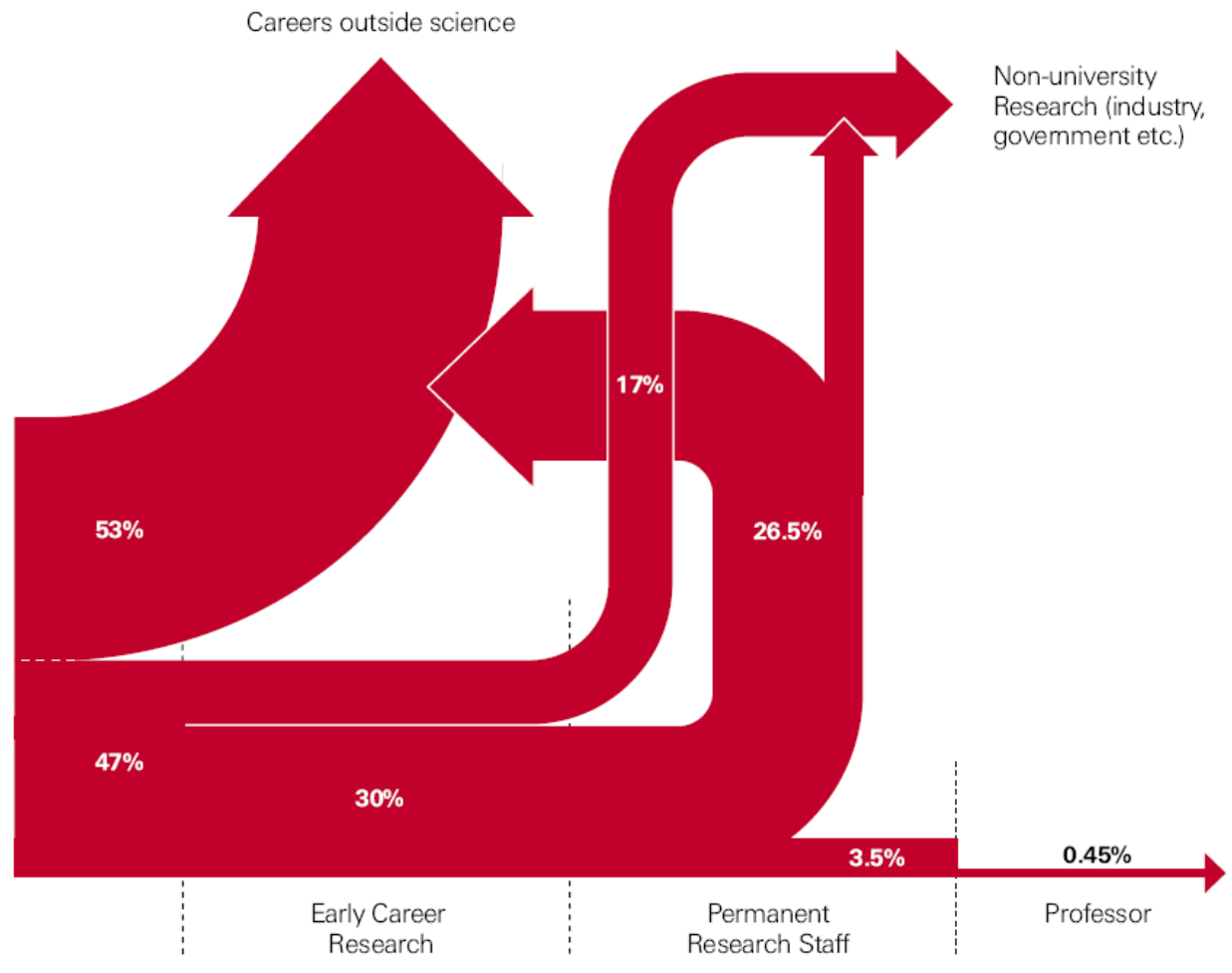
## The seven rules of engagement

- Contextualise the landscape*
- Make it relevant (needs-based)*
- Benefits must be clearly articulated*
- Case studies to support*
- Manageable agenda to avoid tensions*
- Supervisor “buy-in”*
- Use every opportunity to promote*



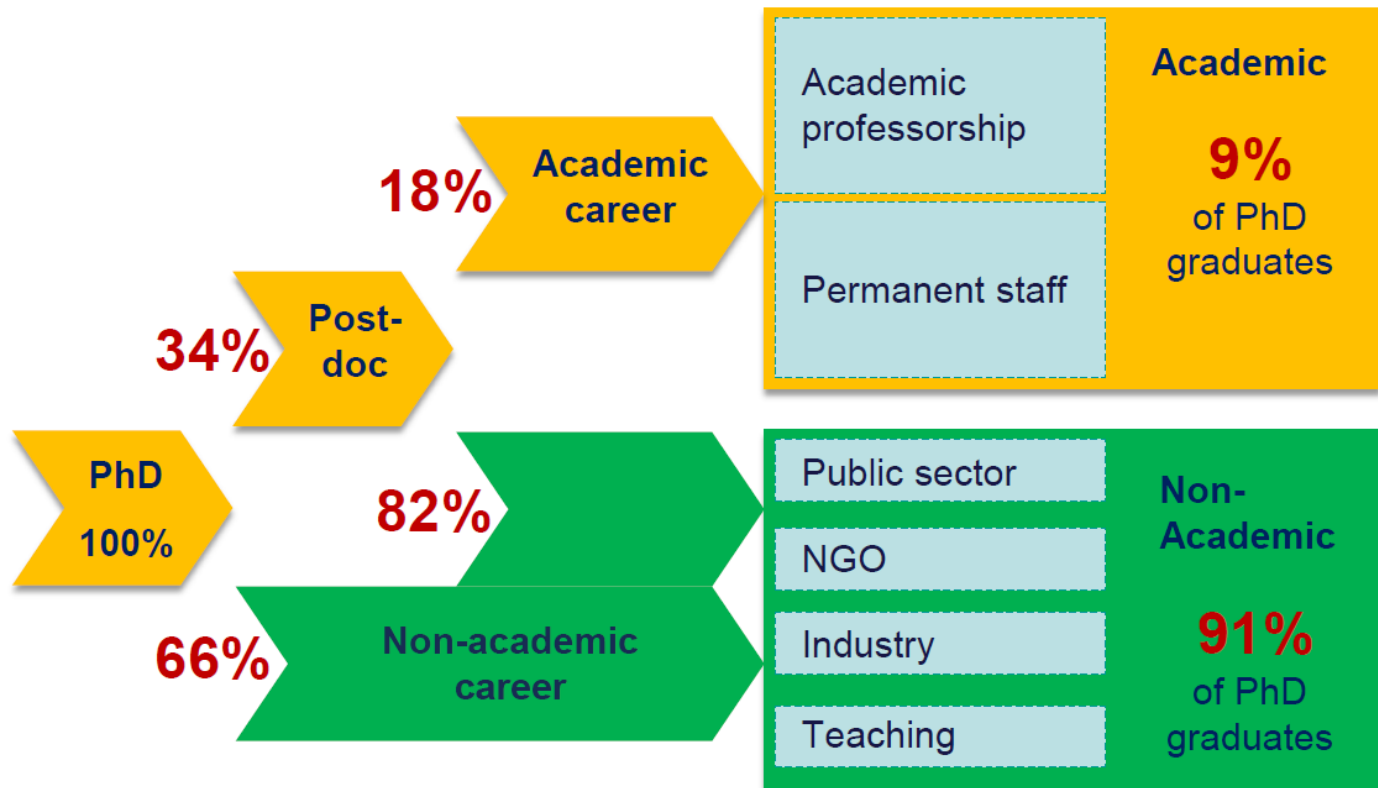
# Current academic employment landscape

Figure 1.6 Careers in and outside science



# Current academic employment landscape

The majority of doctorate holders leave academia





Standing out from the crowd

# Important headlines to address

## (The changed landscape)

- *The modern PhD has been traditionally the stepping stone to an academic career.*
- *In the last 30 years or so the likelihood of achieving an academic position in the UK has however diminished.*
- *There is a sense that there is still an overemphasis on the academic track and an under-valuing of other career paths.*
- *Sample headlines*
  - *what is the stand alone PhD really worth?*
  - *the PhD is “broken” and needs a total rethink*
  - *ditch the current system*



# Increasing PhD awareness - Personal and Professional Development

Catch the students early (at induction events)

- emphasise the need to stand out from the crowd (the need to lay down the foundation of the future)
- take ownership of needs (build these into a research plan)
- develop a direction of travel – **research methods**, presentation skills (networking), publishing, managing time and people, gaining teaching experience, organising meetings, budgeting, developing new initiatives, contributing to the Institutional agenda (student voice), engaging with enterprise activities, considering internships, carrying out public outreach



# Increasing PhD awareness - Personal and Professional Development

Have (e)systems in place to interrogate whether the student is engaging with PDP:

- reinforce this agenda at fora / network meetings / events / workshops
- make it part of progression monitoring (six monthly reporting in Cardiff University)
- emphasise the RCUK steer on this
- make it part of the discussion between examiners and the candidate at the *viva voce*, so building it into the examiners' joint report on the Thesis and the candidate
- indicate that this is examined in PRES (student experience – a metric in league tables)

# Increasing supervisor awareness - Personal and Professional Development (PDP)

Do supervisors (academic staff) engage in PDP themselves ?

- This must come through the Institution (staff development courses) or must be generated by the staff member themselves (RDF).
- Are there good examples from the doctoral candidates or supervisors that adopting PDP has tangible benefits ? These can be shared.
- Build mentoring of PDP into work allocation models and staff appraisals (recognition of, and rewards for this activity).
- Is this the domain of the supervisory team (Cardiff) or should there be another “mentor” involved ? (pastoral versus research). Would this create a tension between what might be conceived as conflicting agendas?
- PRES / REF – implications for the Institution.
- RCUK – a condition of funding (challenges with block grants / inter- Institutional collaborations).

# Supervisor engagement and Inspirational Supervisor Awards

*2016: Local Cardiff University award (ESLA) “ Outstanding Doctoral Supervisor ” (Good practice - recognising, rewarding and awarding )*

*2016: UKCGE sponsored National THE award “ Outstanding Research Supervisor”*







# *Getting engaged*

*Several careers events each year: careers inside and out of HEIs (Academia)*

*Personal and Professional Development (PDP): what it is, and what it can do for you*



PDP is...

“A structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development.”

*Employers inform our processes !*

# Empowering Doctoral Candidates Through Personal Development Planning

## Proceedings

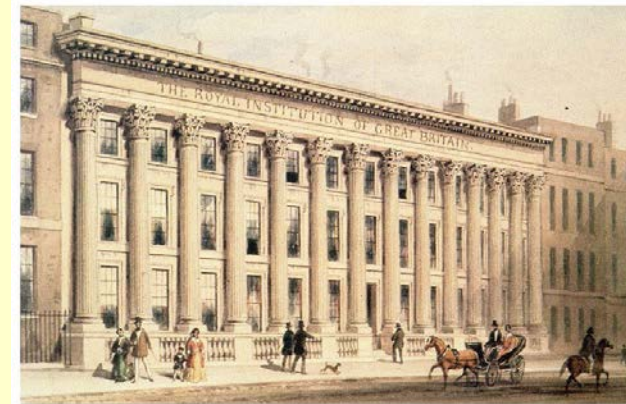


# *Speaking of Science 2016*



Student – led conferences:

perhaps the “first” experience of  
engaging with an audience  
(exploit this to deliver a message)  
c.f. participatory democracy (gamification)





# Public Engagement Event Student Showcase



# A quarterly newsletter showcases who we are and what we do

## University Graduate College



Newsletter

March - May 2014

### Welcome from the Deputy Dean

Several months have now passed since the passing of one of the world's foremost and arguably most successful leaders, a man who received more than 250 honours in his lifetime including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. Nelson Mandela left a massive legacy which included inspirational lessons for all of us, including leaders at any level who wish to be effective or influential. He showed the world that if your message and ideals are strong enough, you can continue to lead and be effective even from the weak position of 27 years imprisonment. The message is clear: that you don't necessarily have to be in a position of authority to lead. His capacity to forgive, to collaborate, and to persist in order to advance his cause was both breath-taking and inspiring.

The questions 'what makes a good leader?' and 'what might be the generally accepted vital ingredients?' do not always have an obvious answer. There are clearly horses for courses, and leadership styles come in many forms. The requisite qualities might be definable, but in themselves they are not necessarily all there is to it. Sir Alex Ferguson supported the appointment of his successor David Moyes at Old Trafford, and yet the club's fortunes have changed dramatically, now (temporarily?) spiralling into crisis. His departure has clearly been felt. But what definable quality does Ferguson possess?

During the year, we are offering the opportunity for some of the University's leaders to try to answer this

challenging question. Inside, you can read about our series of 'Leadership at Lunchtime' events which enable PGRs to hear first-hand how senior staff lead on the Institution's agenda and on their own research agenda.

Universities are large complex organisations competing for business, funding and talent worldwide, constantly being judged, and ever conscious of the need to retain, or gain a vital place in some league table or rankings. Given the changing and dynamic nature of the Higher Education agenda, the most effective leaders might be Academic or equally they might hail from the Business world? We could opt for split leadership with shared responsibilities? There can be tensions in this approach which I have witnessed previously in the Wellcome Foundation. But you have to admit there is some sense in this option.

The skills required to run such an operation are arguably broader than ever before, but of course Universities are not just led by one individual. University Councils or Executive Boards provide balance, perspective and shared responsibility and vision for taking an Institution forward.

If what defines a University is the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, then there is a compelling,

almost axiomatic, argument for selecting leaders with exactly these traits or strengths giving the leader genuine legitimacy. After all you would not expect a football team to be led (or managed) by someone who did not understand the game.



To be successful, a University has to be led by individuals who have real currency or credibility, who understand the nature of a competitive University, who recognise what motivates their colleagues, who can inject a sense of

collegiality or community and can inspire everyone to realise individual ambitions. A tough ask you might say.

Leadership skills are recognised in the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) which underpins the University Graduate College Programme. Within the Programme, researchers are offered an number of options to develop their leadership skills - by participating in workshops like "The Effective Researcher", by joining a conference committee; or by developing a project and gaining funding under our scheme for postgraduate research initiatives. Several doctoral students who have done just that describe their experiences inside. We hope these examples - of early stage researchers and of senior staff - serve as a prompt to consider your own development.

- Professor Ken Mann, Deputy Dean of the University Graduate College

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[www.twitter.com/cardiffugc](https://twitter.com/cardiffugc)



## University Graduate College



Newsletter

March-May 2013

### A Word from the Dean

Careers is the theme for this issue of the University Graduate College newsletter. Here, Professor Terry Marsden, Dean of the University Graduate College, gives his thoughts on preparing for a career within or outside of academia.

"The research process that PhD students pursue and complete in their PhDs is very valuable to non-academic audiences and careers. This has been the case for a long time, but I think it's particularly the case now. A PhD is a significant passport for advancing one's career outside of academia - in the policy world, in the private sector and elsewhere. Inside academia, the same applies. There's more of an emphasis on using the experience and subject of the PhD as a foundation for further research and publication. Whereas with non-academic careers, that experience itself may lead the person into a range of other different areas.

When it comes to seeking a career, you need to be aware of the things an employer will be looking for on a CV. They will be looking for evidence of any training you may have been involved in during the PhD period. Furthermore, you need to be able to demonstrate the range of skills and experience that you've gained from doing the PhD. It is also important to have some sort of plan about what you are doing with the research material from the PhD - whether you're publishing it, or whether it is an end in itself and you're moving on. At interview, the interviewer will be looking for vibrancy and strong motivation, and commitment to furthering the post that's on offer. You should be well prepared - do your homework and think through how you

fit with the specifications for the post.

There are a number of essential skills a PhD student needs to develop to prepare themselves for a career. These include being able to think with originality, and to write and more broadly communicate your research to both academic and non-academic audiences. Another skill which is important to develop is problem solving, both short and long-term, around different aspects of the research process. Effective project management of a PhD from day one is also critical. I would strongly advocate that students take advantage, with their supervisors, of regular skills needs assessments. It engages the supervisor and student about this issue, and sets out areas for development. The University Graduate College offers a huge range of workshops and training to enable this process.

It is important for PhD students to be exposed to the research processes and activities across disciplines. It gives you a broader perspective on the research process, which I think is healthy and increasingly relevant to the issue of careers. It is not always necessary for all students to be interdisciplinary, but it is becoming more common for research to transcend the old established boundaries of disciplines. I think there's going to be more of an

#### Top Tips

- Engage with your supervisors and regular colleagues about your skills needs at regular intervals.
- Make the most of being in a vibrant research-led University and engage with PhD students across the institution.
- Time management is really important. If you feel you're not managing your time effectively, talk to somebody about it or attend a course.
- Think about what your CV is going to look like and what you're going to put on it. Don't hesitate to seek career advice.



emphasis on PhDs who are interdisciplinary and can work at the boundaries. In fact, the definition of a PhD is partly to work at boundaries. The University Graduate College is here to function as a vehicle to allow interdisciplinary activity to happen, so I would encourage students to take advantage of the funding we offer for interdisciplinary activities, and to attend our interdisciplinary Student-led Conferences.

It was quite a long time ago that I did my PhD and there wasn't the provision of training facilities or the same supportive environment that there is now. I was working fairly alone with my supervisor and there was an absence of other people working in related areas. That was a problem, as I was isolated within the institution. The message here is, take advantage of all the opportunities that there are within the University Graduate College, as well as the wider University, to interact and engage with the PhD community."

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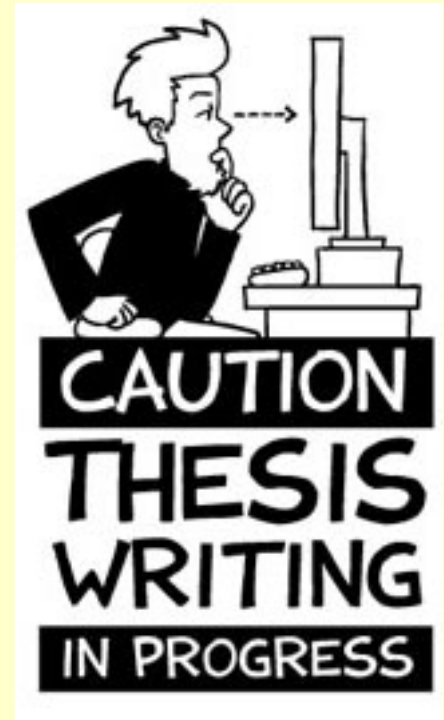


# *Planning and writing your PhD Thesis* *(October 2016)*



School of Pharmacy and  
Pharmaceutical Sciences

**K T Wann**  
Professor of Cell Physiology





Pharmacy and  
Pharmaceutical Sciences

# *Preparing for your Viva Voce* (2015)



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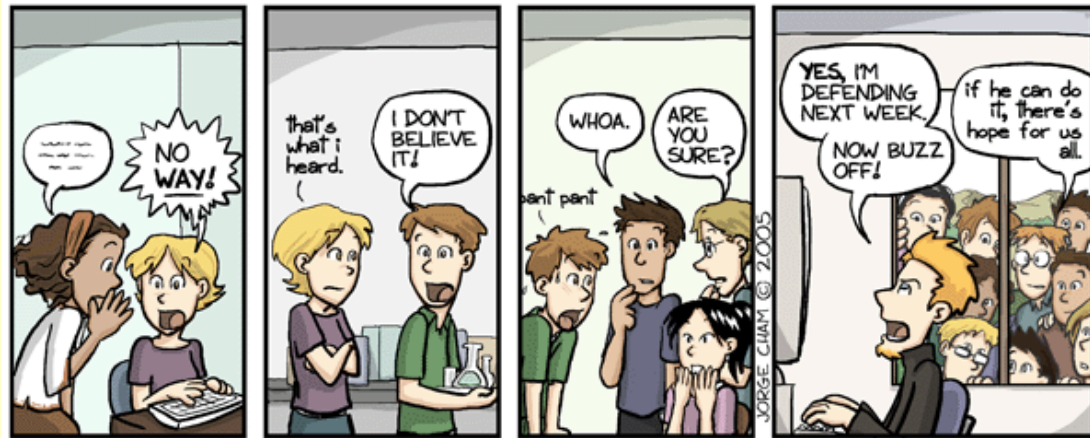
# *The mock viva*

*(The good and the bad)*

- *Staged performances*

*Cast:*

- *Candidate*
- *External examiner*
- *Internal examiner*
- *Chair*



# The Doctoral Academy hosts major community building events



# The Doctoral Academy hosts major community building events



Power of procrastination

Jorge Cham



PhD comics

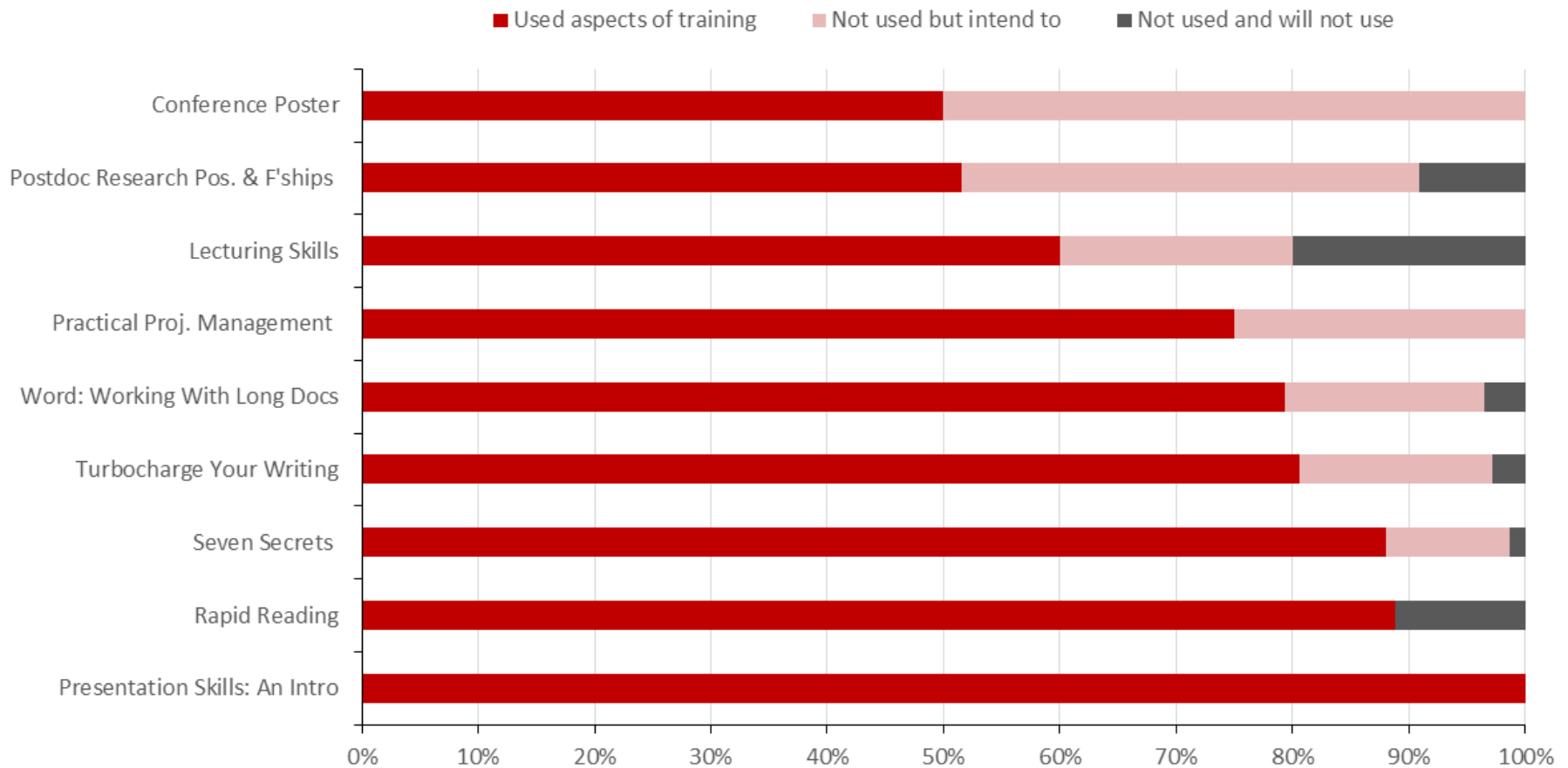
# Programme Level Feedback

Table 2: Results of Feedback Forms

Workshops with Mean:	Usefulness				Satisfied with Presenter(s)			
	2014-15		2013-14		2014-15		2013-14	
	n	%			n	%		
below 3.0	-	0%	0	0%	-	0%	-	0
3.00-3.49	2	1%	6	2%	-	0%	2	1%
3.50-3.99	32	10%	39	14%	8	3%	13	5%
4.00-4.49	156	51%	126	46%	76	25%	65	25%
4.50-5.00	115	38%	100	37%	221	72%	185	70%
Total	305		271		305		265	
<b>% 4.0 or above</b>		<b>89%</b>		<b>83%</b>		<b>97%</b>		<b>94%</b>



# Impact: Use of training



# Impact: PhD Progress

*Table 7: Impact of training on progress of PhD*

<b>Workshops/Events</b>	<b>Weighted mean</b>
Conference Posters	4.9
Turbocharge your writing	4.8
Word: Working With Long Documents	4.8
Practical Project Management for Your Research	4.8
Seven Secrets of Highly Successful Researchers	4.6
Rapid Reading	4.5
Presentation Skills: An Introduction	4.2
Postdoctoral Research Positions and Fellowships (Sciences/Social Sciences)	3.3
Lecturing Skills	3.2

Mean score: on 5 point scale, 1 = not at all, 5 = very much

