

# Researcher Career Pathways

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# Early career researchers

- Report: *The Global State of Young Scientists* by the Global Young Academy, on early career research scientists working in 12 countries who obtained a PhD up to 10 years ago
- **Found long hours, job insecurity and lack of resources.**
- **Most interviewees did not hold a permanent position in academia.** This insecurity drove them to work long hours and weekends to stand out.  
Early career researchers **work an average of 55 hours a week.**
- Common problems worldwide: **having to build a laboratory from scratch, uncertainty over funding** necessary to secure future positions, and lack of resources and research staff.
- **Job insecurity was a key concern in Europe**, where fixed-term positions are the norm for early career researchers: 83% of respondents.  
Despite this, two-thirds of respondents said that they felt hopeful about their career prospects.
- Researchers' **confidence in finding a permanent research position** varied worldwide. Respondents in **America** thought their chances were 66%, whereas in Europe put chances at just 35%.  
**Confidence in finding a permanent teaching position** was only 39% in Europe.
- Scholars said that **more support and mentoring** during the early stages of their career was required, particularly at transition points such as starting a family. "In Europe in particular, the lack of mentoring was perceived as a barrier, leaving young scholars to their own devices in a fairly unstable higher education labour market, with only limited chances for job security.
- Research organisations "**need to adapt to the realities of women and family issues**".



# Researchers lack realistic career expectations

- Careers organisation Vitae has warned that research staff **do not have realistic expectations of their long-term career prospects** and lack knowledge about careers in other areas.
- According to the Careers in Research Online Survey, which surveyed 9,000 researchers from 72 institutions and was published on 8 September 2015, 77% of respondents wanted to have an academic career in the long term. Of these, 34% want a pure research role and 43% want a combined teaching and research role.
- The survey echoes findings from a Royal Society report published in 2010 that said that **only about 3.5% of science PhDs achieve a long-term career in academia**, while about 80% end up dropping their research aspirations altogether.
- Janet Metcalfe, chairwoman of Vitae, says that by the time people finish their PhD studies, and are looking for a permanent job in academia, they have invested an “extraordinary amount of themselves” in the idea of being an academic. “Psychologically it is very difficult for them to step back and recognise that that is not going to happen,” she says. For many people, finishing a PhD but failing to become an academic is still seen as a career failure. “Everything else is a plan B
- Vitae’s report says that universities have an important role providing research staff with access to information about a wide range of career opportunities. “It would be very helpful if universities would make very clear the variety of options available for somebody being successful in a PhD.” Researchers who are frustrated with their job prospects could undertake a career audit, she says, which would help them identify barriers to achieving their goals, as well as the potential risks and benefits of continuing to pursue an academic career path.



# Careers in Research Online Survey 2013

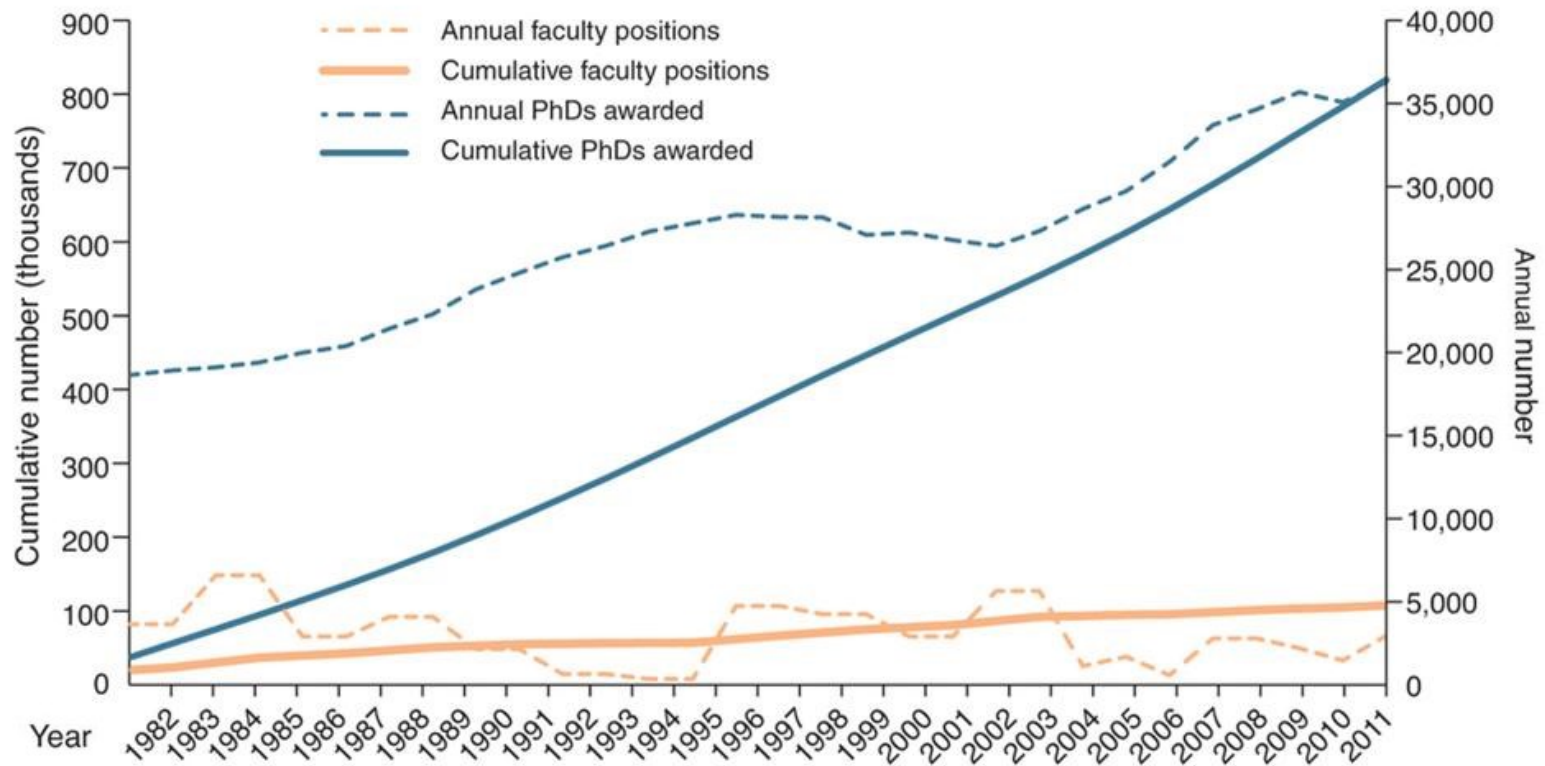
- Sought to find out more about opportunities for researchers to get involved in activities such as collaboration, knowledge exchange, supervision, teaching and mentoring.
- *"significant credibility gap"* between researchers' expectations and the likelihood of their forging long-term careers in higher education. A career in research was very competitive but *"researchers do not all have a full awareness of quite how competitive [it is]"*. [Read the full story](#)
- Over 65% of researchers have had **experience of collaborating with colleagues outside of the UK and with external organisations.**
- Only around 50% had **experience of mentoring, teaching or writing a funding proposal** - although a 2013 survey shows that research publications still tend to override other research-related activities in the biosciences.
- **Perceptions of fairness in the treatment of contract research staff compared with other types of staff**, 50% of both males and females believed they were not treated fairly. This figure rose to 64% for researchers who had been on five or more contracts.
- **Career ambitions of researchers:** clear disparity between the aspirations vs realistic expectations of researchers. Although three quarters would like to have a research and/or teaching career in academia, only two-thirds believed this was likely to happen in reality. This lack of opportunities is true of other intellectually stimulating professions. 2/3 or ECRs believe they will actually achieve a research/teaching career, according to Vitae the number of researchers who DO achieve it is closer to 1/5.
- A **lack of engagement with careers support** at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels, either out of choice or because such support does not exist.

# More PhDs than academic posts available

[www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20131014180817-2434720-the-value-of-formal-education-in-career-success](http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20131014180817-2434720-the-value-of-formal-education-in-career-success)

Since 1982 in the USA, 800,000 PhDs were awarded in science and engineering, whereas only about 100,000 academic faculty positions were created. Source: <http://goo.gl/Yl0g1y>

Consider therefore also non-academic options: managing people, research in industry, analysing data etc.





*(Beam Diagnostics, Physics)*

21 Fellows



*(Laser Applications, Engineering)*

19 Fellows



*(Accelerator Optimization, Physics)*

23 Fellows



*(Medical Applications, Life Sciences)*

15 Fellows (planned)



*(Antimatter R&D, Physics)*

15 Fellows (planned)



Driving question: How to provide **best** training ?





# Basis for a good career – a recipe

- Get world-class education;
- Provide evidence of your excellence (*e.g. degree marks*);
- Obtain a broad and interdisciplinary training – beyond what the academic sector offers;
- Gain relevant work experiences;
- Build up a strong and international contact network.



# Researcher Careers after the PhD

- Is a PhD worthwhile?
- Skills gained on a PhD
- What do employers look for in postgraduates?
- What do PhDs do after completion?
- What jobs are there outside research?

Based on: Bruce Woodcock, U Kent





# Is a PhD worthwhile?

## Sutton Trust Report

- The proportion of people of working age in Britain with a postgraduate qualification has climbed rapidly:

4%	in 1996
11%	in 2012
- **PhDs obtained in the UK**

1994-5	7,500,	
2012-13	21,000	(Source HESA)
- 72.9% of PhDs will obtain it within 7 years of starting but at London Met. University only 12% will complete in 7 years !

(Source HEFCE)
- The study found a **postgraduate degree** remained linked to higher earnings: **worth on average £5,500 per year more than someone with only an undergraduate degree.**



## Careers in Research Online Survey 2013

- **“Significant credibility gap” between researchers' expectations and the likelihood of a long-term careers in higher education.**  
A career in research was very competitive but *“researchers do not all have a full awareness of quite how competitive [it is]”*.  
  
A Royal Society report published in 2010 that said that **only about 3.5% of science PhDs achieve a long-term career in academia**, while about 80% end up dropping their research aspirations altogether.
- 2/3 contract researchers think they will get a research/teaching career, according to Vitae **the number of researchers who DO achieve it is closer to 1/5**: *“Only 19% of PhD holders are working in HE research within 3.5 years of completion “ (Vitae 2010)*  
  
But this lack of opportunities is true of other intellectually stimulating professions
- **A lack of engagement with careers support** at the doctoral and postdoctoral levels, either out of choice or because such support does not exist.



## Question

**What skills do you gain on a PhD  
that you could “sell” to employers?**

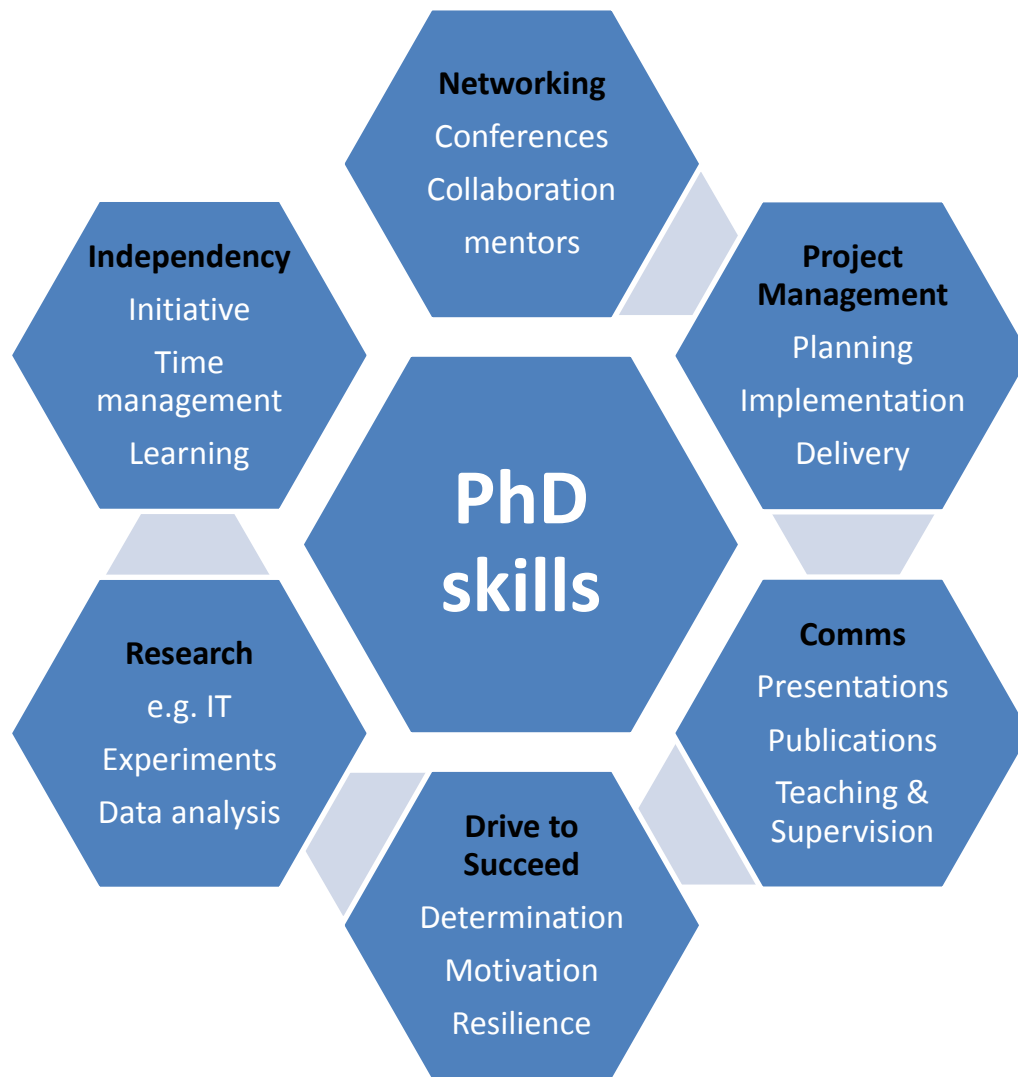


# Postgraduates Skills

## PhD researchers can usually:

- **understand and create knowledge** at the forefront of their discipline
- **conceptualise, design and implement projects** to generate new knowledge and understanding
- analyse a problem and **generate creative solutions** to it, drawing on existing knowledge and the gathering of new knowledge
- **work independently** and under their own initiative
- **plan and deliver a large piece of work** independently and over a long time
- Experience of **cutting edge research skills** and techniques.

**SELL THESE SKILLS IN YOUR CV, APPLICATION FORMS AND AT INTERVIEW!**





# What do Employers look for in Postgraduate applicants?

**Rank the following in order e.g. 1 for most important and 10 for least important:**

- Can be asked to undertake independent research
- Good time management
- Negotiation skills
- Ability to listen to others
- Ability to present ideas clearly (verbally & in writing)
- Attention to detail & thoroughness
- Ability to identify areas for change or improvement
- Capable of learning new IT systems quickly
- Can integrate quickly into team
- Honesty & integrity





# What do Employers look for in Postgraduate applicants?

## On appointment:

1. Honesty & integrity
2. Ability to listen to others
3. Can integrate quickly into team
4. Ability to present ideas clearly (verbally & in writing)
5. Good time management

## After one year:

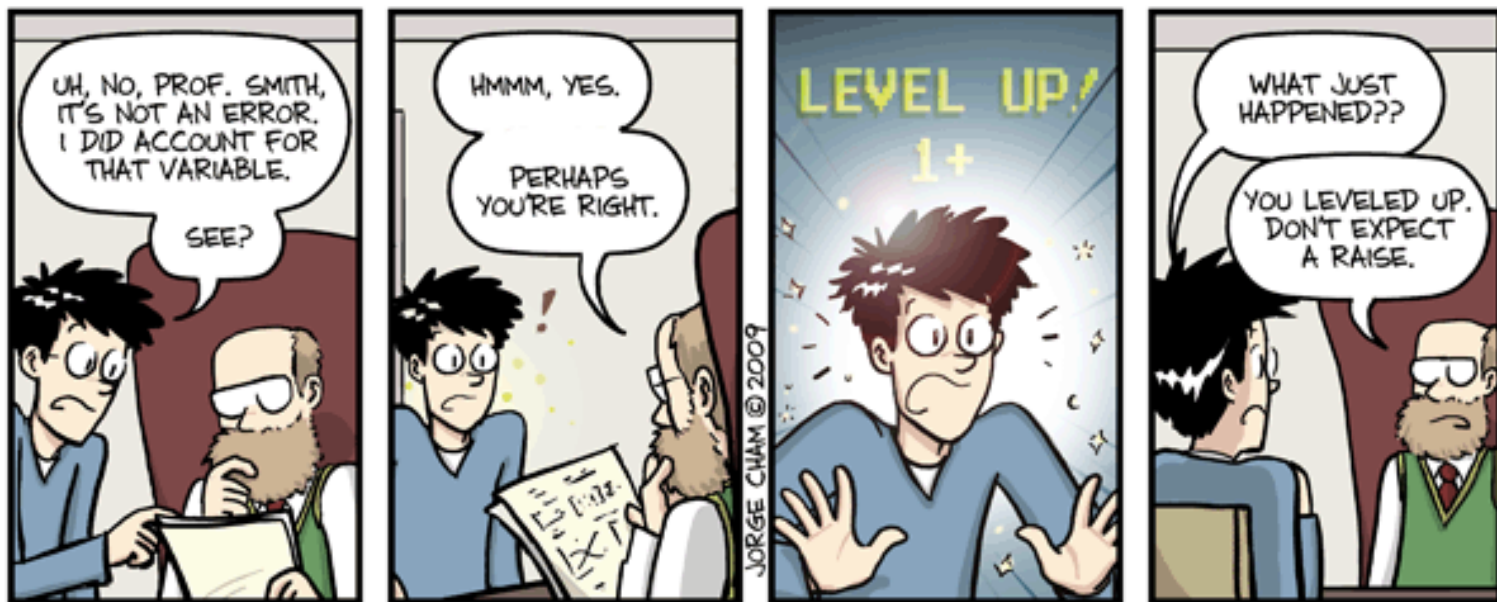
1. Ability to identify areas for change or improvement
2. Can be asked to undertake independent research
3. Negotiation skills
4. Capable of learning new IT systems quickly
5. Attention to detail & thoroughness

# Postgraduate Employment

What jobs can you do with a PhD?

Think of as many jobs you can that PhDs are likely to enter

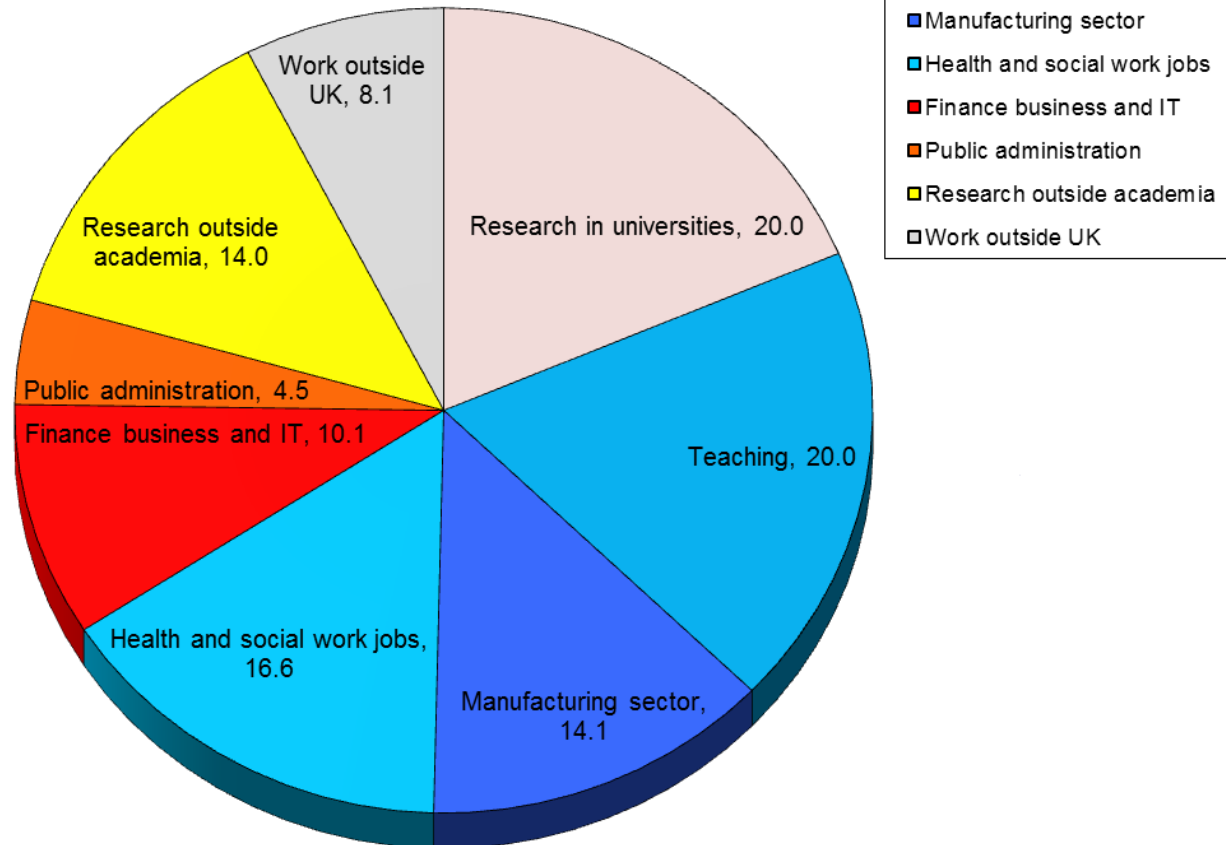
What are the names of some potential employers?

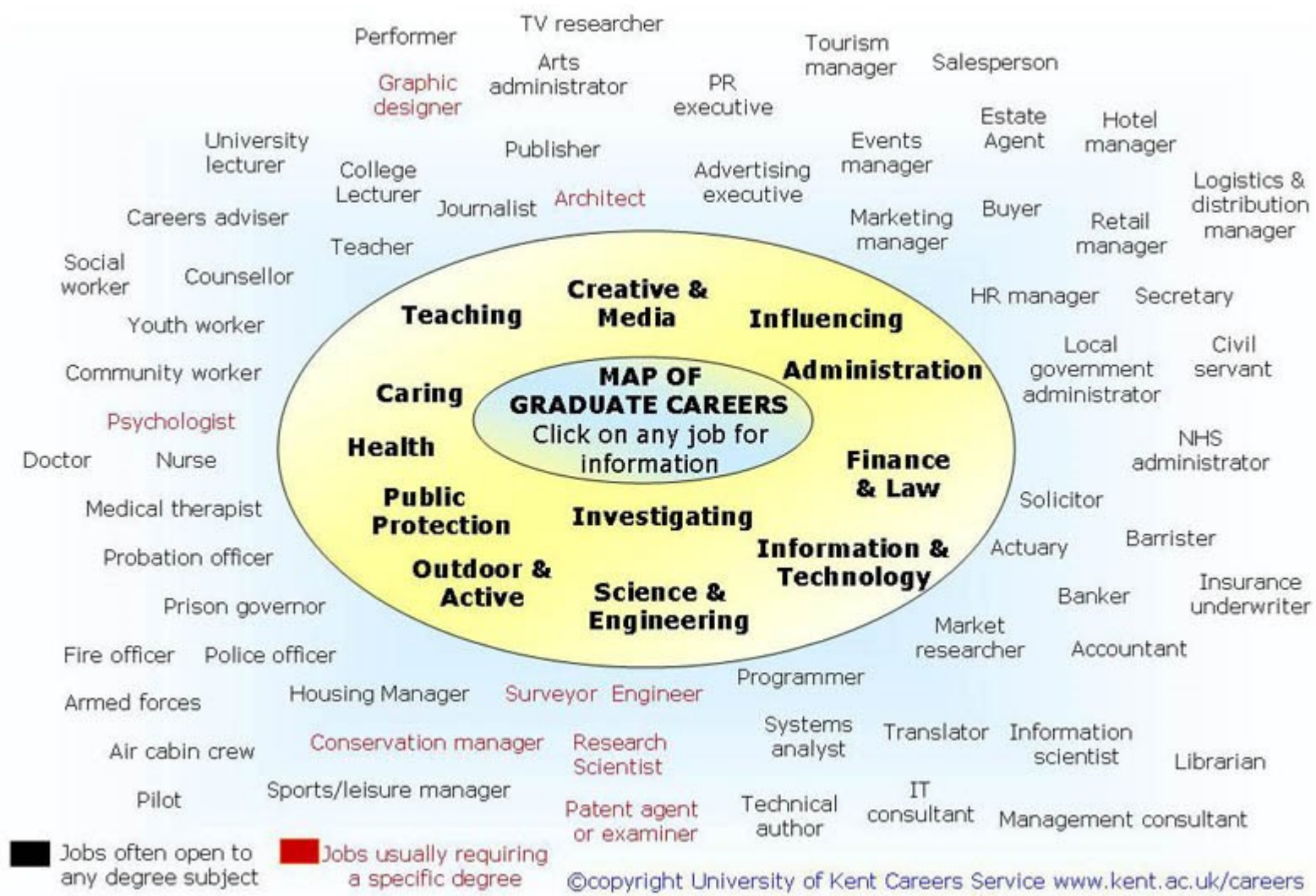


# What do PhDs do?

Source: HESA DLHE Surveys)

PhD Destinations







# Employers recruiting researchers

According to Vitae

- **Accenture**
- AstraZenica
- Baker Richards Consulting
- Bank of England
- Belzona Polymerics Limited
- **BP Research & Technology**
- Business Research Group (UK) Ltd
- Capita Hartshead
- CellAura Technologies Ltd
- Corus
- CRAC
- Credit Suisse
- Curtis+Cartwright Consulting Ltd
- **Doosan Babcock Energy Ltd**
- Ely Lilly
- EMB Consultancy LLP
- Eversheds
- Financial Services Authority
- HM Forces/The Army:
- HSBC
- **Jaguar Land Rover**
- JBA Consulting
- Kaplan Higher Education
- KPMG
- Medical Research Council
- **Mewburn Ellis**
- Mott MacDonald
- Mycorrhizal Systems Ltd
- NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement
- North Somerset Council
- Onalytica Ltd
- Ordnance Survey
- Oxford PharmaGenesis
- Pfizer
- Pilkington Group Limited
- Procter & Gamble
- **QinetiQ**
- **Rolls-Royce PLC**
- Simon Mort Reports Ltd
- Space Northwest
- The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre
- The National Physical Laboratory
- The Work Foundation
- Thinktank Trust
- **UBS Investment Bank**
- Unilever
- Waymont Consulting Limited





# Today

- We will look into the practical aspects of career “planning”
- We will cover all essential aspects of careers, including questions related to insurance, pensions, etc.
- Experts from various sectors and diverse backgrounds – network, ask questions, discuss !!!

Enjoy !