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the potential  
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Incorporating the UK GRAD Programme and UKHERD

# Career Tracking of Doctoral Graduates from UK HEIs

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 **RESEARCH  
COUNCILS UK**

# Research Councils UK (RCUK)



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

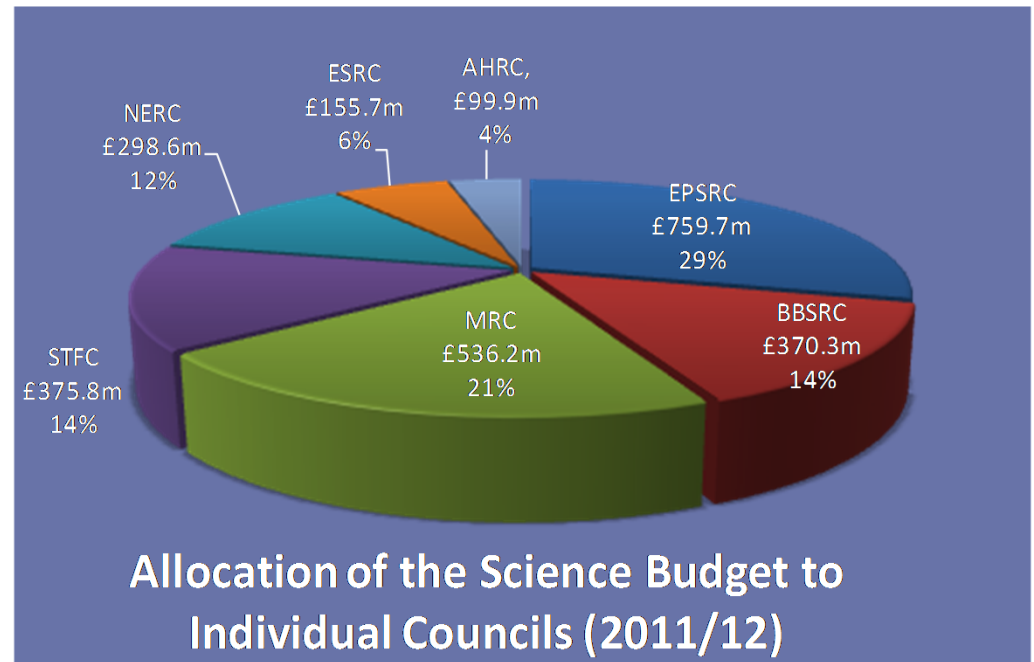


**EPSRC**

Engineering and Physical Sciences  
Research Council



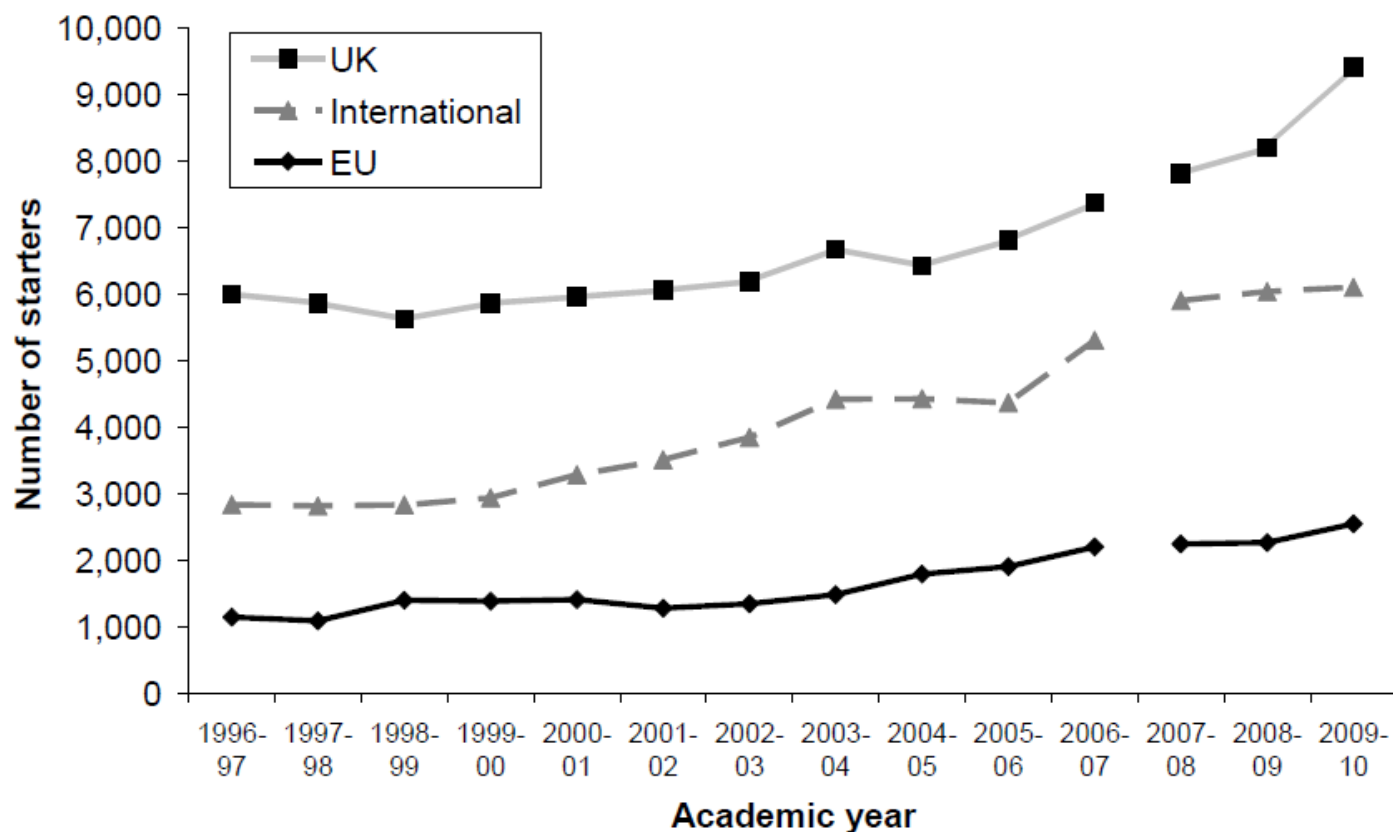
Science & Technology  
Facilities Council



Total budget:  
 10/11 £2.55 billion  
 11/12 £2.60 billion  
 12/13 £2.57 billion  
 (Figures 2011/12)

# PhD starters by Domicile 1996-07 to 2009-10\*

Figure 3 Number of PhD starters on a full-time course, by domicile

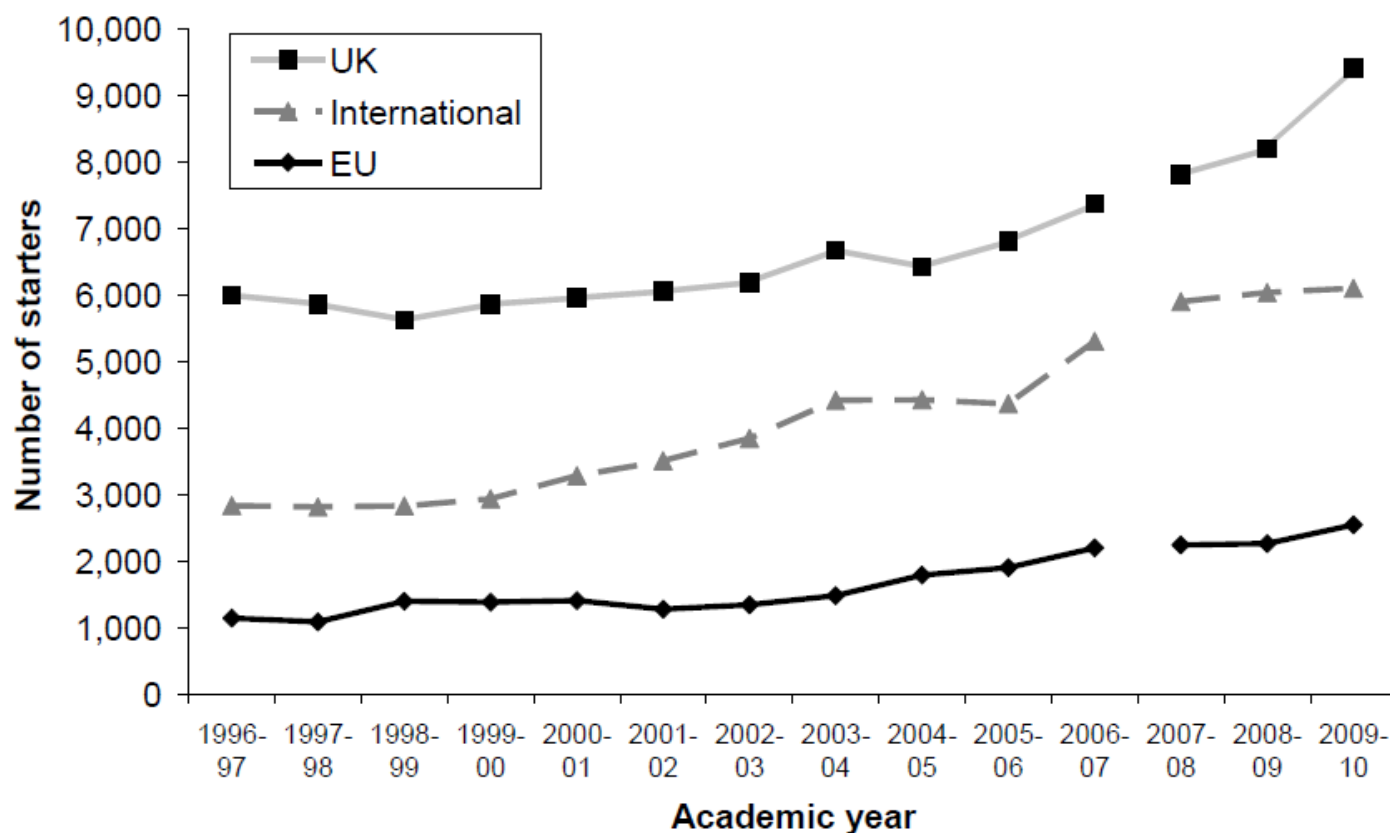


Note: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK.

\*PhD Study: Trends and profiles 1996-97 to 2009-10 (HEFCE 2011)

# PhD starters by Domicile 1996-07 to 2009-10\*

Figure 3 Number of PhD starters on a full-time course, by domicile



## Notes

RCUK funding:  
5,500 of 17,500  
doctoral graduates  
p.a.

Mature PhDs  
significant especially  
in AHSS

Rest of world:  
~ 42% overseas  
PhDs (30% non-EU,  
13% other EU)

Current doctoral  
candidates 60,000  
FT, 23,000 PT

Note: EU category excludes those domiciled in the UK.

\*PhD Study: Trends and profiles 1996-97 to 2009-10 (HEFCE 2011)

# Career tracking – Options analysis 2008



Doctoral Career Pathways, Skills and Training - *Options analysis for the collection of information about the early careers of UK Doctoral Graduates*

A new survey needed to answer questions including:

- *Motivations for undertaking PhD training and initial career aspirations:*
- *Employment history and reasons for changes in career:*
- *Current employment:*
- *Skills development:*
- *Job satisfaction:*
- *Future career aspirations:*
- *'Impact' of career:*

*Advice: Existing data-sources cannot provide sufficient information, nor coverage of the target population.*

Options

- X *Stand alone survey (c.f. USA SED)*
- ✓ *Piggy-back on existing Destinations of Leavers from HE (DLHE survey)*

*Impact* : a demonstrable contribution to economic growth or policy development.

# The RCUK Cohort study in outline

- Three cohorts: all UK and EU domiciled doctoral graduates from UK HEIs in 2004/05, 2006/07 and 2008/09
  - First survey at 6-18 months after graduation - HESA DLHE\* survey e.g. early 2005
  - Second survey 3.5 years after graduation as part of L-DLHE e.g. winter 2008/09
  - Third survey stand-alone ~7 years after graduation planned winter 2012/13
- Results published in ‘What do Researchers Do?’ series by Vitae



\* DLHE/L-DLHE (longitudinal) – Destination of Leavers from Higher Education

# Some practical facts and issues

- 2004/05 DLHE - 6595 research postgraduate responses
- 2008/09 L-DLHE – 2501 responses (45%) of which 2073 doctorates
- 2012/13 resurvey – projected attrition problem – currently being addressed
- Use of Standard Occupation Coding (SOC)
  - Initial problems of subjective categorisation
  - Four-digit SOC allows grouping into clusters

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HE research occupations</li><li>• Research (not in HE sector)</li><li>• Teaching and Lecturing in HE</li></ul> |
|--|

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Other Teaching Occupations</li><li>• Other common doctoral occupations</li></ul> |
|--|

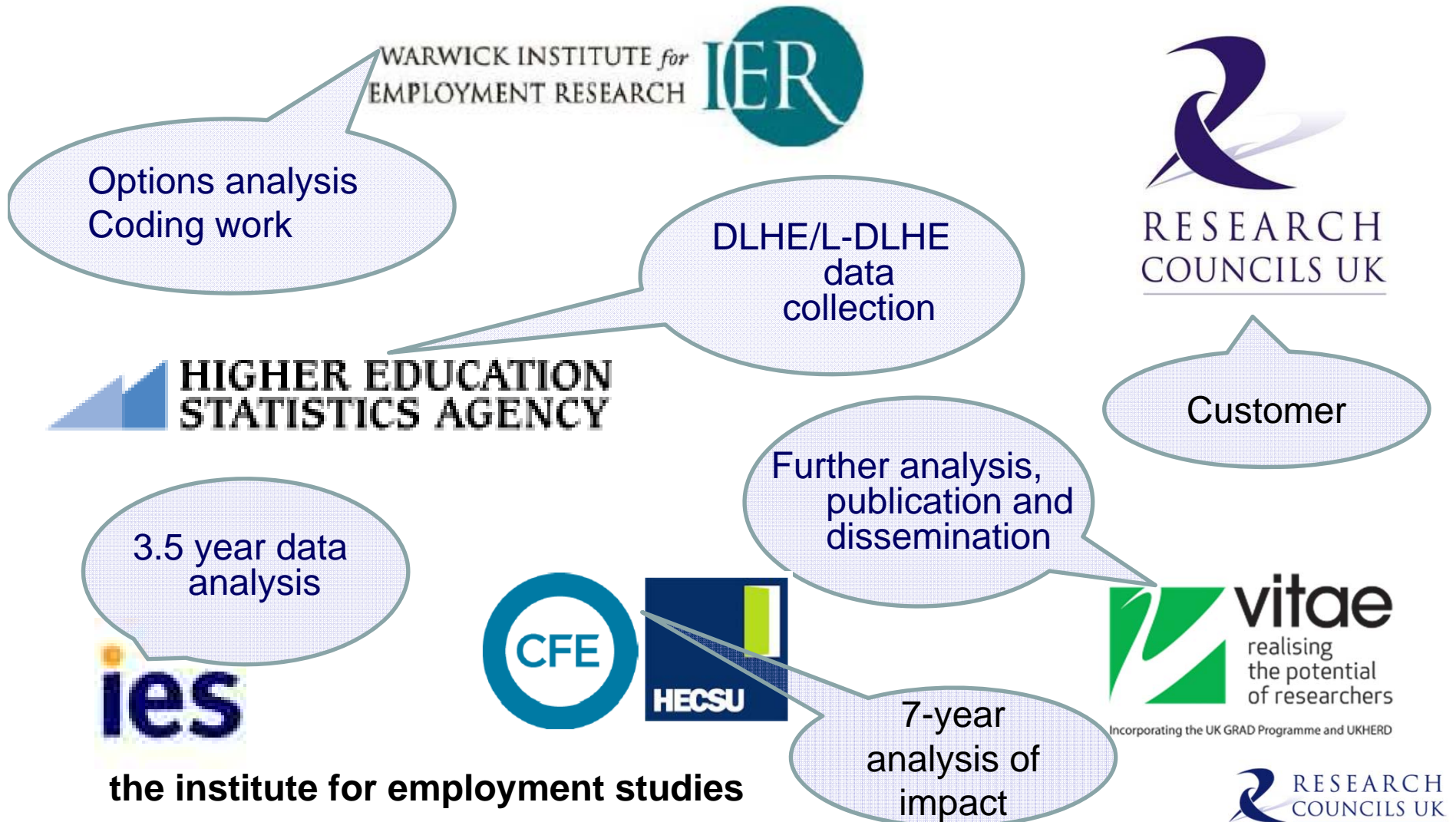
- Projected future problem of identifying researchers using SOC 2010
- Basic survey supplemented by qualitative research and/or case studies

# Redefined objectives (7 year point) RCUK Doctoral Cohort Study

- The aims of the Study are:
  - To better understand the career pathways of doctoral graduates
  - To improve knowledge of doctoral graduates' impact in employment
  - To better understand how high level skills contribute to the long-term competitiveness of the UK
- It will help to inform:
  - Resource allocation and investments in doctoral training
  - Policies regarding research training and how it contributes to both excellence and impact
  - Policies regarding career pathways and how these might be influenced
  - The supply of information and guidance to researchers about the careers open to them
- Results expected – Autumn 2013



# The RCUK Cohort study - Actors





# Outcomes from the study so far

# Researchers careers



- What do researchers do?
  - First destinations by subject
  - Career profiles
  - Career profiles of doctoral entrepreneurs
  - Doctoral graduate destinations and impact three years on
- Career stories portal
  - database of careers stories
  - Career stories on film with icould
- Employers' briefings
  - targeting the postgraduate and researcher market
  - researchers' skills and competencies



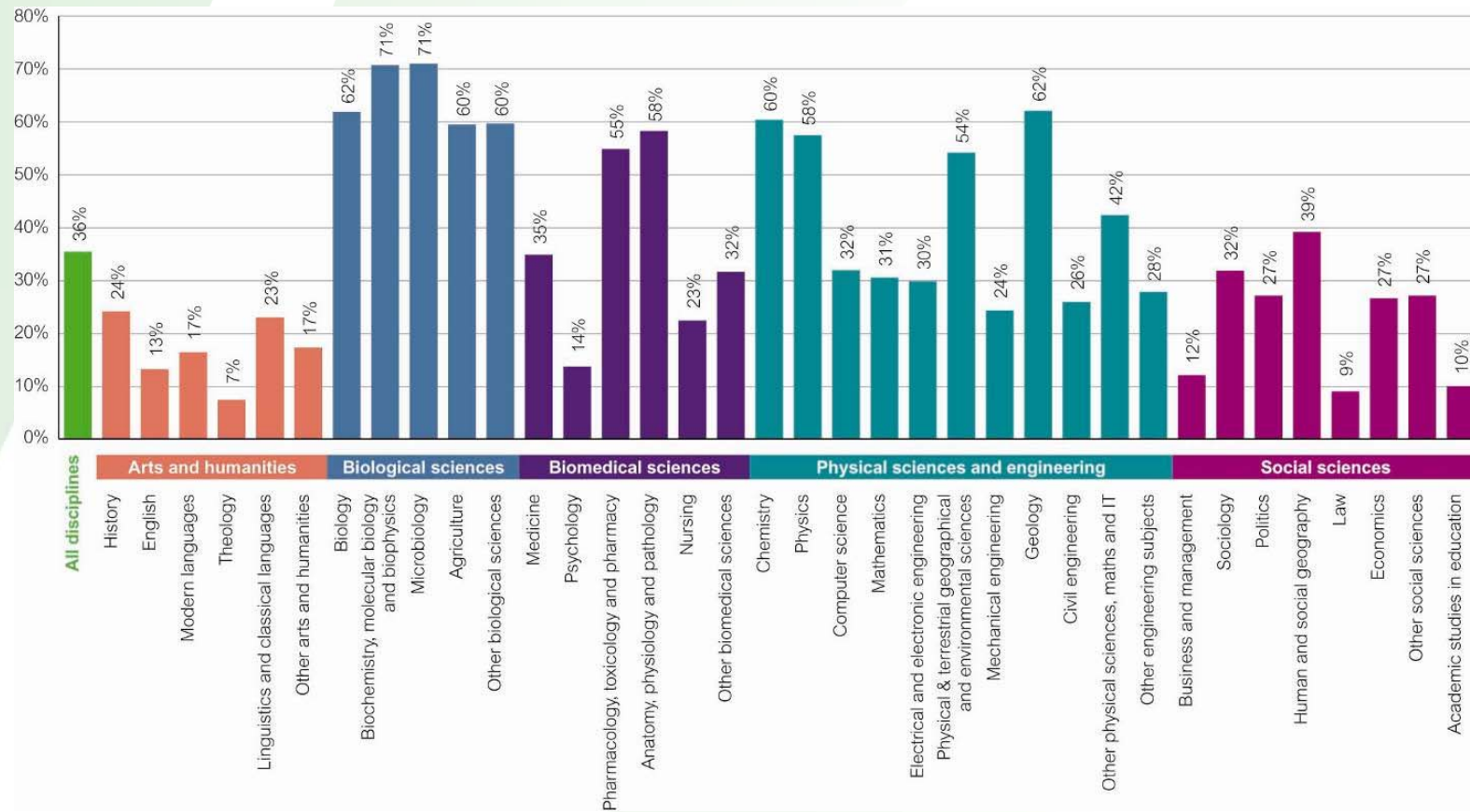
# WDRD? PhD First Destinations\*



- ✓ 5 year trends of UK domiciled PhDs in 5 broad disciplinary areas
- ✓ Unemployment averages 3.4% - lower than Bachelor (6.1%) or Master (4%)
- ✓ 72.7% entered work in the UK
- ✓ 49% employed in Education (mainly HE)
  - 23% in HE research position (Bioscience 36%, SS 18%, A&H 14%)
  - 14% in HE teaching jobs (Bioscience ~5%, SS 34% A&H 27%, )
- ✓ Overall 35% in research and 22% in teaching

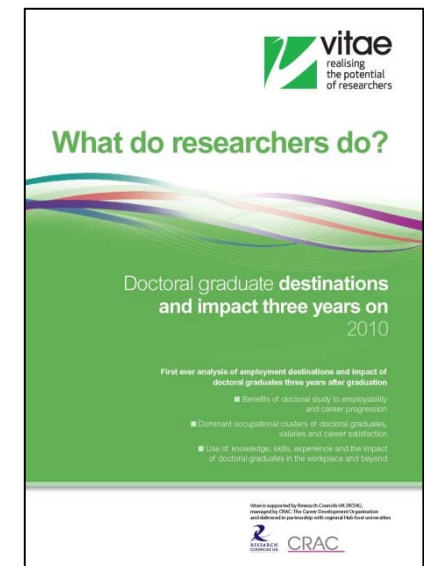


# Employed in research roles: 35% overall



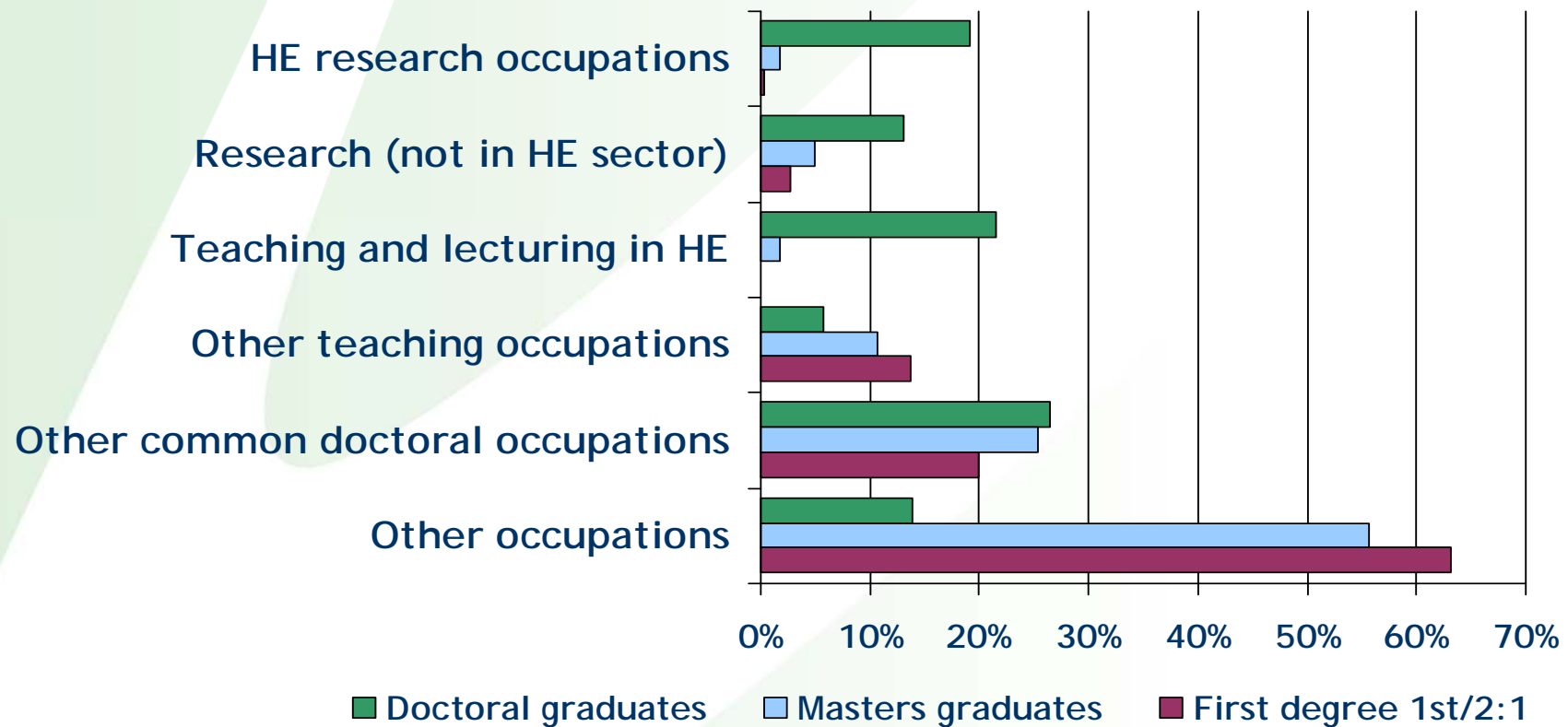
## WDRD? Destinations and impact three years on

- ✔ Employment circumstances (2% unemployed)
- ✔ Employment sector and occupation
- ✔ Status (contract/mode of work)
- ✔ Median annual salary (£34k D; £25k B)
  
- ✔ Value of the doctorate (82% requirement or important)
- ✔ Satisfaction with career to date (93%)
- ✔ It fitted into my career plans (73.8%)
- ✔ It was exactly the type of work I wanted (65.7%)
  
- ✔ Unique doctoral occupations

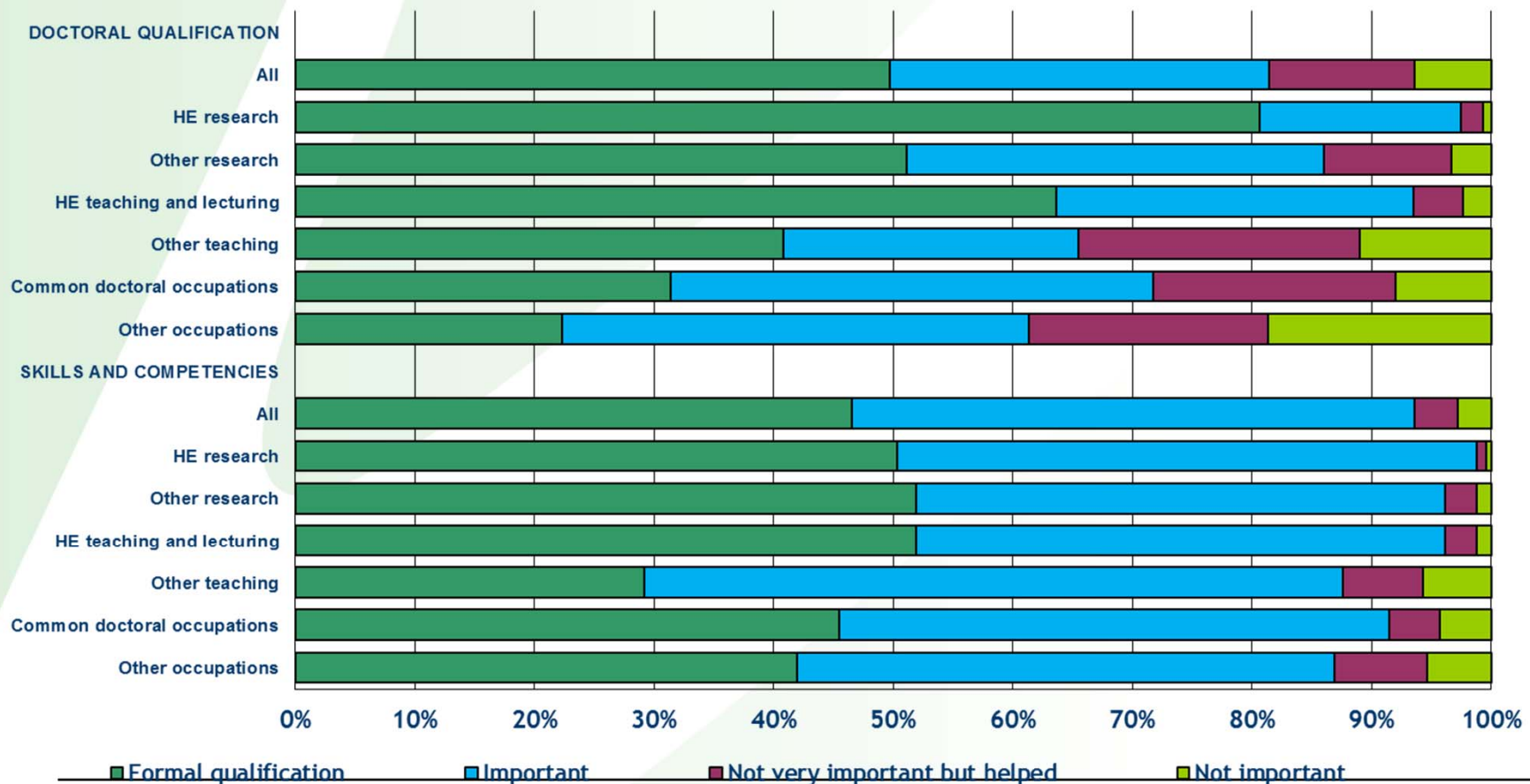




## Doctoral graduate occupational clusters



# Importance of doctorate, skills and competencies for current employment

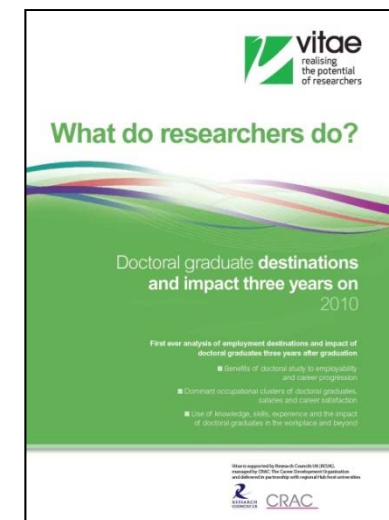




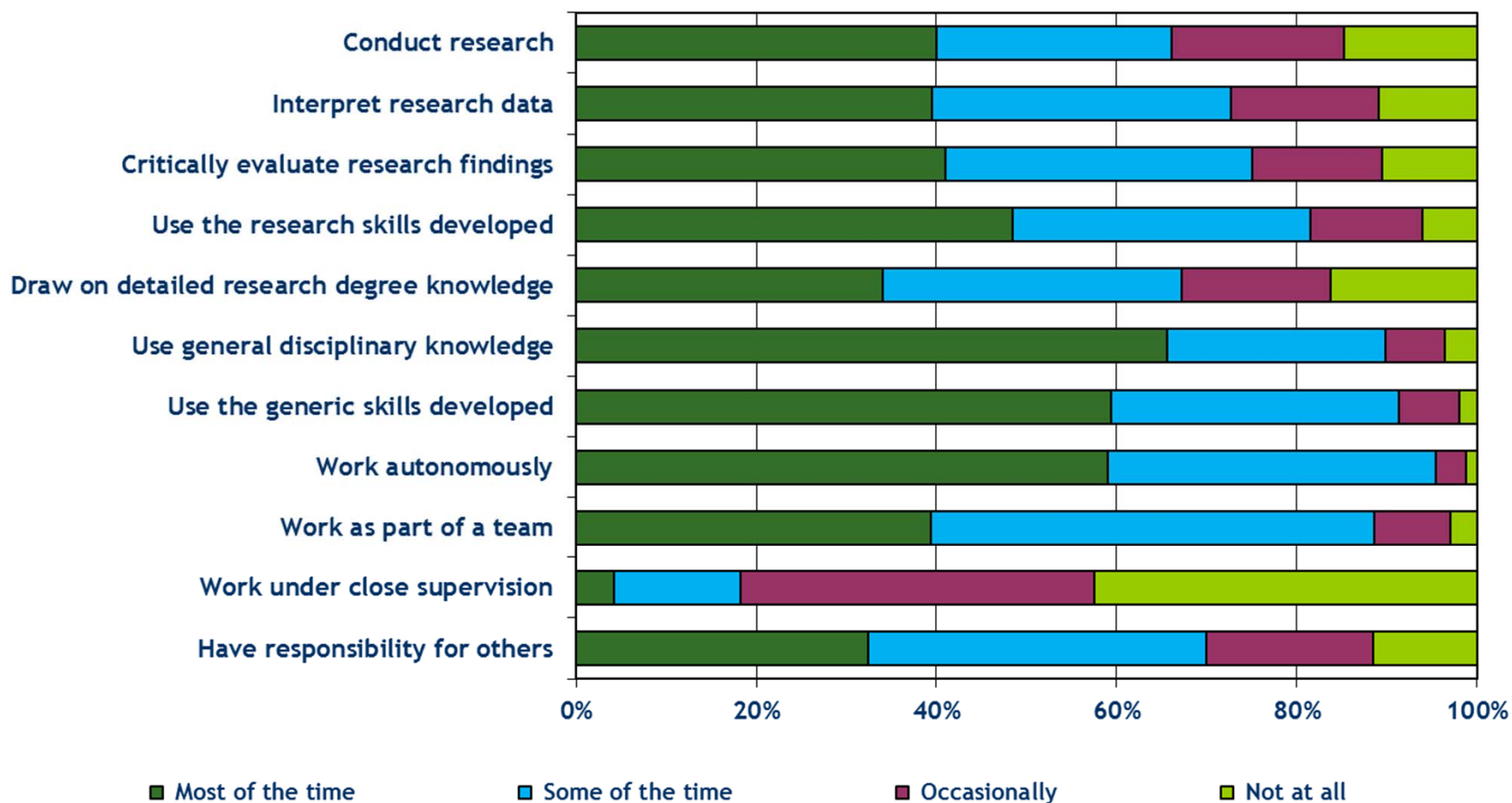
## Evidence of impact

# WDRD? Destinations and impact three years on

- ✔ Use of knowledge, skills and experience (research skills 82%; generic skills (91%))
- ✔ Make a difference in the workplace / innovation (94%)
- ✔ Access to, and progress, towards long term career aspirations (87%)
- ✔ Enhance social and intellectual capabilities and quality of life (89%)



# Use of knowledge, skills and experience



# HE *versus* non-HE research – findings from WDRD 3 years on

Work autonomously most of the time:

- HE Research 65.8%, non-HE research 48.8%

Work as part of a team:

- HE Research 30.1%, non-HE research 44.4%

Be innovative in the workplace:

- HE Research 48.9, non-HE research 50.9%

Make a difference in the workplace:

- HE Research 38.7%, non-HE research 49.3%

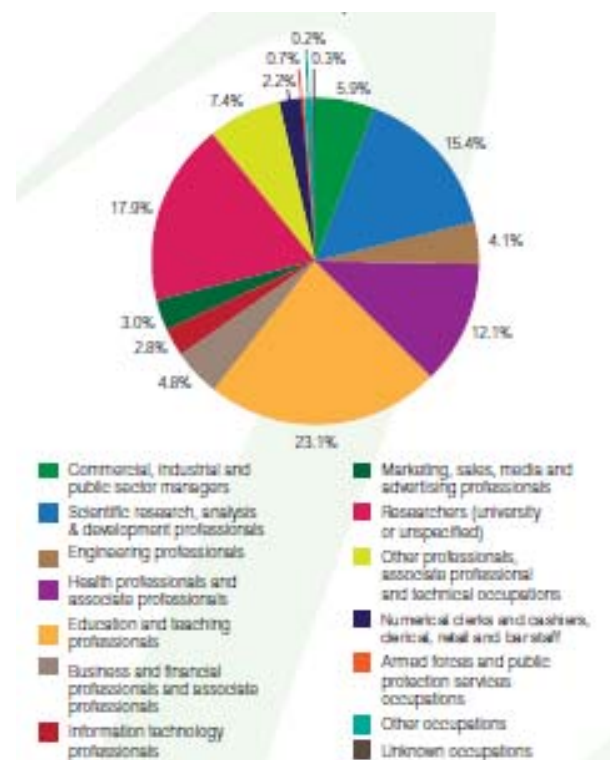


Figure 4: Types of work comparison: UK-domiciled doctoral graduates 2007\*

# Job movement over time: HE and non-HE Researchers

- 435 doctoral graduates were in HE Research at 6 months and 280 were in non-HE research
- At 3.5 years the distribution between job clusters was:

Location at 6 months →	HE	non-HE
– HE Research	50%	18%
– Non-HE Research	13%	47%
– Teach/lecture in HE	17%	3%
– Other Teaching	3%	0%
– Other Common Doctoral	10%	20%
– Other	7%	12%

## Some weblinks

- RCUK: [www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/ResearchCareers)
- Vitae: [www.vitae.ac.uk](http://www.vitae.ac.uk)
- What do researchers do? [www.vitae.ac.uk/wdrd](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/wdrd)
- Labour market information [www.vitae.ac.uk/lmi](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/lmi)
- Impact and evaluation [www.vitae.ac.uk/impact](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/impact)
- Vitae employers [www.vitae.ac.uk/employers](http://www.vitae.ac.uk/employers)

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