The impact of a doctoral career

Information for doctoral students and those considering undertaking a doctorate

Arts and Humanities Doctoral Graduates Factsheet

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About this factsheet

This factsheet has been produced for current or potential doctoral students and those who support and advise them. It is informed by the Doctoral impact and career tracking study conducted on behalf of Research Councils UK (RCUK) and the higher education funding bodies for England and Wales (HEFCE and HEFCW).

The factsheet provides key statistics and examples of achievements and impact for graduates of the Arts and Humanities. It is complemented by a briefing containing a general overview of the findings of the Doctoral Impact and Career Tracking Study.

Employment status seven to nine years after graduation (%)
Survey response: 260

Where are doctoral graduates working seven to nine years on? (%)
Excluding graduates working in higher education. Survey response: 210

Average salary: £40,000*

* Average salary is median salary for survey respondents in full-time employment in one job in the UK.

Find out more

A copy of the full report, along with shorter briefings targeted at policy makers, employers and current and potential doctoral students can be found here: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/skills/impact/

Survey data from the study will be deposited with the UK Data Archive for other researchers to use: http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/
How satisfied are doctoral graduates with their career to date? (%)

Survey responses: Arts and Humanities graduates: 255 / Total sample: 1,818

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arts and Humanities graduates</th>
<th>All doctoral graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all satisfied</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very satisfied</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly satisfied</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job roles of arts and humanities doctoral graduates

The word cloud is created from the job titles of survey respondents working outside higher education – the size of the word corresponds to its frequency in the job titles.

“What a doctorate can provide more effectively, though not exclusively, is the ability to synthesise information and the ability to extrapolate from incomplete information in a way that is effective. I think I have been regularly surprised at how much more you can rely on people with advanced degrees to have those skills.”

Arts and humanities graduate.
“I wouldn’t have imagined at the end of my PhD where my career would take me - lots of very bizarre offshoots. And in a way that’s like the PhD itself because you do the research and it leads you in another direction, and some are dead ends and some are just amazing and completely reshape everything. In a way my career sort of mirrors that PhD pattern.”

Arts and humanities graduate.

### Extent to which doctoral experience enabled graduates to... (%)

Survey responses: 245-260

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Some extent</th>
<th>A great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate complex information to non-specialists</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve problems</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think creatively</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be innovative in the workplace</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Since graduating Arts and Humanities graduates have...

- Set up a new literature festival attracting an audience of over 2,000
- Repatriated historical human remains for museums
- Created a blueprint for security adopted by companies around the world
- Instigated changes to government policy on mental health
- Digitised an entire body of philosophical works
- Published a book that was their publisher’s bestseller for 2009
- Run a series of inspirational talks for local schools and community about an historical site

### In the words of their employers...

“In studying for a [humanities] doctorate you are trained to sharpen your critical faculties – and I think that’s a training you don’t get so much at undergraduate or even at masters level – but the critical inquisitiveness that a doctorate gives you allows an organisation to be self-critical and to aim for a new answer and a better answer all the time.”

Large employer, other sectors.

“[Doctoral graduates] come with a really good knowledge of what is going on amongst young, innovative research in their area. So they are more aware than people who have been employed here for a very long term about new trends both in research themes but also new trends in research methodologies and research tools [...] and they are therefore often impatient drivers of change.”

Large employer, other sectors.