The impact of a doctoral career

Information for doctoral students and those considering undertaking a doctorate

Social Sciences 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 Social Sciences. 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: 233

Average salary: £46,000*

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/

* Average salary is median salary for survey respondents in full-time employment in one job in the UK.
How satisfied are doctoral graduates with their career to date

Survey responses: Social Sciences: 230 / Total sample: 1,818

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all satisfied</th>
<th>Not very satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All doctoral graduates</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
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Job roles of social science 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.

“The PhD training encourages you to think differently from the very word go, to push your boundaries and to move on from existing ideas and put them to the test. [...] Working with innovative peers encourages you to raise your bar, which I think is a side effect of doctoral training.”

social sciences graduate.
Extent to which doctoral experience enabled graduates to... (%)  
Survey responses: 225-230

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Some extent</th>
<th>A great extent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate complex information</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solve problems</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61</td>
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<td>Think creatively</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be innovative in the workplace</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
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</table>

Since graduating Social Sciences graduates have...

- Evaluated a government pilot that led to a major policy change
- Established a business advising overseas businesses and governments how to operate ethically
- Developed a model to predict the performance of retail outlets
- Supported better media and journalism in a developing country
- Acted as expert adviser on an award winning research project
- Advised government on the needs of vulnerable young people

In the words of their employers...

"Whenever we are looking bringing new products on board or looking at new strategies or new structures, definitely the people with the doctorates will do a lot more research and background information and checking before jumping in with two feet... the PhD people they will actually think about things first and then they plan.

Large employer, research and development.

“I think [doctoral graduates] are a very steadying influence across the company, and that certainly helps people be more productive. [...] It’s great that they mentor other staff formally, but they also debrief informally without even realising it.”

Small employer, health and social work."