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Careers
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Doctoral Internships: Friend or Foe?

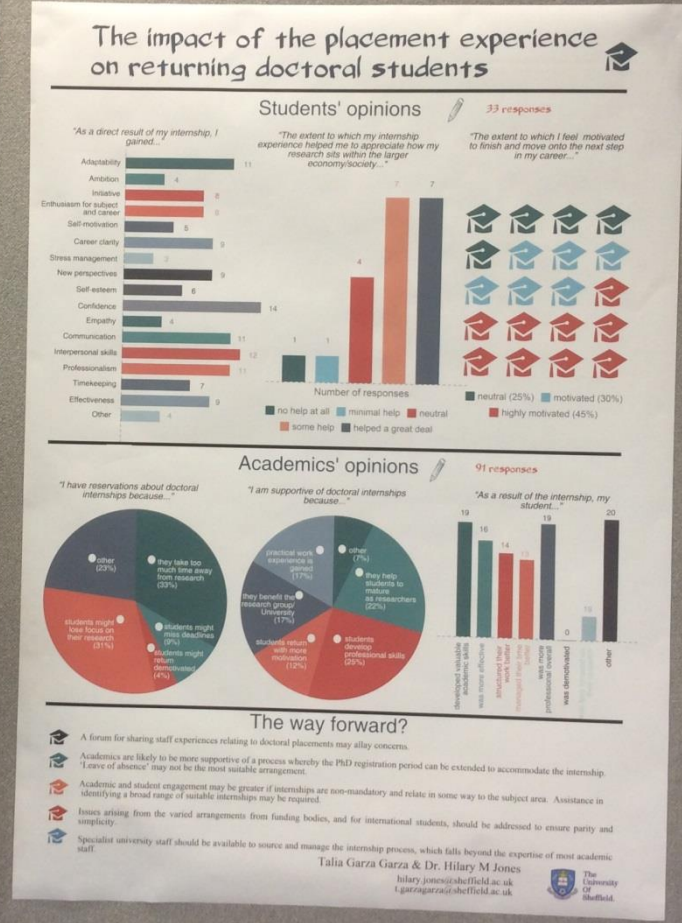
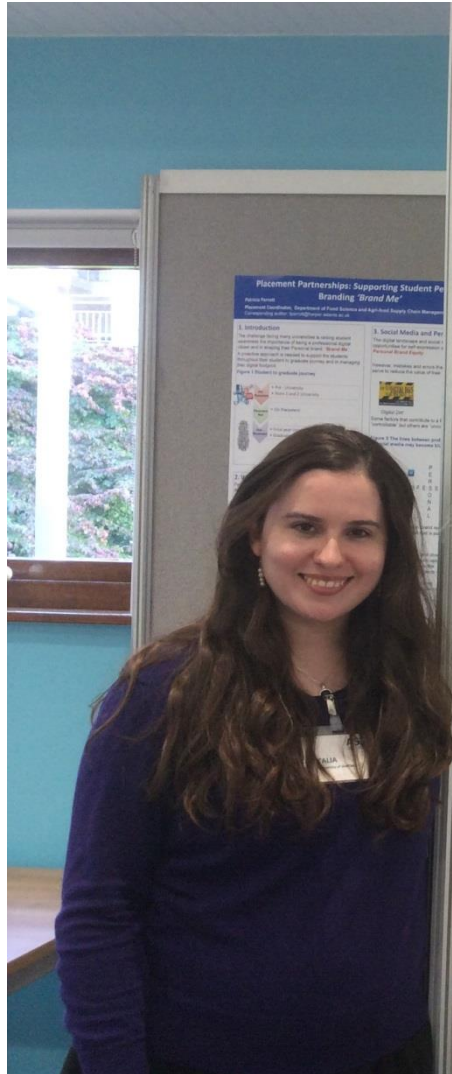
Ms Talia Garza Garza and Dr Hilary M Jones
Postgraduate Internships Coordinator
The University of Sheffield





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Rationale for research

- Majority of doctoral students do not pursue an academic career
 - Proliferation of placement schemes at doctoral level
 - Anecdotal evidence about benefits and disadvantages of these schemes
-



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Research methods

- Three separate surveys
- Face-to-face interviews with students and staff

Current student, completed their internship

Thank you for volunteering and completing this poll. The information from this poll will potentially contribute to the development of University of Sheffield policy and national policy.

Please keep in mind that at the end of this poll, there is an option to check whether you are interested in claiming your bar of chocolate or not, and if you are interested in volunteering further by allowing us to contact you for a short (15-20 minutes) interview.

Thank you for your participation and time.

Current student poll, currently conducting an internship

Thank you for volunteering and completing this poll. The information from this poll will potentially contribute to the development of University of Sheffield policy and national policy.

Please keep in mind that at the end of this poll, there is an option to check whether you are interested in claiming your bar of chocolate or not, and if you are interested in volunteering further by allowing us to contact you for a short (15-20 minutes) interview.

Supervisor Poll

Thank you for volunteering and completing this poll. This survey aims to identify the benefits and drawbacks of PhD students undertaking an internship or work experience during their PhD, from an academic perspective. The work experience can be of a CASE award, the BBSRC's pips scheme or any other arrangement whereby PhD students have spent time with another organisation.

The information from this poll will potentially contribute to The University of Sheffield policy and national policy.

Thanks for your participation and time.

***Required**

1. Have any of your PhD students completed an internship during their PhD studies? *

- Yes
- No

2. If so, what type of work experience did your student do?

- BBSRC/Pips scheme
- ESRC Internship
- CASE award
- Internship in industry
- Internship at a university
- Other:

3. In principle, do you support PhD students undertaking an internship during their PhD studies? *

1 2 3 4 5

have reservations against fully supportive

Please tell us why *

r graduate level work experience or
grade the PhD studies (for example
PhD).

e level work experience or

PhD studies (for example

cing a leave of absence because of

sing your internship? *
(management skills)

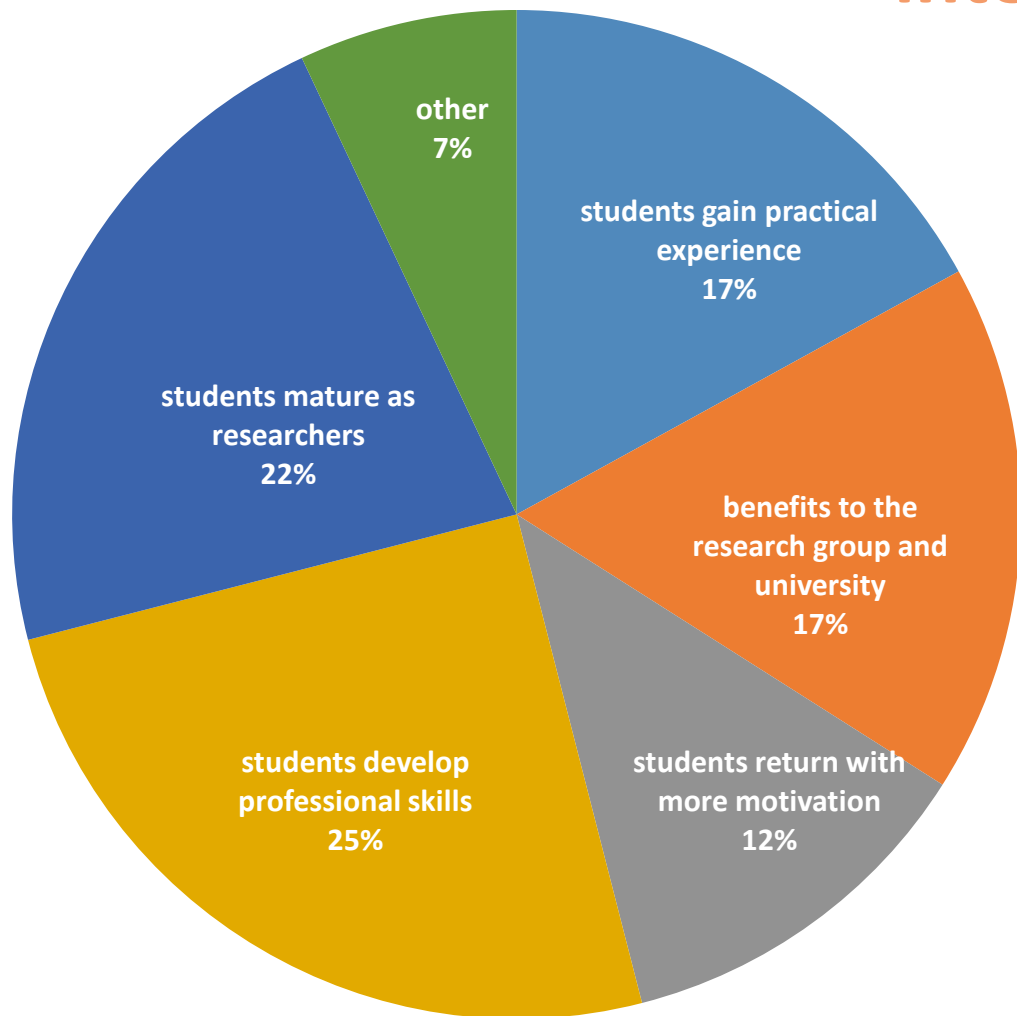
ve of absence because of





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Academics were supportive of doctoral internships because:

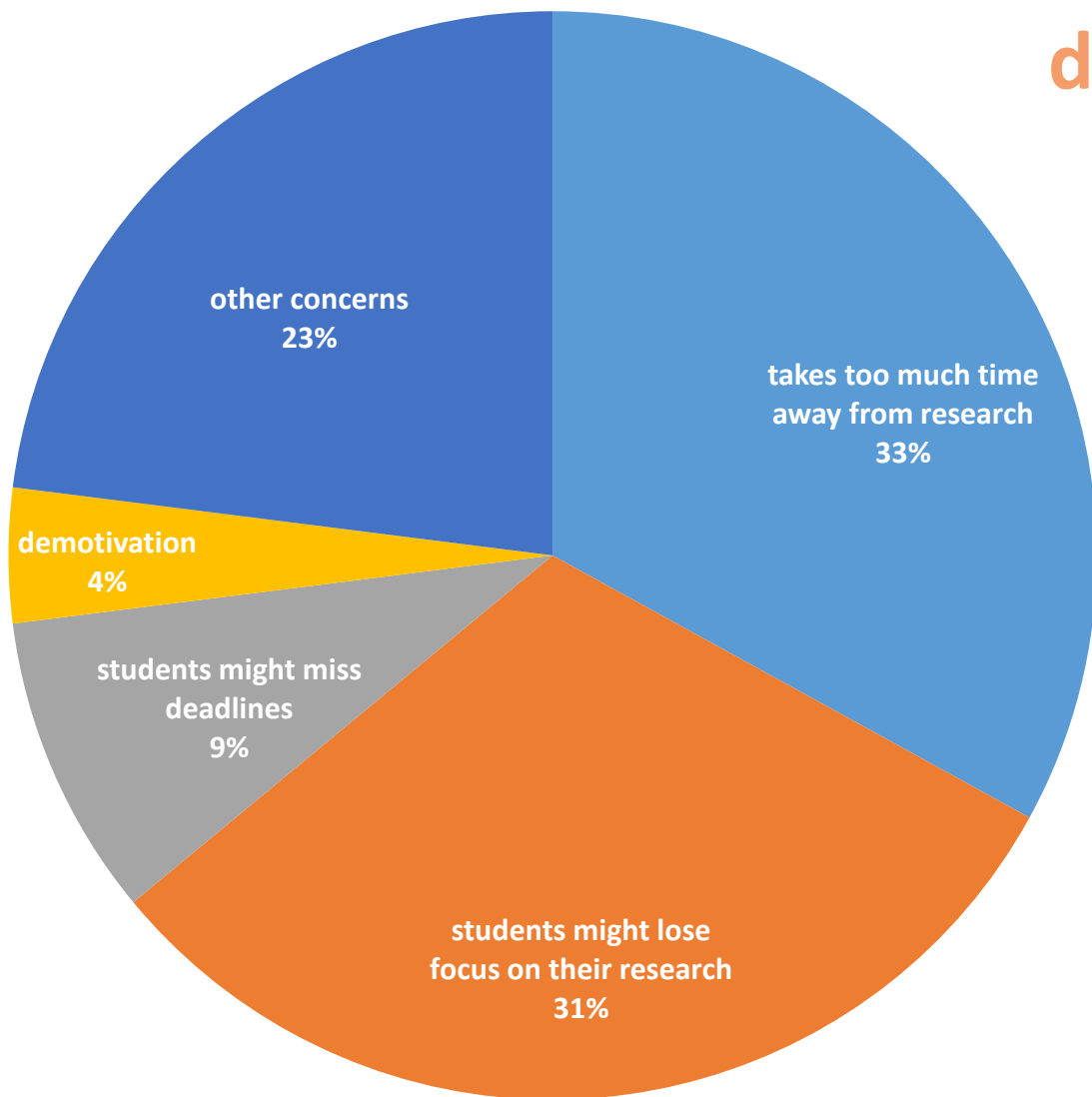




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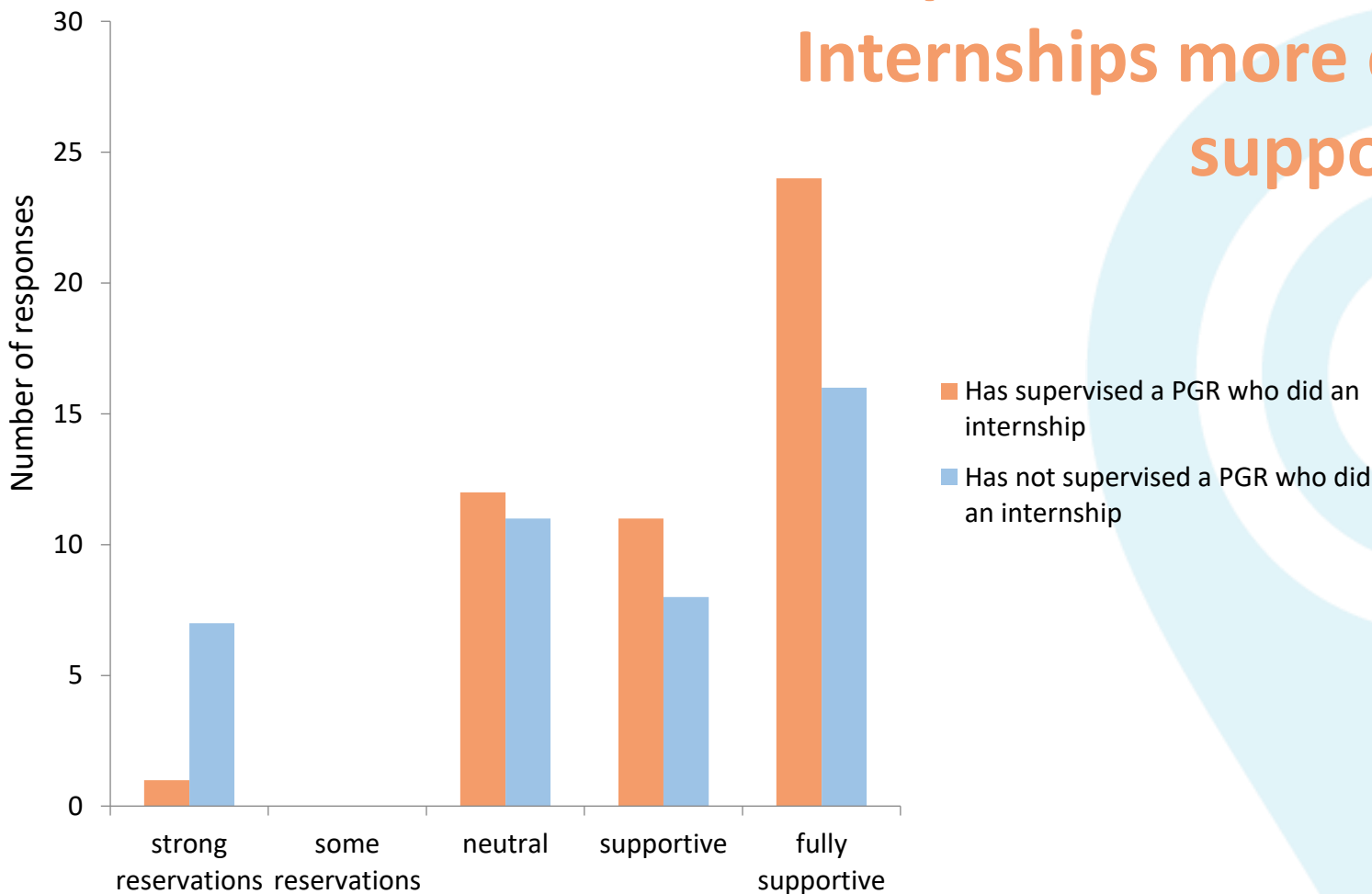
Academics had reservations about doctoral internships because:





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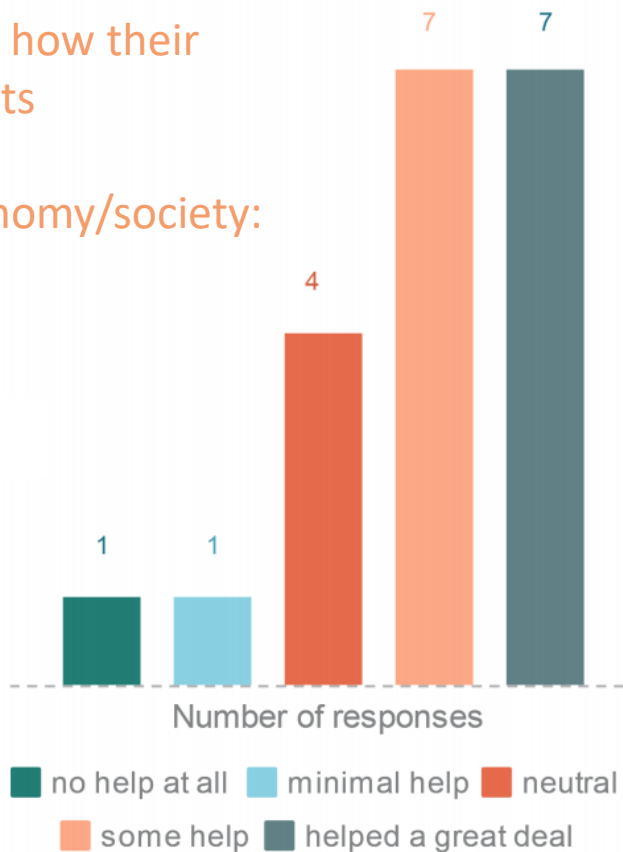
Are academics with experience of doctoral Internships more or less supportive?





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Extent to which the internship experience helped students appreciate how their research sits within the larger economy/society:



Extent to which students felt motivated to move on to the next step in their career:

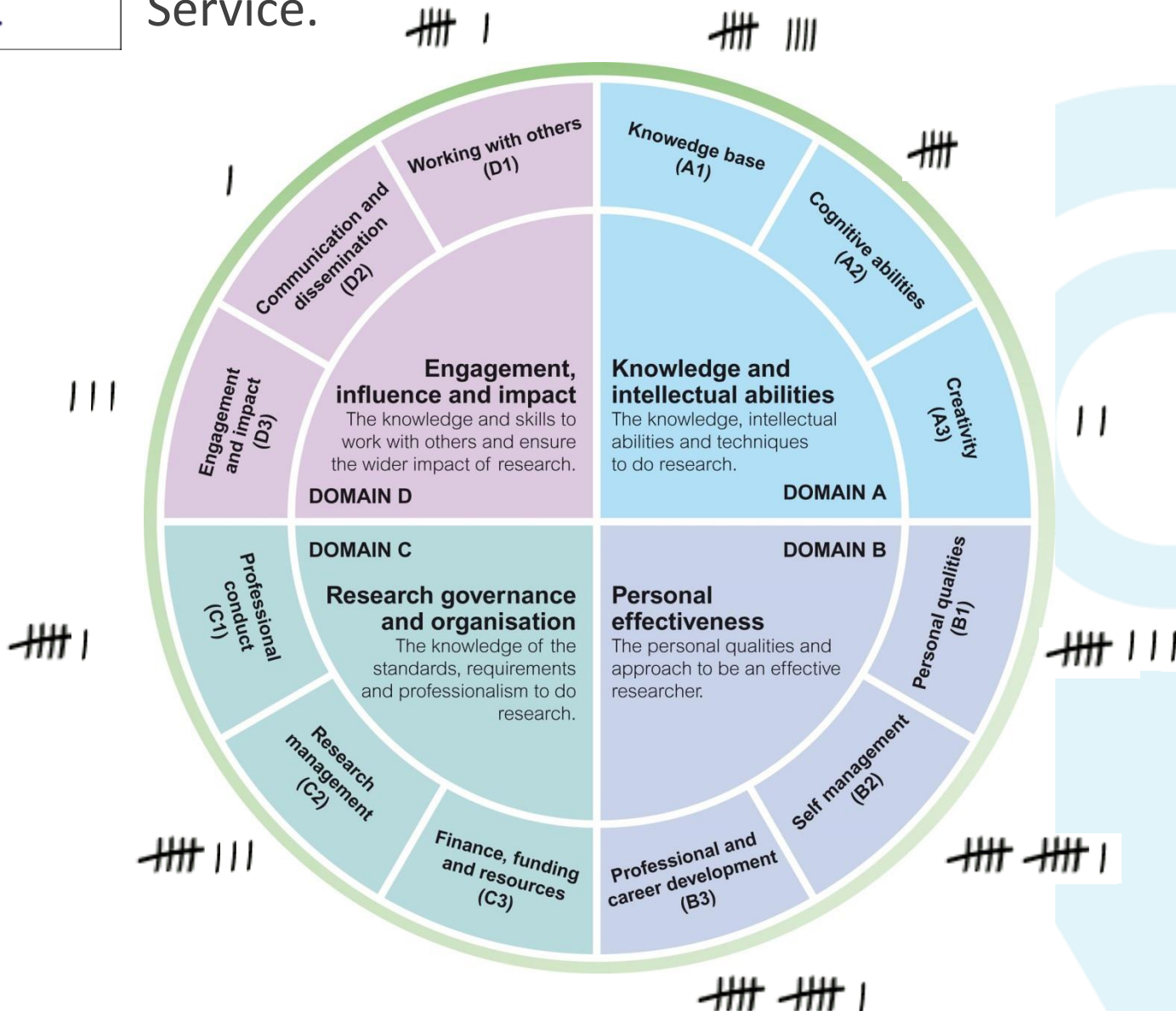


neutral (25%) motivated (30%) highly motivated (45%)



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Reasons to be cheerful...

“Excellent experience for the student and expands the network and connections for the academic.”

“Good for student to gain wider experience. Good for supervisor and University in building links and reputation with external organisations. Raises possibility of future spin off work or impact of PhD output.”

“Many PhD students do not end up in academic careers. Often they are poorly informed about other options. Internships are a good way to get external experience and, if they do end up as academics, it is no bad thing to have seen something outside University life.”

...and reasons not to be

“I work in pure mathematics. I don’t see how an internship can be relevant?”

“Internships are training students for what they do if they fail as researchers. I would prefer schemes that optimize success rather than mitigate failure.”

Recommendations

- Forum for sharing staff experience
 - Extension of registration period – not LOA
 - Non-mandatory, related to subject area
 - Simplify multitude of arrangements
 - Specialist staff to source, manage and ensure compliance
-



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With thanks to

Talia Garza Garza

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Lorna Warnock, The University of
York





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