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In theory: A realist approach to the development of researchers

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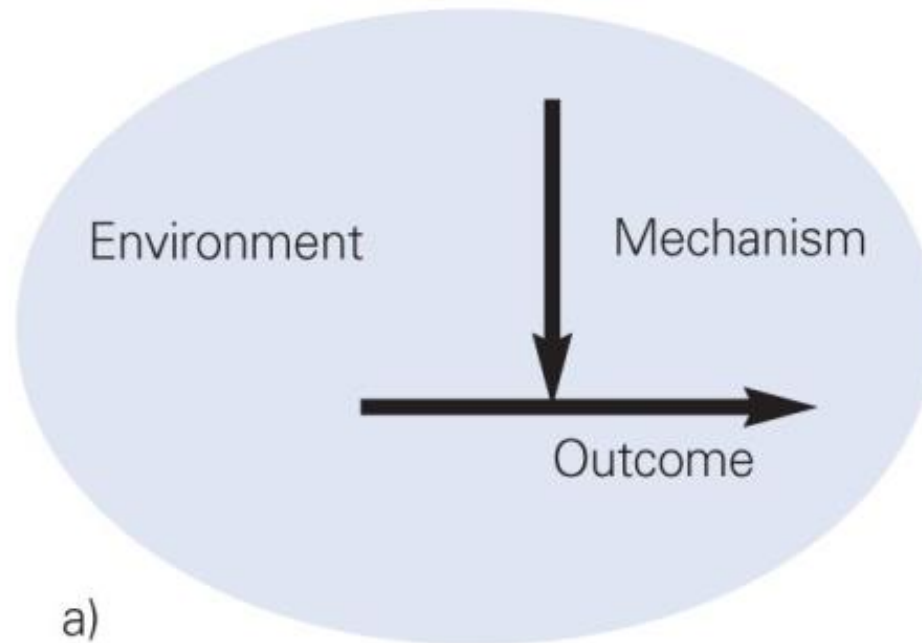


1. Realist approach key ideas
2. Application to development programme
3. Application to the individual
4. A realist future

1. Realist approach key ideas



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Mechanisms are: ***'frequently occurring and easily recognizable causal patterns that are triggered under generally unknown conditions or with indeterminate consequences'*** Jon Elster



1. Realist approach key ideas

1. The current environment, with the current mechanism(s) acting in it leads to the current outcome(s)
2. The relationship between the environment and mechanism(s) and outcome(s) is fluid: change in one can cause change in another
3. We can influence the environment, to support the operation of a mechanism to support the achievement of an outcome
4. Whether we choose to attempt to influence or not there will always be an environment, a mechanism(s) acting and an outcome(s)

2. Application to a development programme



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A. Understand now:

What is the environment now?

What outcome(s) do we get?

What mechanism(s) is acting?

Environment

B. Where do we want to be?

What outcome(s) do we want? why?

How can we change the environment to...

Support the mechanism(s) we want?

Outcome

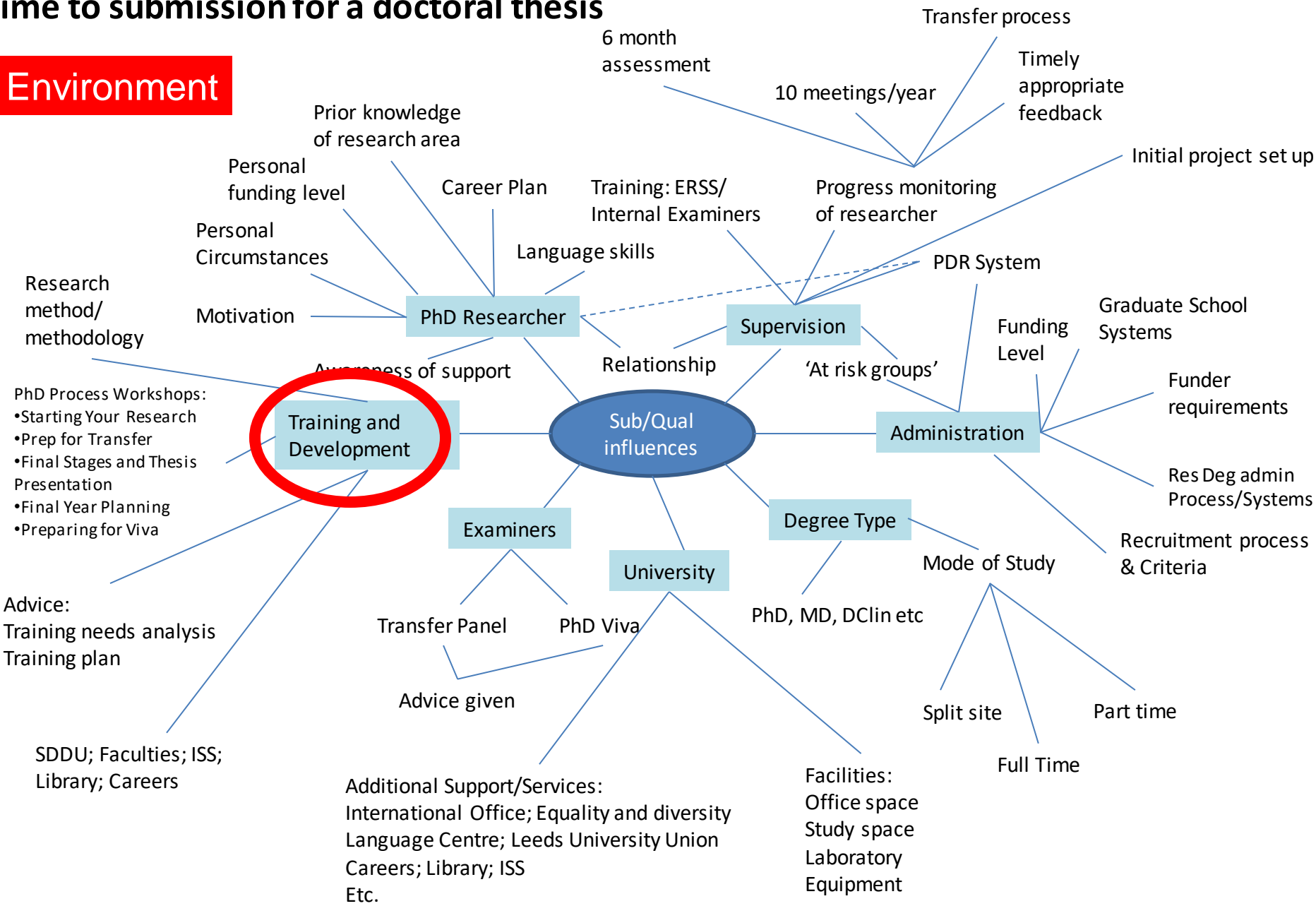
Understand **A**, Understand **B**, design a logical progression from **A** to **B**

(Continue to monitor and re-assess. Logic and reality differ)

Mechanism

Understand now: Environmental influences map – Factors that can impact on time to submission for a doctoral thesis

Environment



Environmental Changes

New online system

Improved recording and monitoring of progress

Rationalisation, simplification, unification of process

Increased clarity of procedure

Increased PhD

'Process' training

Training Messages

To PGR and supervisors

'Three year standard period of study'

Skills development

Increased PGR numbers through:

Time management
Project management

Final stages and thesis presentation

Outcome

Short term
PRES

Long term
tbc

Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2015 University of Leeds



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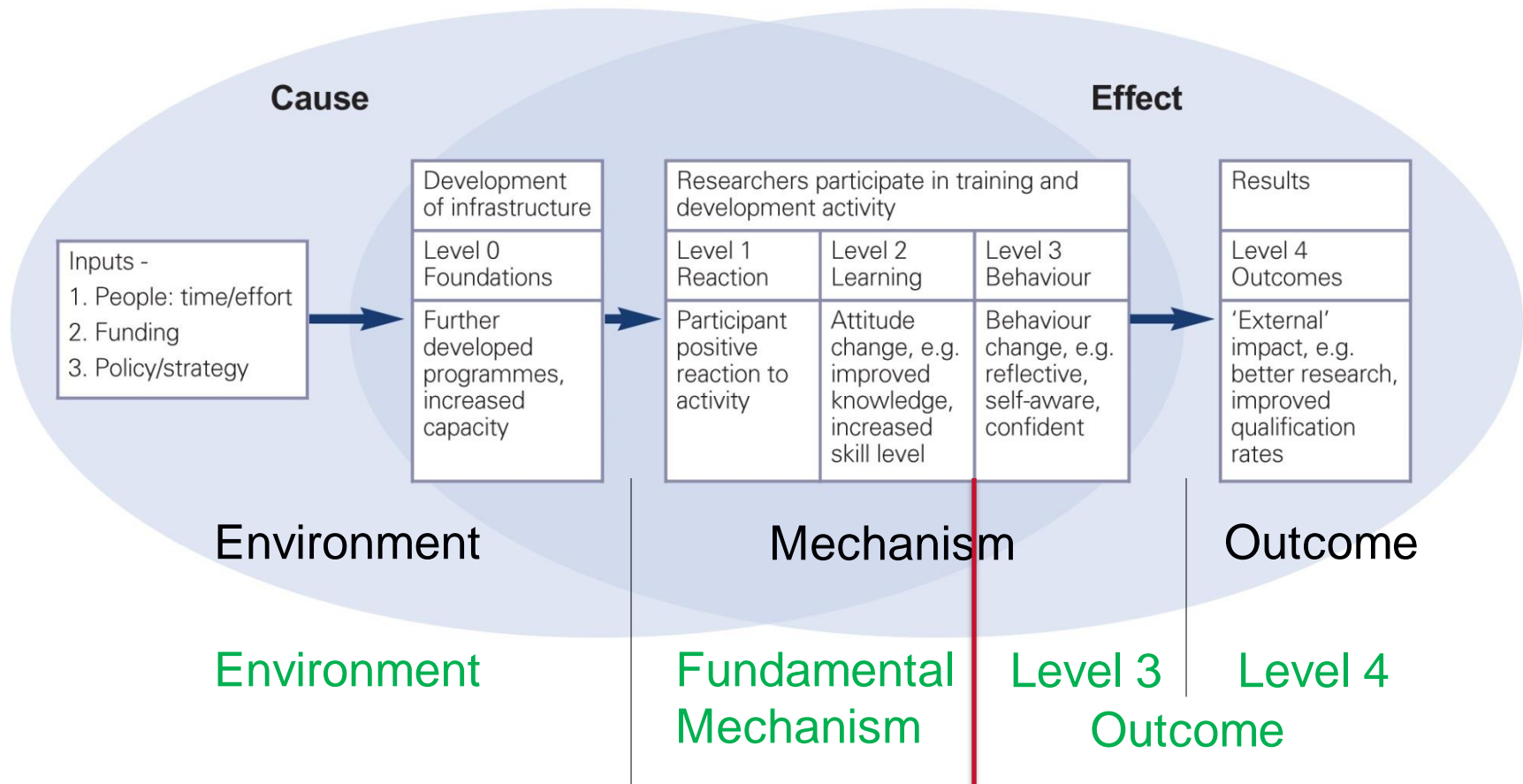
	2013 (UoL) % agree	2015 (UoL) % agree	Russell Group 2015 (provisional)	Difference between Russell Group and UoL (percentage points)
Supervision				
2.1.a. My supervisor/s have the skills and subject knowledge to support my research				→ +0.5
2.2.a. I have regular contact with my supervisor/s, appropriate for my needs				↑ +3.1
2.3.a. My supervisor/s provide feedback that helps me direct my research activities				→ +1.7
2.4.a. My supervisor/s help me to identify my training and development needs as a researcher				→ +3.0
Resources				
4.1.a. I have a suitable working space				→ +1.2
4.2.a. There is adequate provision of computing resources and facilities				→ +2.7
4.3.a. There is adequate provision of library facilities (including physical and online resources)				→ +2.1
4.4.a. I have access to the specialist resources necessary for my research				→ +0.7
Research Culture				
6.1.a. My department provides a good seminar programme				→ -1.2
6.2.a. I have frequent opportunities to discuss my research with other research students				→ +1.4
6.3.a. The research ambience in my department or faculty stimulates my work				→ +1.2
6.4.a. I have opportunities to become involved in the wider research community, beyond my department				→ +0.4
Progress and Assessment				
8.1.a. I received an appropriate induction to my research degree programme				↑ +8.4
8.2.a. I understand the requirements and deadlines for formal monitoring of my progress				↑ +3.0
8.3.a. I understand the required standard for my thesis				↑ +4.6
8.4.a. The final assessment procedures for my degree are clear to me				↑ +4.3

3. Application to the individual



Development or learning?

The development mechanism or development process?





3. Application to the individual

The development ~~mechanism~~ process comprises:

1. Reaction – ‘Fight or flight’ mechanism
2. Learning - mechanism
3. Behavioural change – an outcome
4. Outcome – ultimate achievement of objectives

Mechanism re an individual: *an attribute fundamental to an individual that has magnitude and direction and independent momentum*

3. Application to the individual



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Understand the individual

Questions:

1. What is the unique environment of the individual now?

Skills, attributes, strengths, weaknesses, personality traits, motivations, learning preferences, ambition, personal circumstances etc...

Tools: Self reflection, MBTI, Training Needs Analysis, Belbin etc...

2. So what can we do to minimise the flight mechanism and maximise the learning mechanism?

Tailor the development activity



4. A realist future

1. A realist approach provides a reference framework for the development of people
2. A realist approach to design engenders the creation of understanding
3. Putting a realist approach into our 'environment' for creating development activity supports the development of our understanding and the creation of knowledge



We are all in this together...

