

ESCR IAA Impact Workshop
Propellers and barriers
along the PhD journey

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Who am I?

- Dutch
- PhD student at the CRUK Beatson Institute
- Student representative Beatson and Institute of Cancer Sciences
- Athena Swan team
- E-mentor at UofG
- PGR blogger

Becoming an international student



Becoming an international student

- Prestige
- CV building
- Adventure
- Better research climate
- Lack of positions back home
- Financial reasons
- Personal freedom

Barriers



Administrative

Cultural

Social

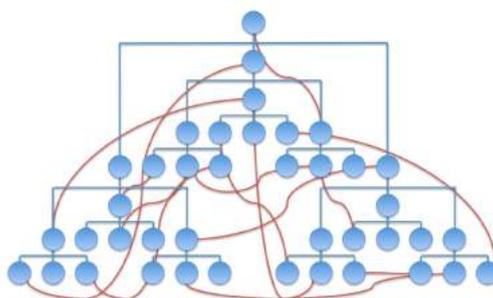
Administrative barriers



Propellers – advice is available

The screenshot displays the SRC Advice Centre website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Contact Us', 'News', 'Blog', 'SRC Documents', and 'Search', along with social media icons for Facebook and Twitter. Below this is a secondary menu with categories: 'About', 'Advice', 'Clubs', 'Events', 'Campaigns', 'Services', and 'Volunteer'. The main content area features a large 'Advice' section with a list of services: 'Accommodation', 'Money, taxes, benefits', 'Health and safety', 'Transport', 'University and study issues', and 'Working and operating'. To the right, there is a section for 'International students' with a photo of three people and text about visa and immigration advice. Below these are three promotional tiles: 'Ask a Student Enquiry Form' (with a photo of two students), 'Hello UofG app' (with a photo of a smartphone), and 'UofG on The Student Room' (with the Student Room logo).

...but not always found

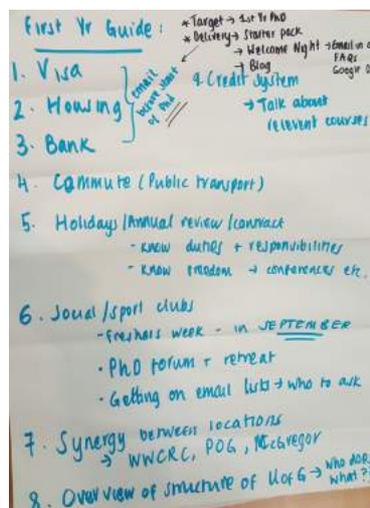


Many students do not enter their PhD via UofG

- “devolved” institutes
- External funders
- Direct applications

Propellers at the ICS

- Buddy system
- Welcome night
- Internal communication
- First Year Guide



Cultural barriers

- Language

WHAT THE BRITISH SAY	WHAT THE BRITISH MEAN	WHAT FOREIGNERS UNDERSTAND
I hear what you say	I disagree and do not want to discuss it further	He accepts my point of view
With the greatest respect	You are an idiot	He is listening to me
That's not bad	That's good	That's poor
That is a very brave proposal	You are insane	He thinks I have courage
Quite good	A bit disappointing	Quite good
I would suggest	Do it or be prepared to justify yourself	Think about the idea, but do what you like
Oh, incidentally/ by the way	The primary purpose of our discussion is	That is not very important
I was a bit disappointed that	I am annoyed that	It doesn't really matter
Very interesting	That is clearly nonsense	They are impressed

- Religious practices
- Cultural habits
- Supervisor-student-colleague relationships

Caution

- Every PhD is unique as they are almost entirely “at the discretion of your supervisor”
 - This allows for a lot of inequality
 - Capture more in policy?
- *Supervisors generally have had no training in education*

Propellers – aligning expectations

<p>It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic.</p>	1 2 3 4 5	<p>The researcher is responsible for selecting their own topic.</p>
<p>It is the supervisor who decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate.</p>	1 2 3 4 5	<p>Researchers should decide which theoretical framework or methodology they wish to use.</p>
<p>The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the researcher is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities of the department and university.</p>	1 2 3 4 5	<p>It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that they have located and accessed all the relevant services and facilities for research.</p>
<p>A warm supportive relationship between supervisor and researcher is important for a successful doctorate.</p>	1 2 3 4 5	<p>A personal supportive relationship is inadvisable because it may obstruct objectivity for both researcher and supervisor during the doctorate.</p>

Social barriers

- Integration
 - Missing home
 - Isolation
- Lack of support network makes international students more vulnerable



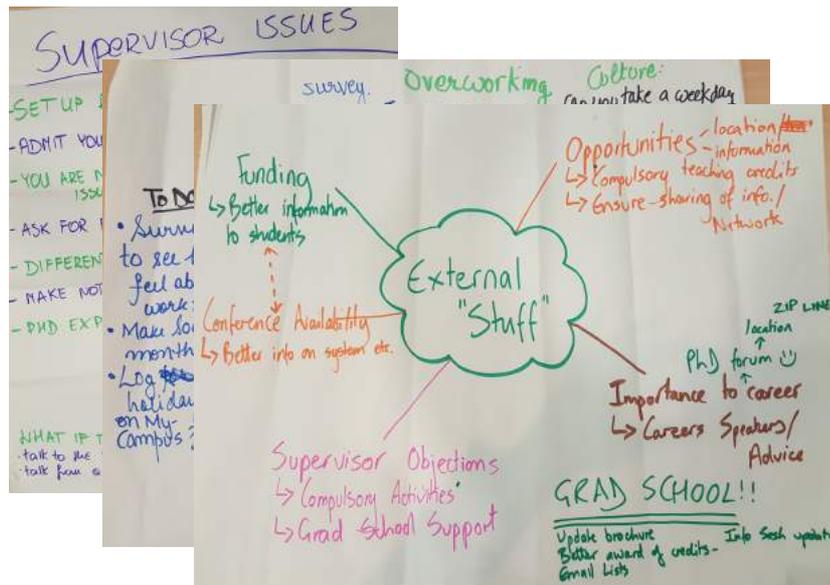
Propellers – peer support

1. Learn
 2. Support
 3. Network
- Monthly PhD Forum
 - Annual retreat
- UofG: PGR Blog

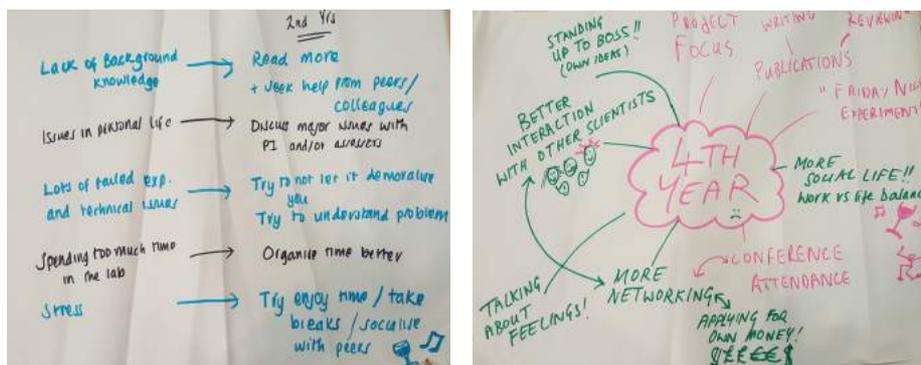
Propellers



Propellers



Propellers



Peer support cycle

1. Buddy
2. Welcome night
3. Annual retreat
4. Annual satisfaction survey
5. Annual ICS poster session
6. Monthly PhD Forum



Trust and support your students!

Leadership skills: organisational skills, team work, delegation and people management, financial management, influence and negotiation, creative problem solving, meeting tight deadlines, marketing skills, prioritising, eye for detail, work under pressure, manage unexpected problems, resourcefulness

- We need buy-in from you

Is it all struggles?



