



I have a PhD. Now what? Future-Proofing the Careers of Research Students

Jennifer Boreland, *The University of Queensland*

PhD students can no longer expect to move directly into an academic position on completion of their higher degree by research (HDR). The higher education employment landscape has shifted dramatically in recent years; yet many PhDs are not aware of this and still expect that they will be guaranteed a career in academia.

Recently, the Australian Council of Learned Academies highlighted the need for new approaches to training higher degree research students to ensure they are prepared for the possibility of careers outside academia. This reflects global trends within the higher education sector.

The University of Queensland's Graduate School (UQGS) is well placed to address these changing demands on HDR development and the new realities of employment post-research-degree. In consultation with industry, UQGS has developed a suite of workshops and experiences – grouped together as the Career Development Framework (CDF) - designed to ensure its research students are provided with professional and career development opportunities which complement the research-focussed elements of the degree.

The CDF aims to provide UQ research students with an understanding of the diverse range of careers available to them, access to networks outside academia, and skills development to ensure they have a competitive edge when entering the workforce. It provides a tool for HDR students and advisors to identify existing competencies and address development requirements. Students can then take a purposeful and strategic approach to their training and development. This meets the University's aims of producing graduate researchers who can look forward to meaningful futures; futures as creative knowledge leaders, adaptable to the demands of the 21st century employment landscape, and who can contribute significantly to their discipline and the wider community.

This presentation will demonstrate how the CDF has been implemented as a tool for career development, and identify future plans to improve its effectiveness.