



# UCL Doctoral Skills Development Programme

Annual Report 2017-18



## Table of Contents

<b>1. Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Introduction and Remit of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. The year in review: key achievements and new initiatives in 2017-2018</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Future plans: The agenda for 2018-19</b>	<b>7</b>
Further new developments and pilots for 2018-19	8
Strategic development beyond 2018-19	9
UCL Doc Skills 2017-18 provision by Researcher Development Framework	10
<b>5. Communication: website, newsletter, social media</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6. Systems, Space and facilities</b>	<b>14</b>
Systems and Databases	14
Space and facilities	15
Student and staff Induction	15
<b>7. Feedback and user views</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>8. Collaborations</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>9. Conclusion</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>10. Appendices</b>	<b>19</b>
Appendix 1 Terms of Reference of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme Training Board	19
Appendix 2 Doctoral Skills Development Programme KPIs	21
a) Summary of programme information, including RDF subdomain, average feedback and detailed breakdown of registrations by Faculty	21
b) Detailed feedback report	21
c) Analysis by Researcher Development Framework	22
Appendix 3 Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network – Registration Statistics	27
Appendix 4 Summary of new courses on UCL Doc Skills in 2017-18 and 2018-19	27

## 1. Executive Summary

- ❖ The UCL Doctoral Skills Development Programme (UCL Doc Skills), provided by HR Organisational Development, exemplifies highly successful partnership working across the University and within Bloomsbury, and is the bedrock of our ambition to see UCL recognised as a Centre of Excellence for Researcher Development by 2020, through an expansion of support for postgraduate research students, early career and advanced researchers.
- ❖ The programme supports UCL 2034, 'giving the best support for students': combining provision from UCL's world-leading academics and colleagues across the university. It also convenes and coordinates the Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network (BPSN): a long-standing arrangement to share researcher development provision between local higher education institutions. In 2017-18 a new member institution City University of London applied to join the network and will become an active member from January 2019.
- ❖ The focus of the programme in 2017-18 was to raise awareness amongst researchers of the provision, encourage researchers to take control of their research skills, personal and professional development, and to improve the programme through co-creation with research students. Successes in this area included a pilot of the Researcher-led Initiative Awards.
- ❖ On average across the University, postgraduate research student engagement with UCL Doc Skills grew in 2017-18. Feedback from research students reveals high levels of satisfaction amongst attendees: 92 per cent would recommend courses to their peers. We aim to expand the programme offer from 4 to 6 training points per student by 2019-20, which translates to an average of 3 training events per student. In 2017-18 we requested a budget uplift to support this aim, which was regrettably not fulfilled. In order to better support postgraduate research students at UCL and the Research Strategy, research skills training, personal and professional development for research students will require a funding uplift. Therefore a request will be submitted in 2018-19.
- ❖ Gap analysis using the Researcher Development Framework reveals the strength and depth of the programme. 43 new courses were added in 2017-18 to address previously identified gaps and areas of high demand.

## **2. Introduction and Remit of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme**

UCL Doc Skills is one of the largest and most comprehensive researcher development programmes for postgraduate research students in the HE sector in the UK and in Europe. It has been recognised at an international level as an example of excellence and good practice for supporting world-class researchers. The programme is open to all postgraduate research students at UCL and is overseen by the Doctoral School and stakeholders across the University (Terms of Reference of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme Board and Key Performance Indicators are included in Appendices). We offer a comprehensive professional development programme of short courses, e-learning, competitions, and funding. In support of UCL 2034 and the Research Strategy, we aim to exemplify, 'giving the best support for students', to reduce barriers and facilitate cross-disciplinary working. We help to deliver the Doctoral Education Strategy, encouraging researchers to become 'creative, critical, autonomous, intellectual risk takers', and to provide support for 'wide career aspirations'.

Our vision:

- To provide excellent professional development for researchers through a wide-ranging and comprehensive programme.
- To develop UCL researchers through a cross-disciplinary learning environment that encourages team-working and networking.
- To empower researchers to direct their professional development and future careers, in academic and non-academic roles.

## **3. The year in review: key achievements and new initiatives in 2017-2018**

In 2017-18 the Human Resources Organisational Development (OD) team began a process of transformation in order to meet a newly defined HR strategy, reflect the vision of the newly appointed Director of Organisational Development and radically improve its overall approach to researcher development and support for academic staff. A number of opportunities to learn from the success of the well-established Doc Skills programme were identified within this process. The aim for the Doc Skills programme within this period was to continue to deliver essential learning and development opportunities and experiences to UCL's population of 8,000 eligible postgraduate researchers. The team sought to build on gap analysis to extend provision and engage a wider audience of postgraduate research students, especially to expand opportunities for co-creation and augment the student-led voice on the programme. In order to do this, it applied for a budget increase, for a much-needed expansion of the programme, which, if successful, will take effect within in 2018-19 and beyond. Wider developments within UCL mean that we have not had a response to our bid, which is disappointing, as it has thus far constrained our ability to

deliver additional (and necessary) development to these communities and in-line with our UCL 2034 aspirations.

New initiatives in 2017-18 that explicitly addressed the **Doctoral Education Strategy** were as follows:

<b>Doctoral Education Strategy Action</b>	<b>OD Action</b>
<b>Ensuring high quality research education environment: UCL Doc Skills caters for student demand.</b>	Additional programming in response to PRES 2017, gap analysis, student demand and institutional drivers. 43 new courses and learning opportunities were created, including integrity, leadership, wellbeing, and support for academic writing and publishing.
<b>Ensuring high quality research education environment: Students have a clear sense of the importance of and the ability to implement healthy work/life balance. This is reflected by the staff with whom they work.</b>  <b>Students perceive UCL to be invested in their wellbeing.</b>	Across all provision the Doc Skills programme provides opportunities for peer-to-peer support, and reduces the isolation associated with postgraduate research student experience.  In particular in 2017-18, UCL Doc Skills offered expanded opportunities to learn about wellbeing and work-life balance, adding new courses to a suite of wellbeing education on the programme in 2017-18, including <i>Sweet Dreams: cultivating a restful sleep</i> and <i>Keep Calm and Study On: how stress impacts the mind and body</i> .
<b>Foster leadership grounded in excellence: Numbers undertaking Leadership training and opportunities through UCL Doc Skills.</b>	Successful pilot within 2017-18 of new Researcher-led Initiative Awards: opportunities for research students to develop leadership and project management skills by bidding for, devising and leading a collaborative learning and development activity for their peers.  UCL Doc Skills expanded training opportunities in leadership through support for PGR places on UCL Changemaker, Leadership in Action and through the extension of a new course introducing the <i>Essentials of Academic Leadership</i> .  UCL Doc Skills also provides key support in the promotion and development of new opportunities in leadership offered by UCL Innovation and Enterprise and Global Challenges.
<b>Foster leadership grounded in excellence: Develop effective and scalable Integrity Training programme and implement.</b>	The development of a new e-learning module on integrity was sponsored in partnership with OVPR (Head of Research Integrity).
<b>Foster leadership grounded in excellence: Encourage outreach and public engagement with the community</b>	Continued support for the Brilliant Club – a flagship programme that trains and develops researchers and places them in schools with high numbers of disadvantaged students  Continued support for learning and development offered on the programme by Public Engagement Unit.

UCL Doc Skills also responded to the findings of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2017 during the course of 2017-18 as follows:

PRES Question	UCL Doc Skills Actions
<p><b>Q16_1 Agreeing a personal training or development plan</b></p> <p><b>35% of respondents agreed with this statement, which represents a small increase of 2% on the previous survey, compared to the sector average of 44%.</b></p>	<p>The Doc Skills Induction, encourages reflective skills self-assessment and experiential learning to support the Personal Training and Development Plan on the Research Log.</p> <p>The OD team contributed to training for research supervisors, including a new e-learning module.</p> <p>UCL Doc Skills increased support for UCL Careers provision.</p> <p>In 2017-18 OD began to explore opportunities to improve student-led self-reflective skills self-assessment through new digital tools available on the market and tailored to researchers and the researcher development context. Further consultation is planned for 2018-19 with the possibility of implementing a pilot thereafter.</p>
<p><b>Q16_3 Receiving training to develop my transferable skills</b></p> <p><b>46% of respondents agreed with this statement, which represents a slight decrease of 1% on the previous survey, and is 2% below the sector average at 48%.</b></p>	<p>Budget expansion bid submitted in 2017-18, for 2018-2021 with the support of the Office for Vice Provost, Research, to grow opportunities for research students in line with the Research Strategy and Doctoral Education Strategy.</p> <p>Continuous development of UCL Doc Skills through new programming to address gaps, areas of heavy demand and institutional priorities.</p> <p>Following the review of the programme in 2016-17, the commissioning process was overhauled in the Summer Term of 2017, and 43 new courses were introduced.</p> <p>Expansion of offering for part-time researchers.</p> <p>Drive to increase engagement through a focus on communication: social media, website, newsletter, promotional materials.</p> <p>Expansion of e-learning modules.</p>
<p><b>Q14_2_ I have received appropriate support for English language needs</b></p> <p><b>33% of respondents agreed with this statement, which is below the sector average of 41%.</b></p>	<p>We continue to expand our offering of thesis writing training on the programme and opportunities for academic writing development.</p> <p>Alongside this we work closely with Centre for Language and International Education (CLIE) to fund and promote opportunities for non-native speakers of English in particular to receive specialist training in English language skills, with 3 calls for applications per year to widen access to the programme for all.</p>

#### 4. Future plans: The agenda for 2018-19.

During summer 2018, the Doctoral Skills Development Programme was commissioned via an open call for applications across UCL, in a drive to encourage more internal applications, especially from staff not already involved and from early career staff, as well as an invitation to select expert external consultants. The programme was recommissioned against the following criteria:

- Relevance to UCL 2034 themes and key enablers
- Reference to Researcher Development Framework
- Evidence that the course will address cross-disciplinary learning
- Evidence of interactive, experiential learning activities.

This again drew a very large number of applications, and saw a consolidation of the 43 new courses added to Doc Skills in 2017-18. New and expanded areas include, interdisciplinary collaboration, publishing, open science, integrity and e-learning (a full list appears in Appendix 4).

New initiatives in 2018-19 that explicitly address the Doctoral Education Strategy are as follows:

<b>Doctoral Education Strategy Action</b>	<b>UCL Doc Skills Action</b>
<p><b>Ensuring high quality research education environment: UCL Doc Skills caters for student demand</b></p>	<p>In line with this requirement, OD submitted an application for budget expansion in order to better cater for student demand, which has been unsuccessful this year. However a new request will be submitted in the next planning round.</p> <p>Other measures to cater for student demand include diversifying channels. We have commissioned more e-learning in order to extend our reach.</p>
<p><b>Ensuring high quality research education environment: Students have a clear sense of the importance of and the ability to implement healthy work/life balance. This is reflected by the staff with whom they work.</b></p> <p><b>Students perceive UCL to be invested in their wellbeing.</b></p>	<p>Building on the growing suite of wellbeing education on the programme, and a new collaboration with HR Occupational Health and Wellbeing, new e-learning modules will be introduced.</p> <p>Additionally, greater visibility is now given to wellbeing matters on the new HR OD Learning and Development website, which has a new section for Researcher Development. We intend to grow the Research Hub element of this website as a resource for researchers.</p>



	A repeat collaborative event between UCL, Kings University London and Imperial College London will focus on part-time researchers, specifically addressing themes such as juggling commitments, making the most of long-distance supervision, and good habits for life. 2018-19 will feature greater co-creation, namely additional panels co-developed with research students, and in some cases convened by research students.
<b>Foster leadership grounded in excellence: Numbers undertaking Leadership training and opportunities through UCL Doc Skills.</b>	In 2018-19 OD will offer Researcher-Led Initiatives provide the opportunity to develop leadership skills in practice (see below).  Specific courses on leadership are offered: <i>Managing your Strengths and Weaknesses for Successful Teams and Leadership, PhD Leadership Skills</i> and <i>Leadership in Business</i> .  Leadership opportunities via Changemakers are sponsored. Leadership opportunities through Innovation and Enterprise and Global Challenges are promoted and supported.
<b>Foster leadership grounded in excellence: Develop effective and scalable Integrity Training programme and implement.</b>	New Research Ethics online module to be developed, under the guidance of Cultures of Integrity team.  OD will sponsor the UCL Open Science Workshop in 2019.
<b>Foster leadership grounded in excellence: Encourage outreach and public engagement with the community</b>	Ongoing collaboration with the Brilliant Club, which offers teaching opportunities in the community in support of widening participation.
<b>Expand training for Impact</b>	OD to sponsor new courses on impact with Impact Curation Co-ordinators in Faculties.

### Further new developments and pilots for 2018-19

Towards recognition of UCL as a Centre of Excellence for Researcher Development by 2020, specific new projects that support this aim are as follows:

- Following the successful pilot of Researcher-led Initiative Awards (RLIs) in 2017-18, RLIs will again be offered to UCL researchers (both PGRs and early career research staff). Our intention is to award a greater number of RLIs, and to encourage further interdisciplinary collaboration by involving the Early Career Research Networks and strengthening emphasis on collaborative approaches. We will encourage the benefits of co-creation by working

closely with last year's award holders to enhance the experience. There will be 20 RLLs available for PGRs (and 20 for research staff) in 2018-19.

- We will continue to develop the new OD Learning and Development website as a resource for researchers, including enhancing the Research Hub.
- We will support the Research Opportunity Scholarships, for BAME researchers in underrepresented areas, and similarly support academics seeking to develop bolder diversity and inclusion initiatives that help to diversify the talent pipeline in academia.
- We have in 2018-19 successfully introduced 'Writing Co-ops', which provide a quiet, facilitative and supportive writing environment in which researchers can gather to further their thesis-writing.
- We seek to widen opportunities for postgraduate research students to volunteer in the wider London community, sharing skills and associated rewards.
- New in-house training from the Communications and Marketing division will support PGRs with understanding and using the media, and preparations for Research Poster and Research Images as Art competitions.

### **Strategic development beyond 2018-19**

The HR Organisational Development team which delivers the Doc Skills programme is transforming the way it works. A recently defined HR strategy and newly appointed Director of Organisational Development offer an exciting platform to introduce and radically improve a cohesive learning and development (L&D) strategy, policies and practices, enabling UCL to achieve its academic mission set out in UCL 2034. Starting in 2017-18 the team has undergone a complete reorganisation into 4 new strands: Talent Development, Learning and Development, Innovation and Consultancy and Recruitment. The everyday operation of researcher development programmes will be delivered by the Learning and Development team, in collaboration with the Innovation and Consultancy team, within which will sit the Head of Innovation and Consultancy, Academic Development Lead, Academic Development Consultant and two Academic Development Advisors (both at 0.6 FTE) to maintain excellent knowledge of UCL's research and academic staff groups (including PGRs) and help deliver innovative and targeted developmental support to them. A headline ambition of the new team is to see UCL recognised as a Centre of Excellence for Researcher Development by 2020 with extended and improved support for UCL researchers and academics. To support this aim, members of the team have already visited colleagues at Stanford and Cambridge universities to gain insights into supporting key academic groups.

UCL Doc Skills 2017-18 provision by Researcher Development Framework

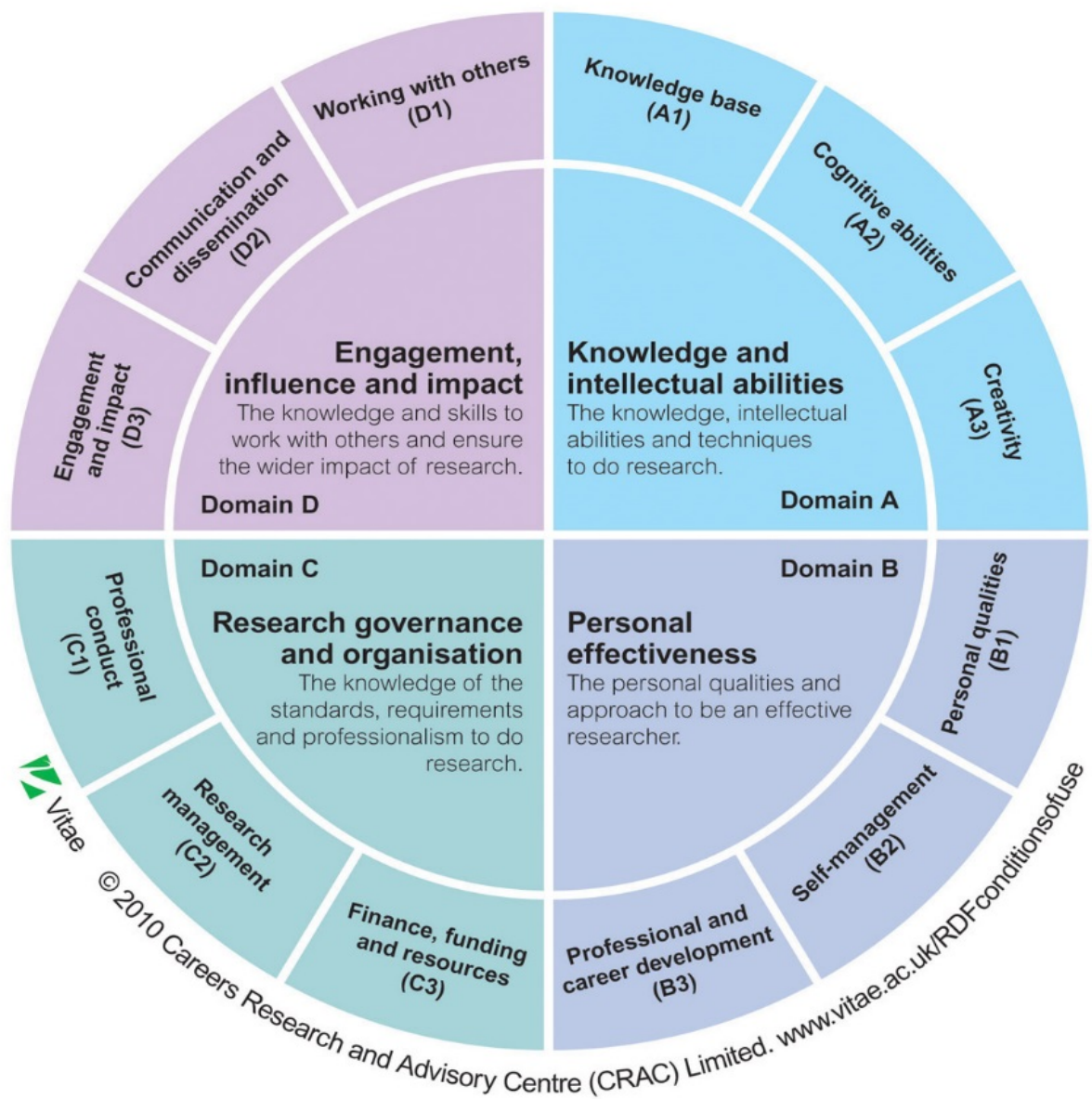


Figure 1 – Researcher Development Framework

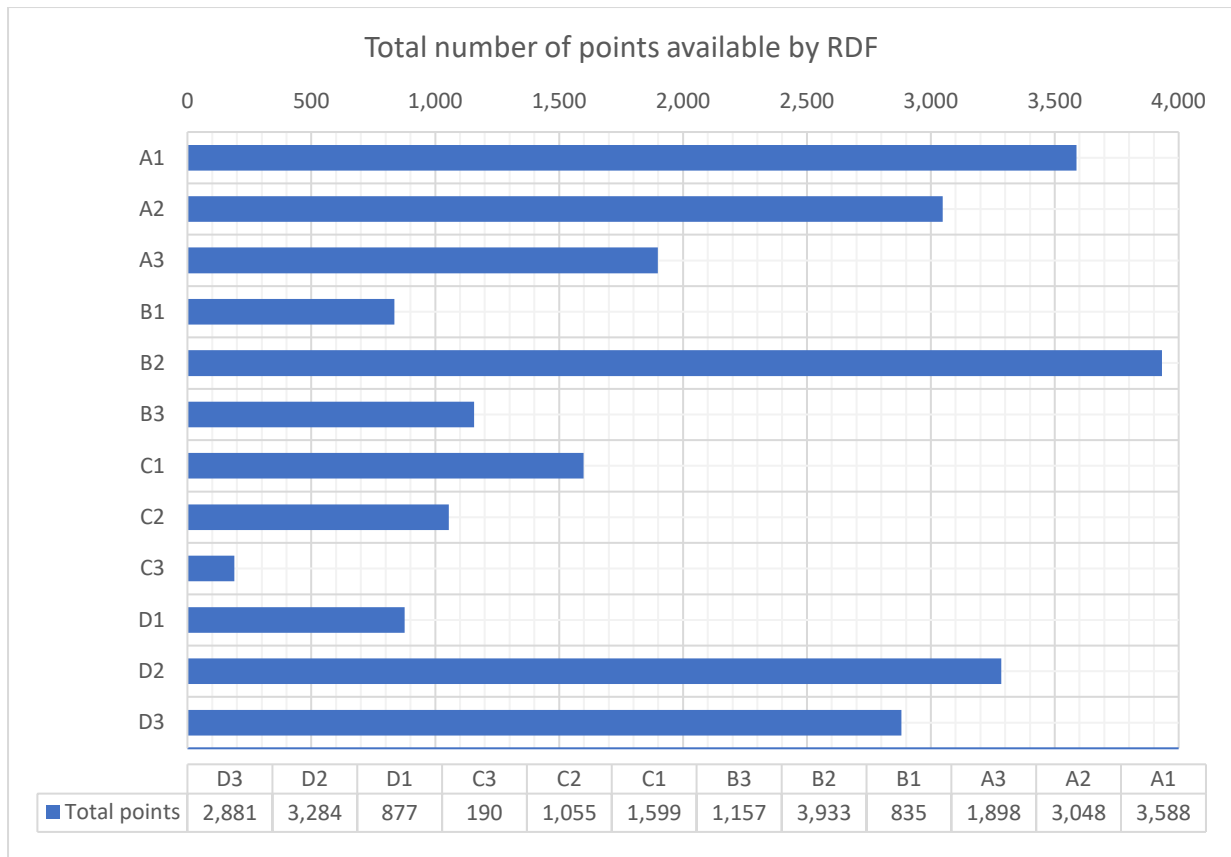


Figure 2 – an analysis of UCL Doc Skills by total number of points available per RDF subdomain

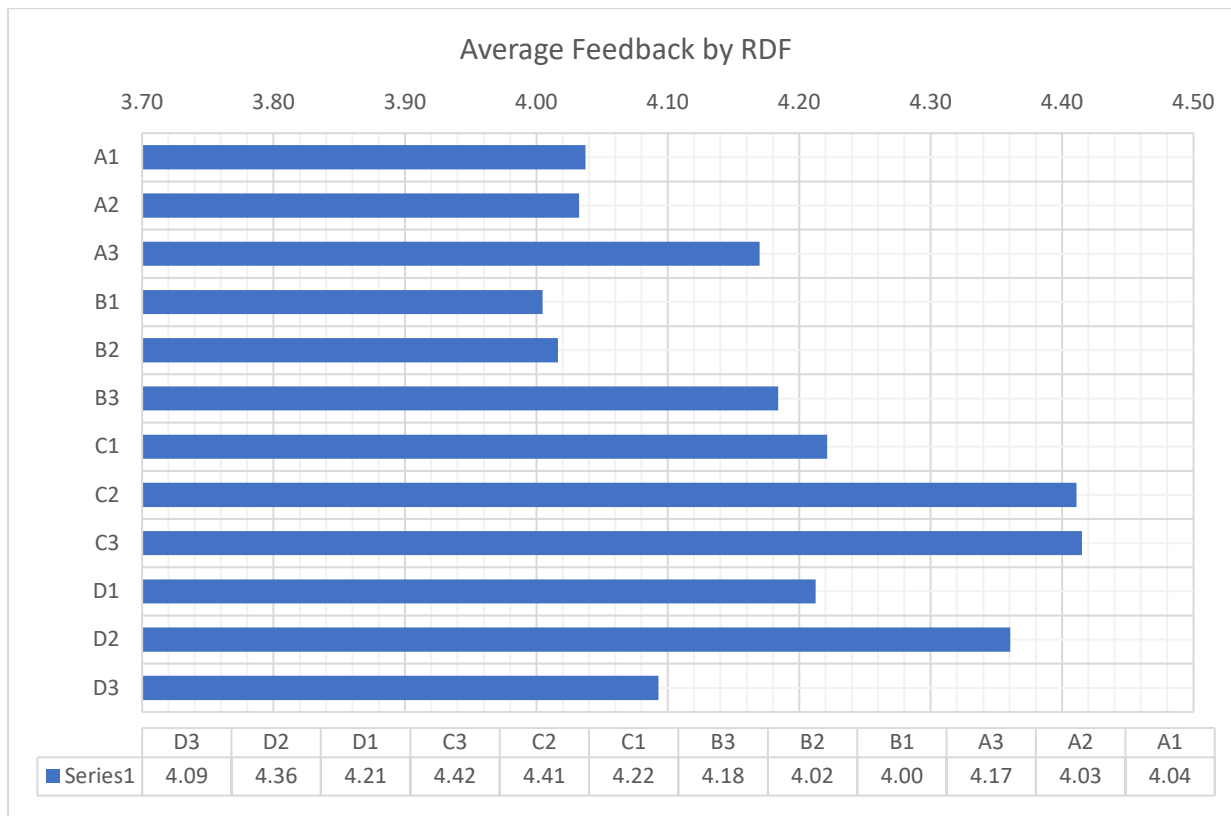


Figure 3 - An analysis of average feedback from research students on UCL Doc Skills by RDF subdomain

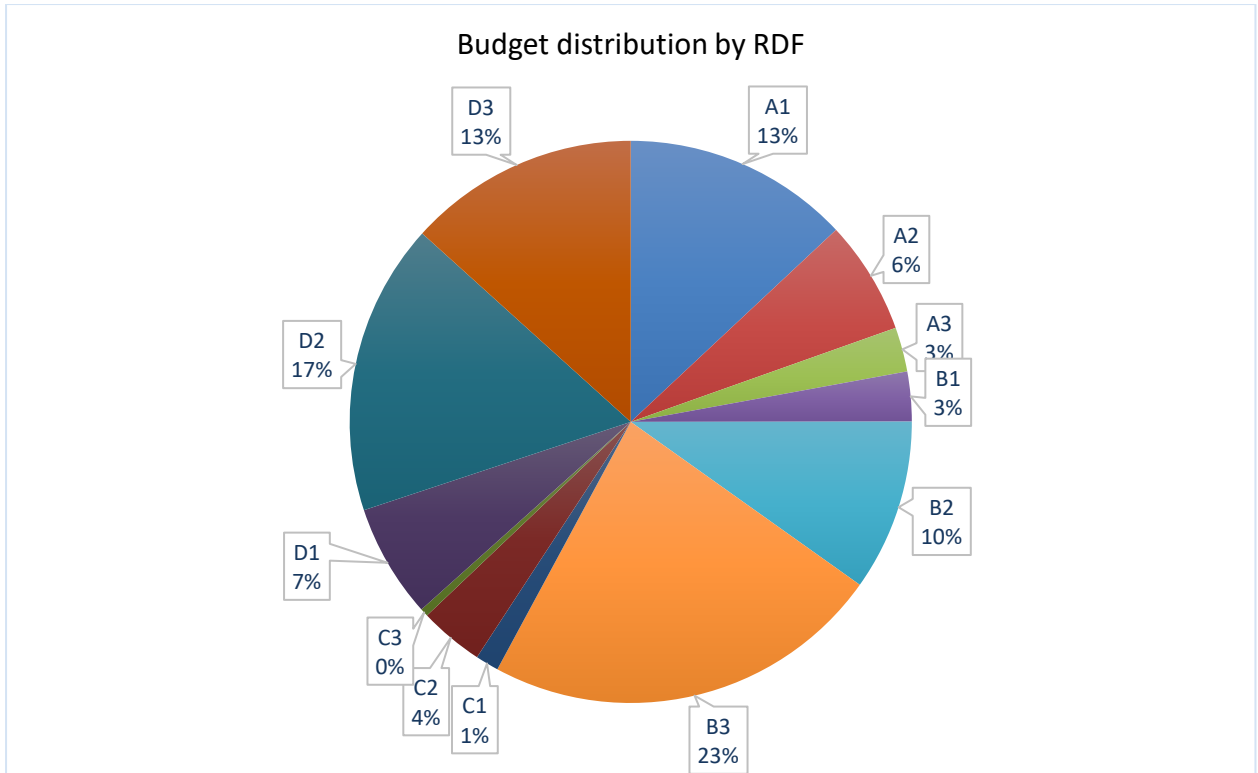


Figure 4 - a representation of the allocation of the UCL Doc Skills budget by percentage per RDF subdomain

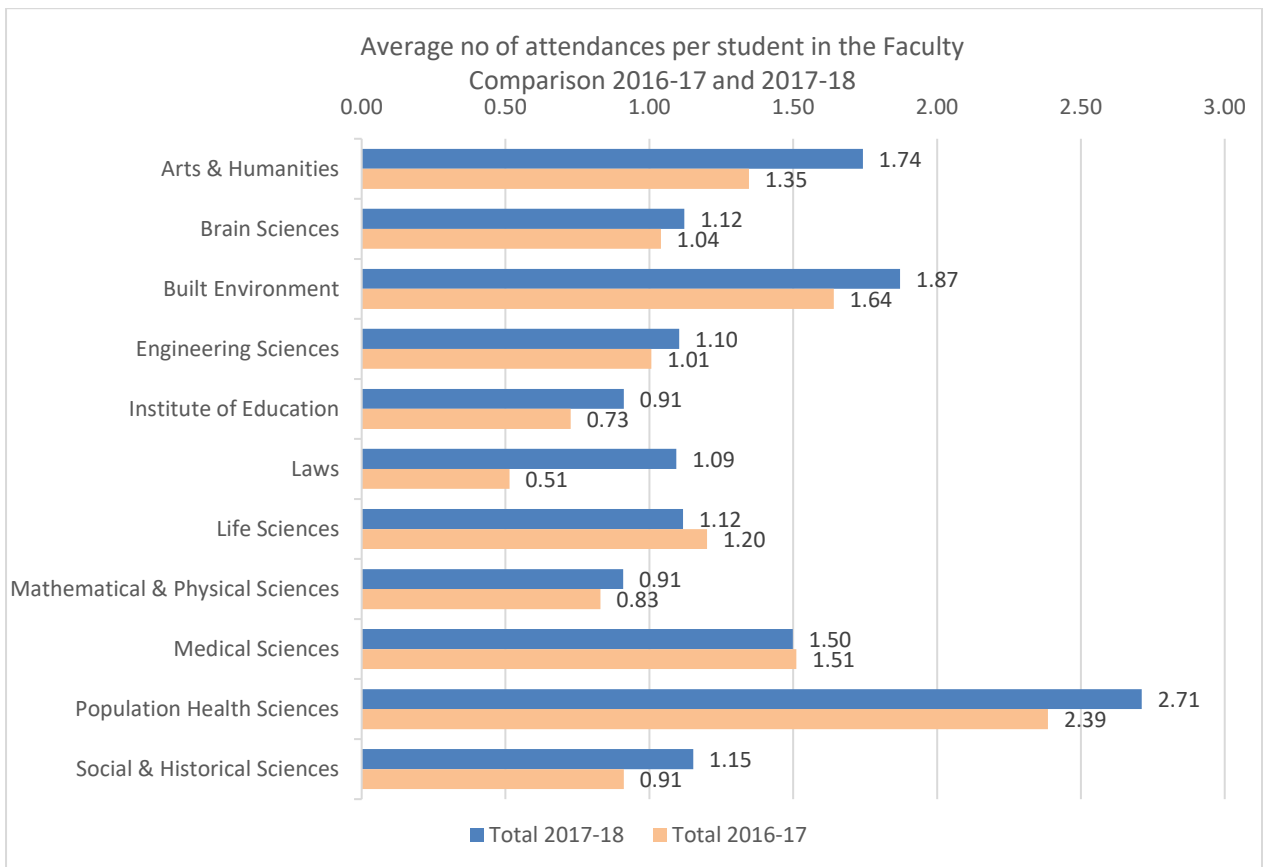


Figure 5 - Attendance by Faculty - 2016-17/17-18 comparison

All provision on UCL Doc Skills is mapped to the Researcher Development Framework (RDF). The framework also underpins the skills self-assessment tool (the Personal Training and Development Plan) on the Research Log that research students use to assess their training needs. Much of our provision will fit into multiple subdomains of the RDF and this is recognised on the UCL Doc Skills website and the Research Log. This analysis of the programme is based on categorising each training event by the main subdomain.

Figure 1 reveals the comprehensive breadth of the programme: all areas of the RDF are represented. The largest number of points and by extension, training hours, where half a day's training equates to 1 point, are offered in subdomains B2, Self-Management, A2, Cognitive Abilities, and A1, Knowledge Base. Provision in these areas addresses the development of personal and professional skills in self-awareness and self-efficacy, research methodologies, academic literacy, creativity, critical thinking, software packages and programming languages. Similarly subdomains D1, D2 and D3 which address Engagement, Influence and Impact are well represented and incorporate our work with the Public Engagement Unit, UCL Innovation and Enterprise, and UCL Arena. The least well represented area is subdomain C3, Finance, Funding and Resources. In this area we offer courses on applying for funding, academic event management, and project management. Demand for these courses is limited, and provision is at the appropriate level. For example, postgraduate researchers should be made aware of additional sources of funding that they may be eligible for, begin to develop good skills in financial project management or budget management, and understand the processes for applying for postdoctoral opportunities, but need not be overly concerned with the intricacies of managing a grant in the way that a postdoc or principal investigator will be. In particular, Researcher-led Initiatives offer practical, hands-on opportunities to develop budget management and project management skills that provide solid evidence of responsibility and independence for researchers.

Feedback from research students reveals the generally high value students place on all Doc Skills learning experiences regardless of the volume of provision or level of spend (Figure 4). On average all courses on the programme were rated between 4 and 5, where 4 is 'very good' and 5 is excellent. 92 per cent of attendees would recommend courses to their peers. Overall attendance is up on last year, with greater engagement from students from all Faculties, with the exception of Medical Sciences, whose attendance is marginally lower than in 2016-17. Engagement from our newest Faculty, the Institute of Education, is up for a successive year, which shows the effectiveness of integration and the team's work with IOE colleagues and students in making the Doc Skills offer visible to them.

## **5. Communication: website, newsletter, social media**

Significant strides have been made in within the last year to improve communications. The UCL Doc Skills weekly newsletter achieves over 5,000 clicks per week, and continues to recruit students to courses in large numbers. In 2017-18 we reinvigorated our Twitter feed which has also become a practical channel for engaging in conversations about researcher development, reaching more researchers and advertising courses. We have begun the overhaul of the HR OD website, which we are making into a Learning and Development resource for all staff at UCL. It now features a dedicated space for Researcher Development, bringing together the Doc Skills and Research Staff programmes with additional useful resources for researchers, including the Research Hub, news and strategy information. Linked from these new pages are older webpages which continue to host the majority of Doc Skills course information. These sites remain for the moment as a portal for students to book places on courses. This is owing to the complexity of the Doc Skills website, and it's ties to the booking system and Research Student Log. More is included below on plans for improvement of the website from a systems support point of view.

## **6. Systems, Space and facilities**

### **Systems and Databases**

Working closely with Information Services Division we are exploring options for upgrading the Doctoral Skills Development portal to meet the growing needs of the programme and our strategic aims. In particular we are exploring new opportunities for digital learning needs analysis that is led by the researcher, encouraging them to take responsibility for skills self-analysis, reflecting on training undertaken and new training needs, as they emerge. We hope to conduct a small pilot in 2018-19 of a new resource on the market. Another priority for development is new, highly accurate reporting tools for the Doc Skills booking system that will support programme evaluation and planning, and provide enhanced information on the breakdown of programme users, for example, by protected characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and disability, allowing us to provide better and more tailored support as necessary. ISD will support the redevelopment of the Doctoral Skills Development Portal to provide a more attractive and user-friendly design, with clearer information and greater functionality across multiple devices e.g. laptop, tablet and smartphone. Additionally, the HR OD team is preparing for transition to the Oracle Learning Management booking system tool in February 2019, however at this time, it will not impact registrations on the Doc Skills programme.

## **Space and facilities**

OD has submitted a proposal to Estates and Facilities for a UCL Centre for Leadership and Researcher Development in support of our aim to be recognised as a Centre of Excellence for researcher development. UCL Doc Skills would continue to make use of teaching space across the university and in 188 Tottenham Court Road, but would additionally benefit from a suite of rooms that is dedicated to leadership and researcher development activity for longer programmes within 45 minutes of travelling distance from King's Cross that would encourage collaboration, connectivity and community-building.

## **Student and staff Induction**

UCL Doc Skills, working with the Doctoral School, leads three dedicated inductions for the new PGR intake each year. This induction, which is refreshed annually, includes an introduction and orientation onto the programme, interactive exercises based around experiential learning and skills self-assessment, the career possibilities of researchers, as well as an essential briefing on how to use the Research Log, and guidance from the Provice Provost of the Doctoral School on how to work effectively with your supervisor. It allows new researchers to meet the team in a friendly, informal setting and ask any questions they may have. UCL Doc Skills also contributed to the Graduate Open Day in December 2017, delivering a skills workshop on critical creative thinking and challenging expectations to prospective research students. The team also contribute to the development of a new blended learning resource training for Research Supervisors, led by UCL Arena. Here, we emphasise the important role research supervisors play in not only acknowledging the need for skills training and career planning but by encouraging it within the scope of the wider research degree experience by having supportive conversations with the researchers they supervise.

## **7. Feedback and user views**

In 2017-18 we introduced a new evaluation form, which captured key information across all OD programmes, including the perceived value and application of learning and feedback on what further learning students think they need. From this data we know that in 2017-18 92 per cent of students who had attended training on Doc Skills would recommend that training to their peers. Further qualitative remarks appear below:

“Can't think of a better way to introduce someone to programming, I feel much more confident to start solving my own problems. Perhaps adding a homework exercise similar to the one worked out in class, would be useful for those who need more



practice. I will be on the lookout for Matlab focused courses complementing this one.”

### **Introduction to Programming for Busy Students**

“This course was excellent. Really good balance of group work; individual time to think and power point slides. I left the course more informed, but also armed with different strategies which I can then use to improve me skills. The course didn't tell you what you had to do, but taught you options you can adopt which was much more useful.”

### **Saturday Symposia for Part-time Researchers**

“This was a very good course about what they media want from you and what you can get out of speaking to the media and being media savvy. Would highly recommend it!”

### **How to Use the General Media to Publicise your Research**

“Applying what we had learned to real-world examples was really useful. Really charming and dedicated lecturers, genuinely approachable and helpful”

### **Statistics for Researchers**

“After this course I am now able to re-imagine academic writing as a creative process.”

### **Editing your Thesis Effectively**

“One of the best courses I've been to... The three hours flew by and we received useful information without it being overwhelming. The tutor was great and made it very interactive, was open for questions and suggestions and perfectly balanced time between talking and giving us exercises to do.”

### **Fundamentals of Giving a Poster Presentation (BPSN)**

## **8. Collaborations**

UCL Doc Skills exemplifies highly successful partnership working across the University and in London. The majority of research skills training is provided on the programme by UCL academics, especially research methodologies and intellectual leadership. Further expertise comes from colleagues in professional services. Compulsory and further teacher training is provided by UCL Arena, which supports researchers in achieving Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy through UCL Arena One. Digital Skills Development provides

extensive training in software packages and programming languages. UCL Careers provides a dedicated service to researchers, members of the team work closely with the London Careers Group and co-write a blog with Oxford and Cambridge. In addition to careers advisory 1-2-1 sessions and training workshops, UCL Careers also piloted new support for researcher-relevant internships. In 2017-18 319 researcher-relevant vacancies were sourced and advertised, which received a total of 15,430 views from students and staff on UCL Careers vacancy system. UCL Innovation and Enterprise help researchers to develop leadership, impact and entrepreneurial skills and to make links with business. The Doc Skills programme continues to partner with the Public Engagement Unit to help develop skills in public engagement, communication and impact, and the Research Training Programme in the IOE, which strengthens in particular the programme's offering on research methodologies. Members of the OD team attend the FOREST forum for Researcher Developers in London.

The longest-running and most successful collaboration on the UCL Doc Skills programme is the Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network (BSPN) which now comprises nine member institutions: UCL, School of Oriental and African Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Birkbeck, School of Advanced Study, London School of Economics and Political Science, Royal Veterinary University, Kings College London and latterly, City University of London, who successfully applied to join the network in 2017-18. City will formally join the network from January 2019 and brings to the BPSN, taught modules from the Cass Business School and the Department of Journalism, which will strengthen the collaboration particularly in the areas of economics, research dissemination through the media and in governance. The network has run successfully since 2004 and hosts a developmental meeting once a year to examine the programme, share best practice and design the following year's programme. Full information on 2016-17 academic session of BPSN appears in the index, including some limited information on 2017-18 session which was captured for that meeting.

In 2017-18 UCL teamed up with Kings College London and Imperial College to deliver a dedicated developmental activity for part-time researchers across all three institutions: The Balancing Act – performing well in your part-time PhD. This collaboration allowed us to achieve a critical mass of attendees on part-time programmes and a cross-disciplinary environment. Feedback was highly favourable, with many students finding value in the meeting. We have already resolved to invite more research students into the planning and delivery of the event in June 2019, so that. UCL, UCL Doc Skills is also represented annually at the Imperial University Graduate School Roundtable which debates important

developments in the sector and this year focused on co-creation of professional development programmes, of which Doc Skill's RLIs are a model.

In 2017-18 we continued our work with the Brilliant Club, a voluntary organisation that places researchers in schools to help raise attainment amongst disadvantaged students and to raise their aspirations to attend highly-selective universities. UCL research students have always responded enthusiastically to the work of the Brilliant Club, which provides them the opportunity to teach their own research in schools, develop their teaching practice, and 'give back' to local communities. In 2017-18 we supported 90 placements and over 350 school pupils.

In 2017-18 the OD team began to collaborate with Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion team over the new Research Opportunity Scholarship Programme for new Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) researchers at UCL. Fundraising through UCL alumni has secured 5 new fully-funded doctoral scholarships of 4 years in duration, to be offered from 2018-19. Funding is currently secure for two subsequent intakes thereafter. The scholarships are offered in UCL departments where BAME researchers are vastly underrepresented. The aim is to diversify the talent pipeline into academia and research-based careers. The OD team will provide a dedicated support package, to include coaching and mentoring, developmental activities and access to flagship Doc Skills programmes, such as GRADschool. Within the OD team the Academic Development Lead also sits on the board for the UK Council for Graduate Education who are interested to learn from this collaboration. The scholarships are the first of their kind in the country and it is hoped that other Russell Group universities, in particular, will follow UCL's example.

## **9. Conclusion**

In summary 2017-18 was a year of growth for the programme in which student satisfaction and engagement continued to rise. To extend the benefits of the programme more widely, and to meet our objective to become a destination of choice for researchers, diversify the talent pipeline and increase engagement through co-creation, we will need to grow. We have a duty to encourage research students to be proactive in seeking out developmental opportunities and exploring career opportunities within an ever more competitive employment market and within the changing landscape of academia. This growth will support these aims and the RCUK's expectation that research students should engage in 10 days (20 points) training per year. UCL Doc Skills gathers wide expertise from across the University for the benefit of postgraduate research students by forging and maintaining

relationships within a range of networks. Challenges remain, with regard to space and facilities, and the need for additional resource to support expansion. Future planning should be based around combined Researcher Development provision housed within a dedicated hub to provide a focus for researcher's development towards become a Centre of Excellence for Researcher Development by 2020.

## 10. Appendices

### **Appendix 1** Terms of Reference of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme Training Board

The Doctoral Skills Development Programme is open to all graduate research students at UCL. The purpose of the programme is to give all research degree students the opportunity to expand their generic research skills and personal transferable skills. Transferable skills training for research students is an important part of the UCL research strategy and is recognized by peer institutions worldwide and by potential students and staff as a distinctive feature of our research training environment. Researcher development training is in line with the implications for research training of:

- the “QAA Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes” including Vitae’s “Researcher Development Framework”;
- the Roberts Review and the guidelines provided by RCUK;
- the UK Research Councils’ stipulation that their funded research students must carry out the equivalent of two weeks skills training in each year of their funded studentship;
- the NHS Research Governance training requirements.

The Doctoral Skills Development Programme provides skills courses that cover all four domains of the ‘Researcher Development Framework’ (RDF), UK’s national professional development framework for planning personal and professional career development.

#### **Terms of Reference**

Subject to any general or particular direction that may from time to time be given by the Pro-Provost of the Doctoral School, the Training Board is charged:

1. To advise the Pro-Provost of the Doctoral School on generic and transferable skills training policy and procedure for research students
2. To review quarterly the Doctoral Skills Development Programme (statistics, evaluation, further developments).

3. To provide an overview of the existing generic skills training support available in various academic and administrative departments
4. To provide feedback and advise on innovative approaches to supporting the development of researchers
5. To review the funding available in relation to the Doctoral Skills Development Programme

Member	Position
Professor David Bogle (Chair)	Pro-Vice Provost, Doctoral School, OVPR
Ben Colvill	Deputy Director, Doctoral School, OVPR
Samantha-Jane Baker	Learning and Development Portfolio Manager, Organisational Development
Dr Rochelle Rowe	Academic Development Lead, Organisational Development
Kasia Bronk	Academic Development Consultant, Organisational Development
Angela Young	Head of Library Skills, Library Services
Dr Calum Leckie	Careers Consultant and Deputy Head, UCL Careers
Georgia Pitts	Public Engagement Manager, Public Engagement Unit
Dr Richard Freeman	Programme Leader for Researcher Development, UCL Institute of Education
Caroline Norris	Digital Skills Development Manager, Information Services Division
Nadia Forde	Programme Manager for Entrepreneurship
Clive Young	E-Learning Advisory Team Leader

Dr Alex Standen	Senior Teaching Fellow, UCL Centre for Research-led Education (UCL Arena)
Greta Antonini	Learning and Development Coordinator, OD

### Key Performance Indicators

Annual Budget and spend against budget.
Course uptake/waiting lists (numbers on courses and on waiting lists)
Course quality (quantitative - score as evidenced through feedback)
Course value for money - average cost per training place viewed in light of course quality to indicate value for money
Breadth and Depth of Programme – quantitative – numbers of places offered by RDF, plus gap analysis of current provision
Depth of Skills Development Activity at UCL – average number of points per student by Faculty
Analysis of Points accrued in year from Doctoral Skills Development Programme; Faculty/Department; Generic Activities.

### Appendix 2 Doctoral Skills Development Programme KPIs

For files a-b please see enclosed zip file

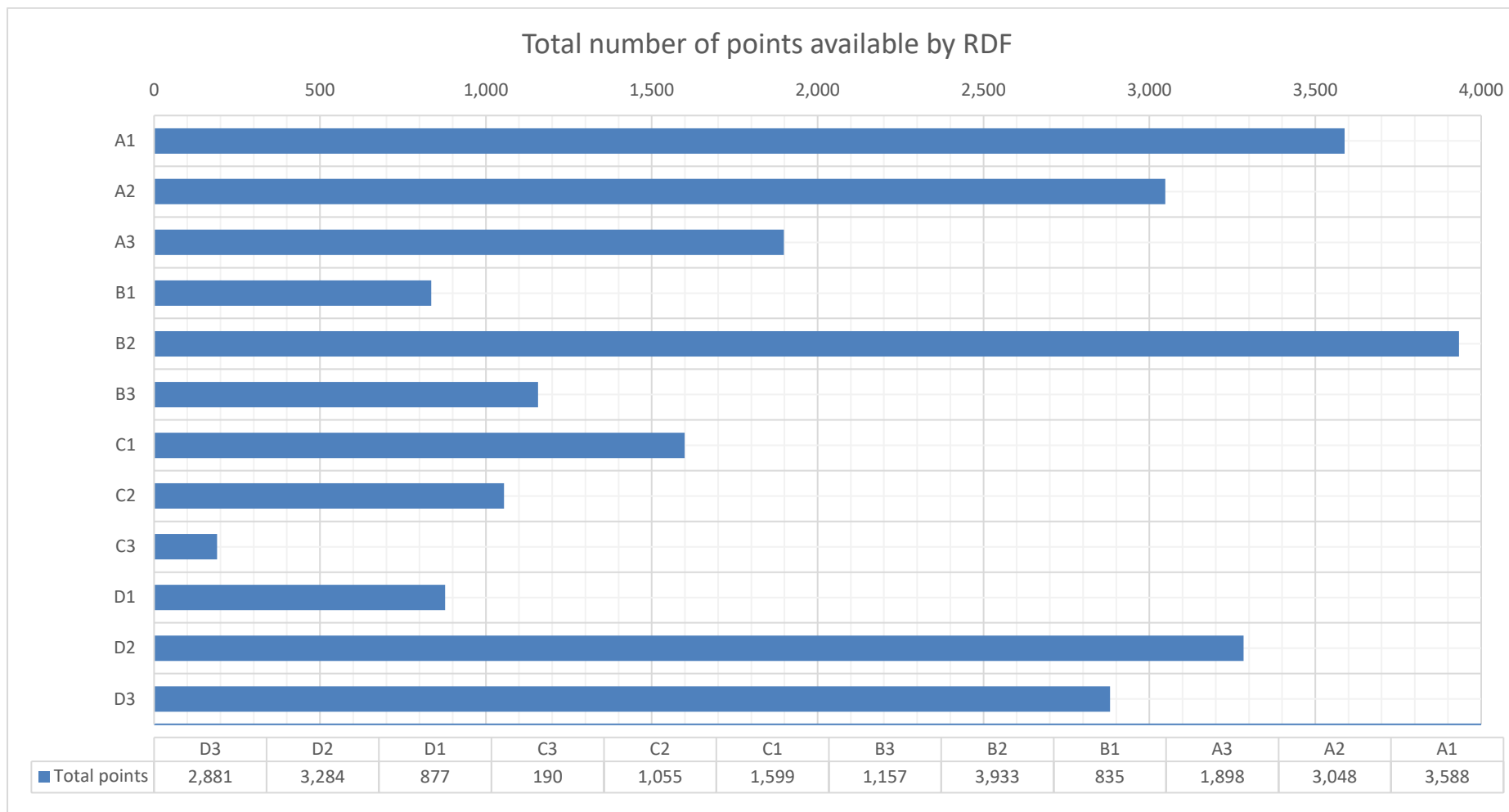
**a) Summary of programme information, including RDF subdomain, average feedback and detailed breakdown of registrations by Faculty**

This spreadsheet provides full information on all activity on UCL Doc Skills 2016-17 including training events not directly managed by our booking system, provided by UCL Arena, Digital Skills Development, and UCL Careers.

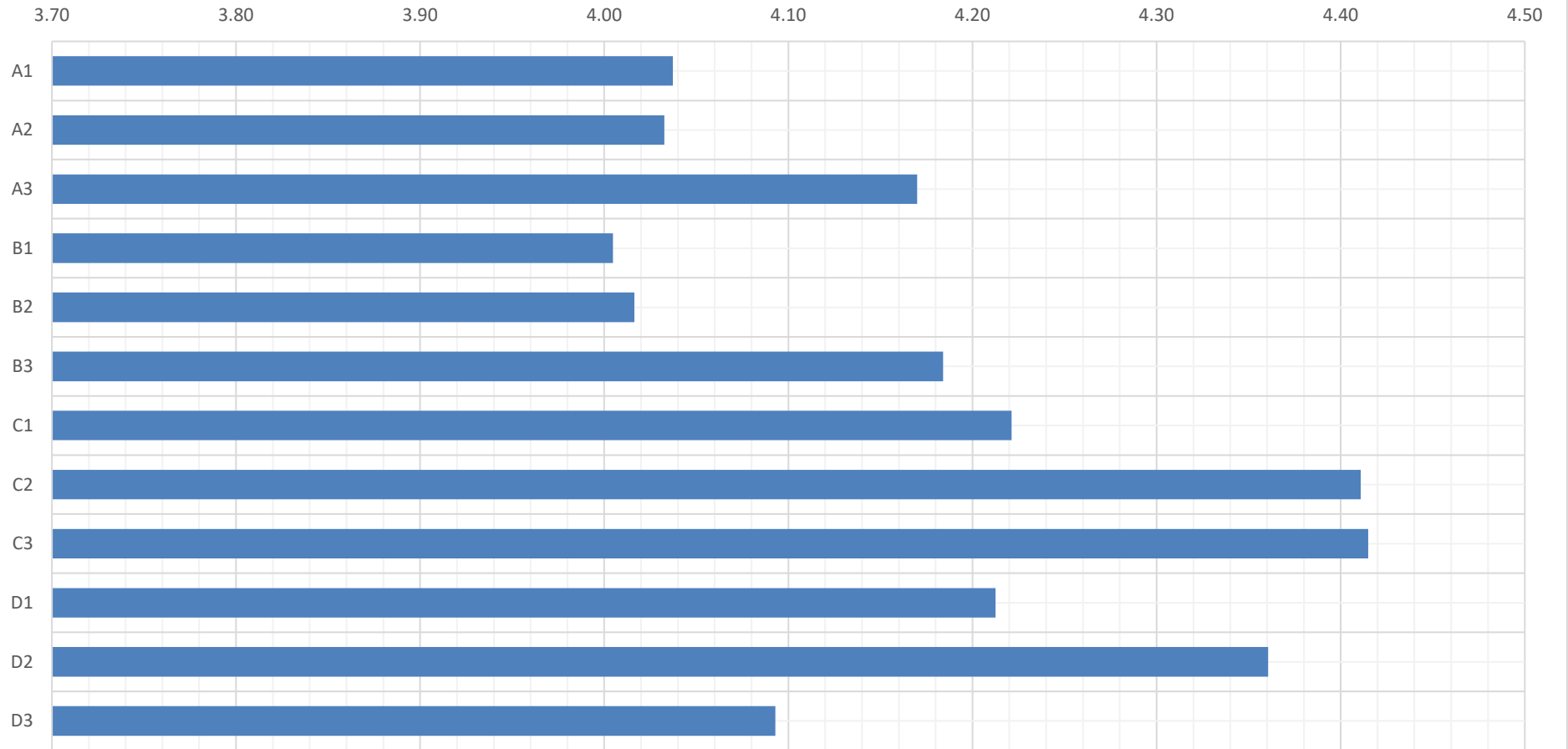
**b) Detailed feedback report**

This spreadsheet provides feedback from postgraduate researchers attending training activities booked on our system.

**c) Analysis by Researcher Development Framework**



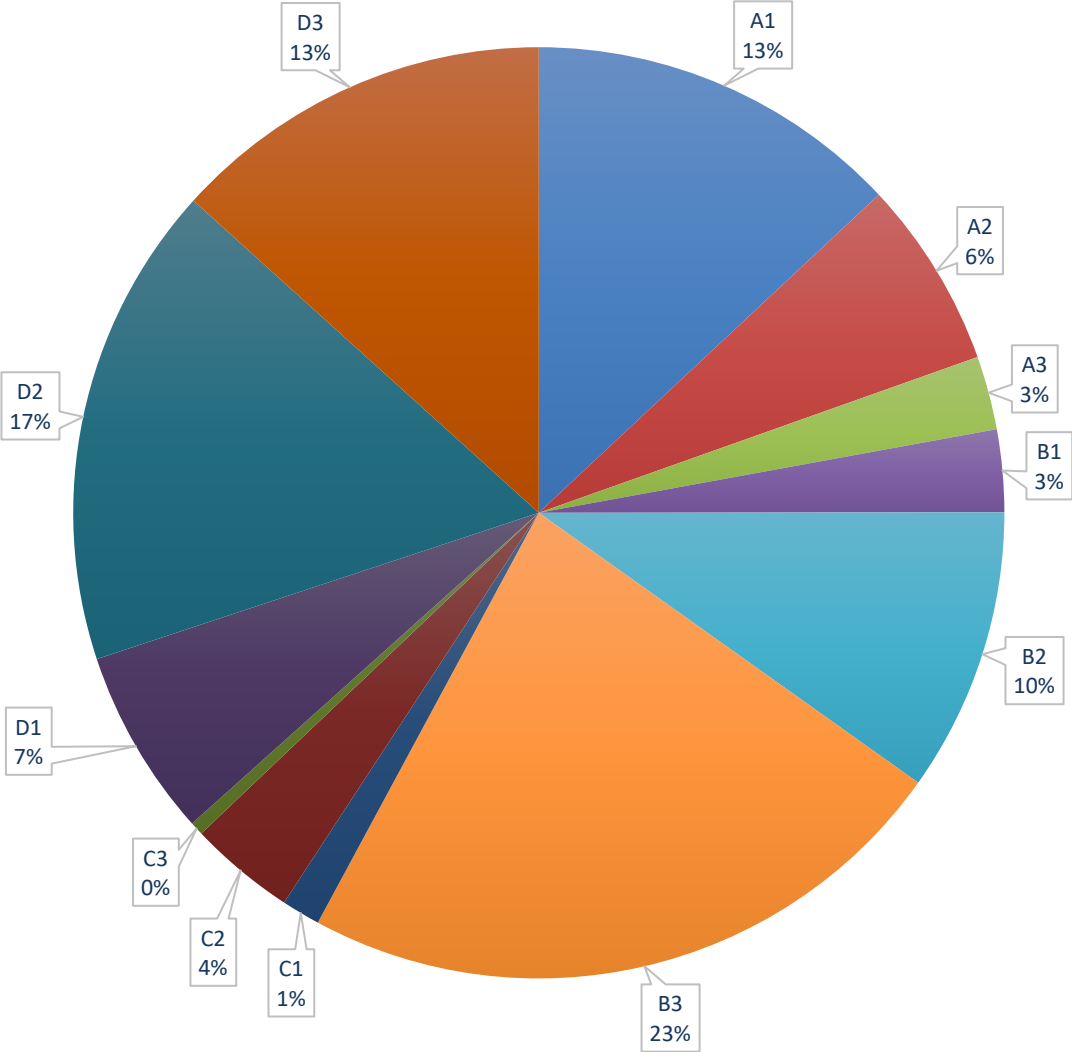
### Average Feedback by RDF



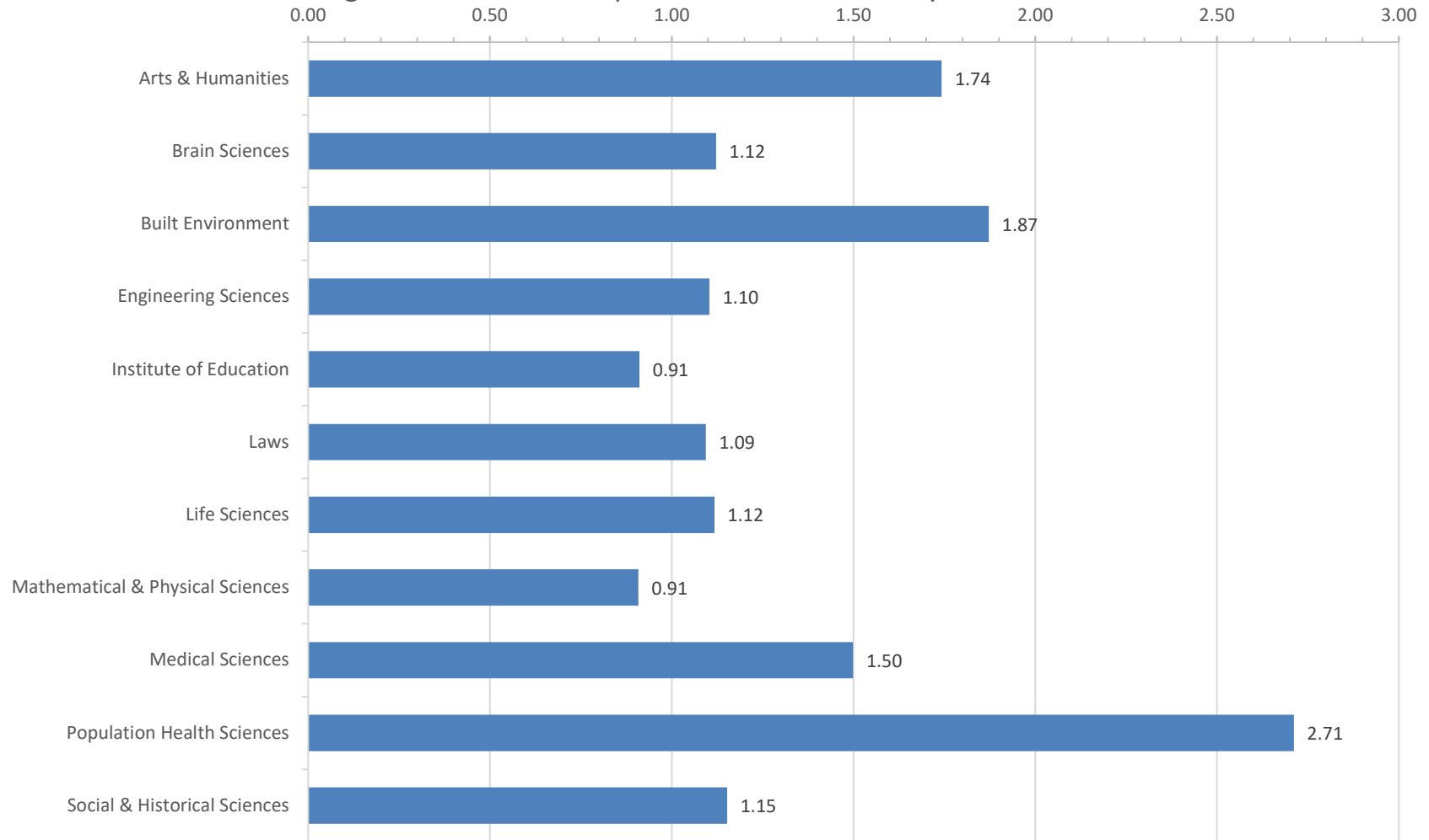
	D3	D2	D1	C3	C2	C1	B3	B2	B1	A3	A2	A1
Series1	4.09	4.36	4.21	4.42	4.41	4.22	4.18	4.02	4.00	4.17	4.03	4.04



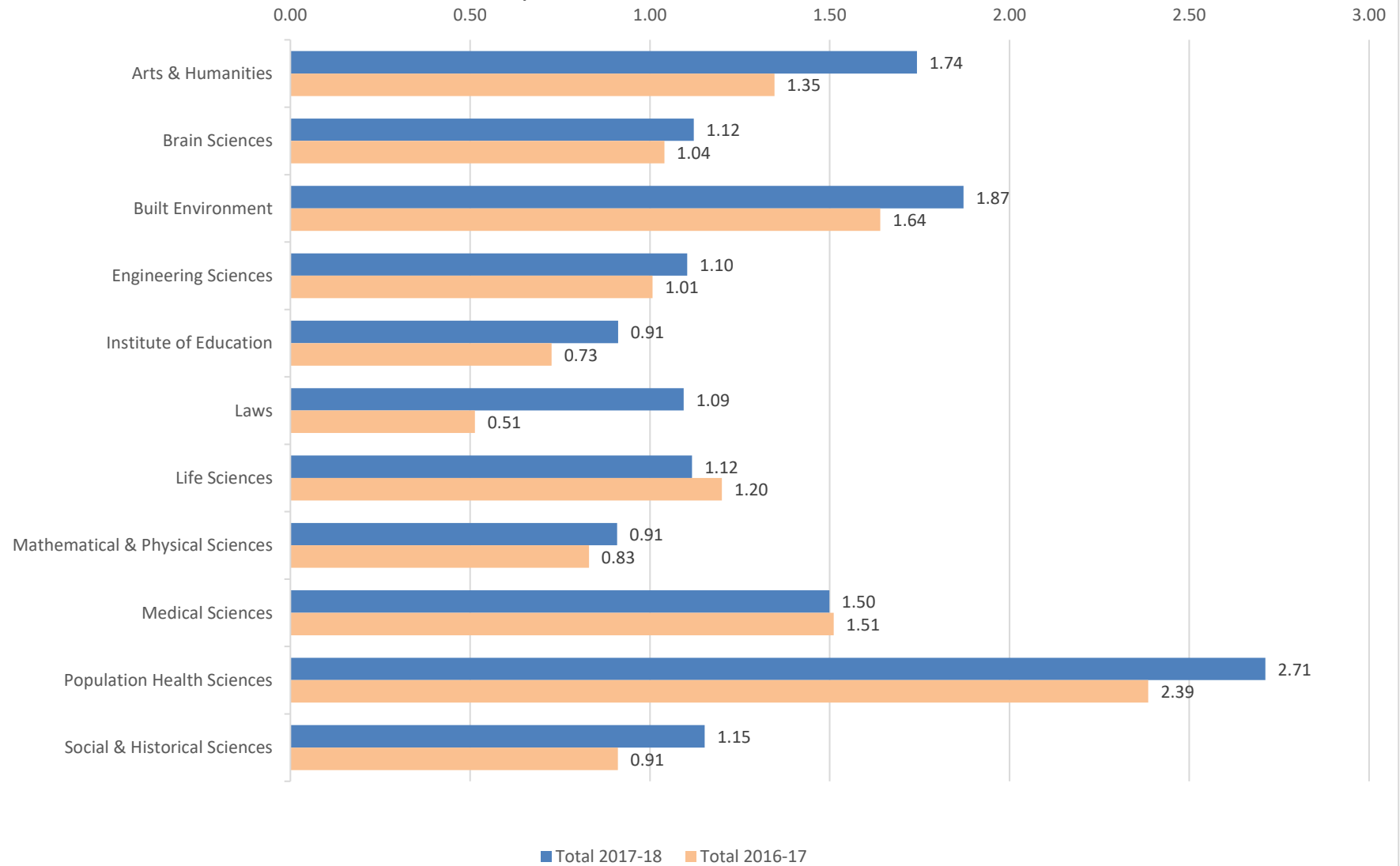
### Budget distribution by RDF



Average no. of attendance per student in the Faculty in 2017-18



### Average no of attendances per student in the Faculty Comparison 2016-17 and 2017-18



### Appendix 3 Bloomsbury Postgraduate Skills Network – Registration Statistics

This spreadsheet includes data provided to the annual meeting of the BPSN members in 2017, it summarises the entire programme for 2015-16 and 2016-17, with some information on 2017-18. Full registration report is available in the zip file.

Host institution	Sept-March 2017-18		2016-17 Full		2015-16 Full	
	Courses offered	Places offered	Courses offered	Places offered	Courses offered	Places offered
Birkbeck	20	179	14	200	13	141
King's College London	10	115	11	205	11	182
London School of Economics	3	15	0	0	1	5
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	16	259	15	268	20	364
Royal Veterinary College	1	5	1	5	3	25
School of Advanced Study	26	439	18	430	23	459
School of Oriental and African Studies	10	80	8	114	20	188
University College London	32	869	42	1136	33	1039
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>2403</b>

### Appendix 4 Summary of new courses on UCL Doc Skills in 2017-18 and 2018-19

Full list of new courses, many of which were piloted in 2017-18, and are now embedded into the 2018-19 programme, as well as new courses added at the start of 2018-19.

New courses	RDF subdomain
<b>2017-18</b>	
Action Learning Set for Doctoral Students	B2
Arena 1: Postgraduates who Supervise	D1
Bitesize Programming	A1
Building Confidence in Academic Writing	D3
Communication skills: exploring the art of engaging, influencing and collaborating with others.	D2
Creativity and Problem-Solving Skills	A2
Designing Public Engagement Lectures and Workshops	D3
Generating, evaluating and exploiting ideas	A3
Giving and Learning from Feedback	D1
How to work well with people different from you	D1

How to Write your First Book or Book Chapter: A Guide for PhD Students	D2
How to Write your First Research Paper: A Guide for PhD Students	D2
How to Write your Methodology Chapter: A Guide for PhD Students	D2
How to Write an Effective Impact Statement	D3
Impact e-module	D3
Interviews: Upgrades and Vivas - Be Your Best Self	D2
Introduction to NVivo: An online resource	A1
Introduction to Pedagogy: instructions, interactions and questioning	D3
Introduction to SPSS: An online resource	A1
Leadership in Business	D1
Making the most of Academic Conferences: A survival guide	D1
Managing your strengths and weaknesses for successful teams and leadership	D1
RADA: Assertiveness forum theatre	D1
Resilience: Managing the Writing and Publishing Process	C1
Saturday symposia for part-time researchers	B2
Software Carpentry	A1
Strategies for Managing Your Part-Time PhD	B2
Think-Write: Conference Abstracts and Posters	D2
Think-Write: Writing targeted grant proposals	D2
Why should anyone collaborate with you?	D1
Writing the Humanities	D2
<b>2018-19</b>	
Academic Writing: A new method that reduces anxiety	D2
An introduction to collaborative ethnography	A2
An introduction to critical realism	A2
Bridging the employability gap	B3
Conducting Research Abroad	C1
Disseminating your research	D
Effective Decision Making	B1
Improving your wellbeing (Online module)	B2
Influencing and Negotiating	D1
Leading without Authority	D1
Integrity e-module (in development with OVPR)	C1
MATLAB Programming - Advanced	A2
MATLAB Programming - Intermediate	A2
Networking for career success	B3

Networking Naturally	D1
Open Science: an essential introduction for researchers	C1
Overcoming Imposter Syndrome	B1
Professional behaviour and research integrity	C1,
Python Programming - Intermediate	A2
Research Ethics (in development with OVPR)	C1
Research Ethics workshop	C1
Resilience, Reflection and Wellbeing	B1
Some Challenges in Interpreting Statistical Evidence	A1
Starting your PhD: Ten steps to success	B2
Sustainability in Science - How you can take action	C1
The Seven Secrets of Highly Successful Research Students	B2
The writing process	D2
Think-Write: Writing Science for the public	D2
Turbocharge Your Writing	D2
Volunteering and your PhD – connecting with London, developing yourself professionally	D3

END

RR,KB/12 2018