


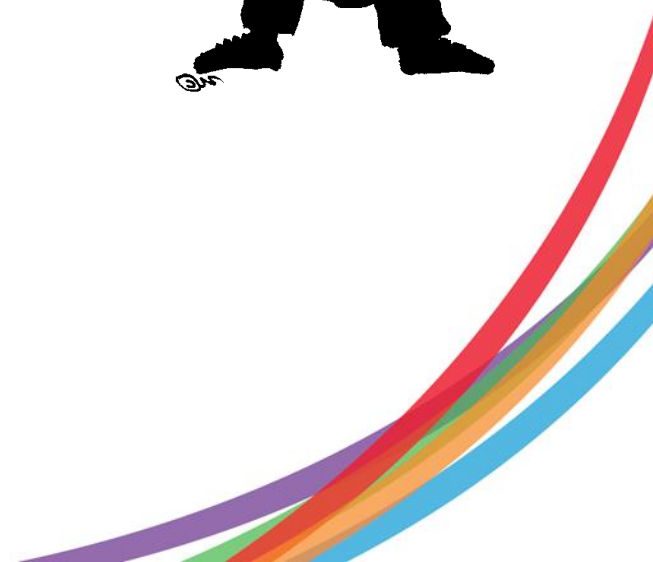
# Understanding the UK Academic Job Market

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PhD and Research Staff Careers  
Consultant  
LSE Careers



# Today

- A bit of history of the UK sector
- UK Higher Education today
- Teaching and research
- Building an academic career
- Keeping up to date

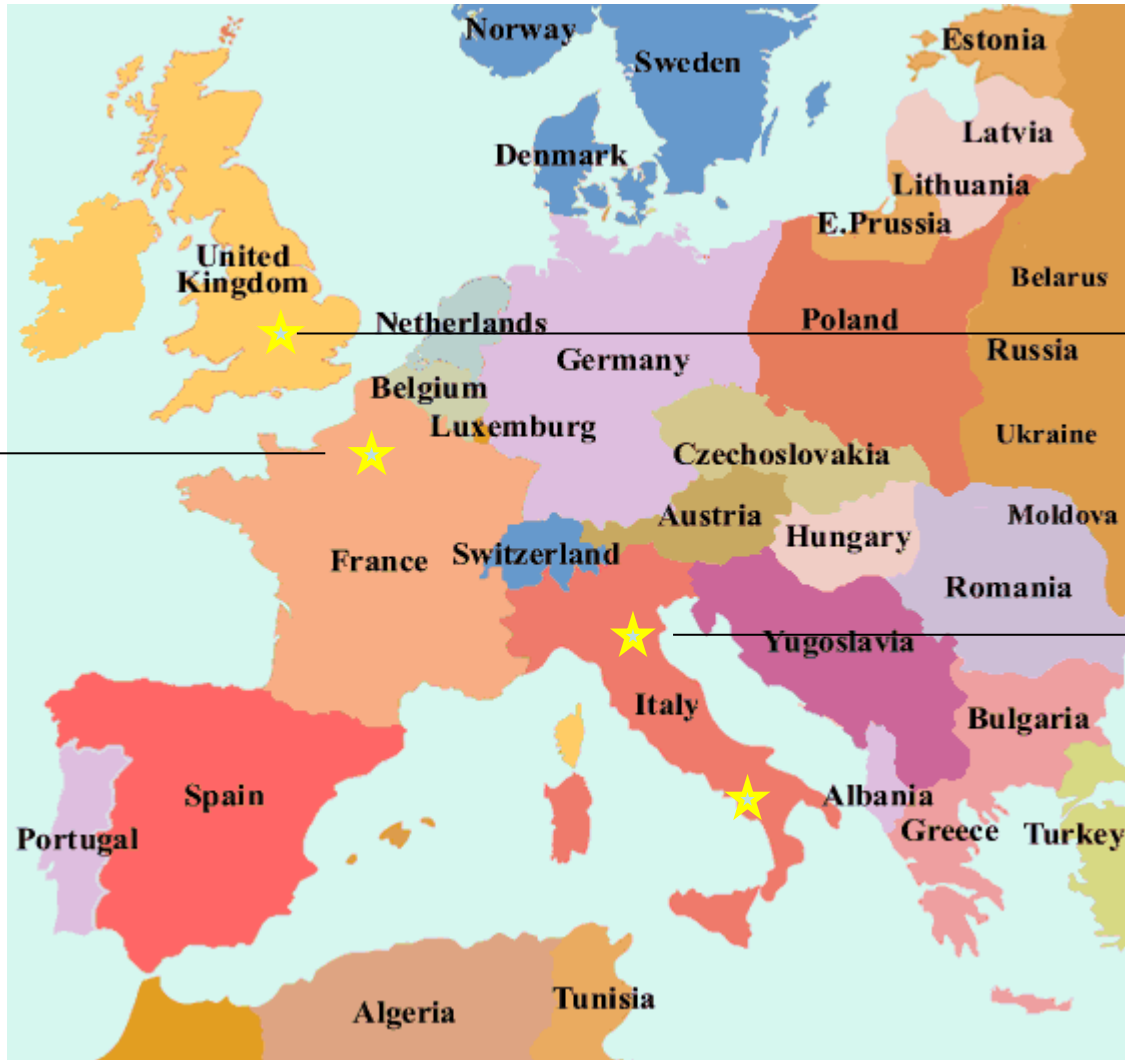


# A university is.....



‘.....a school of higher learning combining teaching and scholarship and characterized by its corporate autonomy and academic freedom’

*H. Perkin, History of Universities, Springer, 2007*



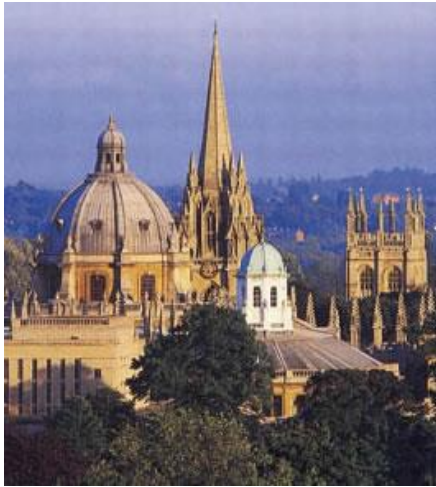
Paris  
*Mid 12<sup>th</sup> C*

Oxford  
*Early 13<sup>th</sup> C*

Bologna  
1088

Medieval Universities (Studium generale) – late 11<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> Century

*'dreaming spires'*



**Oxford**



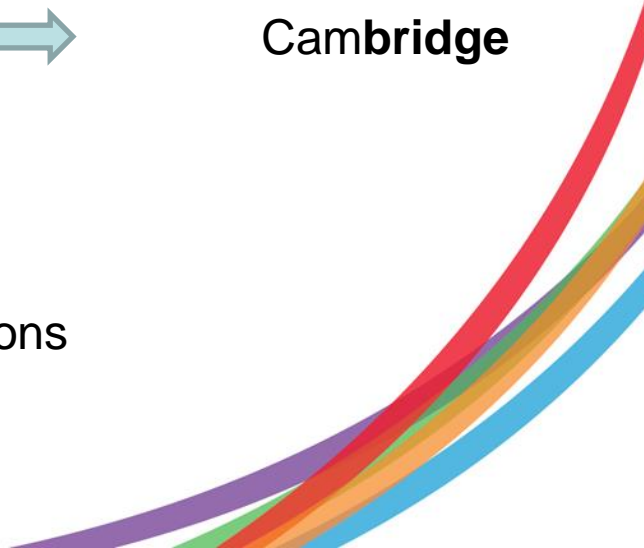
Fleeing hostile townsfolk

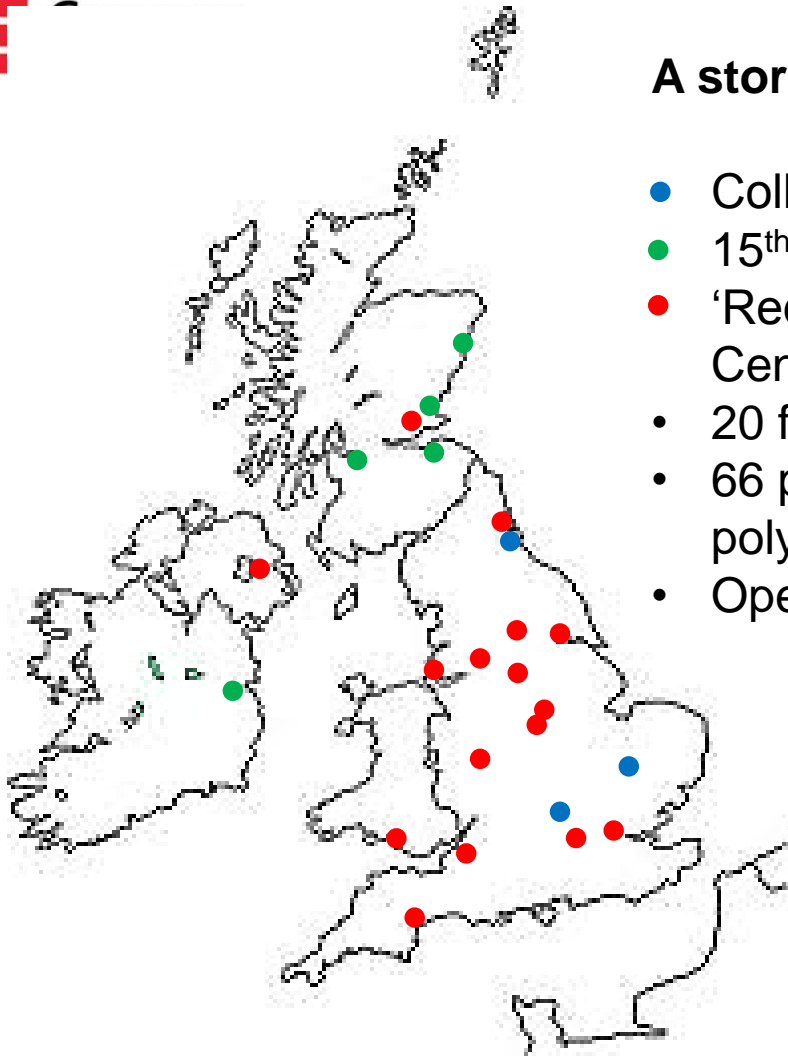


**Cambridge**

# “Oxbridge”

Ancient, college-based, many traditions and own ways of doing things.





## A story of expansion:

- Collegiate universities: “Oxbridge” and Durham
- 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> Centuries
- ‘Redbrick’ or ‘civic’ - 19<sup>th</sup> Century/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, LSE 1895
- 20 founded in 1960s after Robbins Report
- 66 post-1992 “new” universities, many former polytechnics
- Open University – distance learning

## Current Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):

• England	138
• Scotland	15
• Wales	9
• Northern Ireland	2
• <b>TOTAL</b>	<b>164</b>



# Seeing double?

**University of Bath  
Bath Spa University**

**University of Sheffield  
Sheffield Hallam University**

**University of Oxford  
Oxford Brookes University**

**University of Nottingham  
Nottingham Trent University**

**University of Southampton  
Southampton Solent University**

**Anglia Ruskin University  
University of Cambridge**

**University of Manchester  
Manchester Metropolitan University**



# Russell Group

“Represents 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector.”

University of Birmingham  
University of Bristol  
University of Cambridge  
Cardiff University  
University of Durham  
University of Edinburgh  
University of Exeter  
University of Glasgow  
Imperial College London

King's College London  
University of Leeds  
University of Liverpool  
**LSE**  
University of Manchester  
Newcastle University  
University of Nottingham  
University of Oxford  
Queen Mary

Queen's University Belfast  
University of Sheffield  
University of Southampton  
University College London  
University of Warwick  
University of York





# People – UK HE in numbers

## Students

- 1.8 million undergraduate students
- 0.5 million postgraduate students
- 15% are international students
- HEIs range from less than 4000 students to 40000 students

## Staff

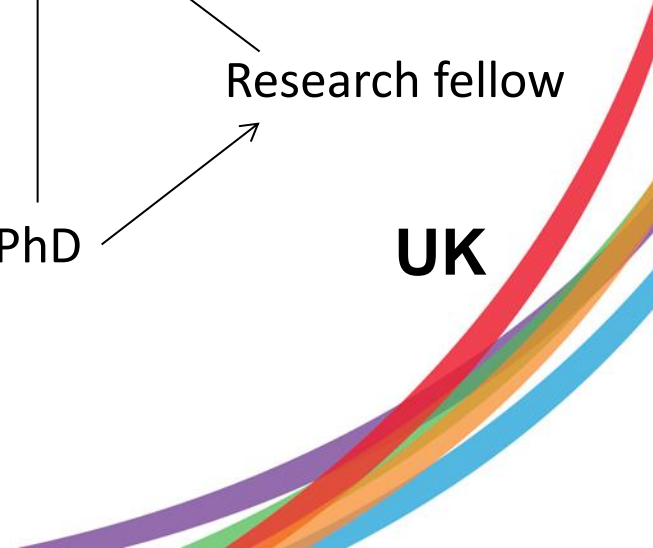
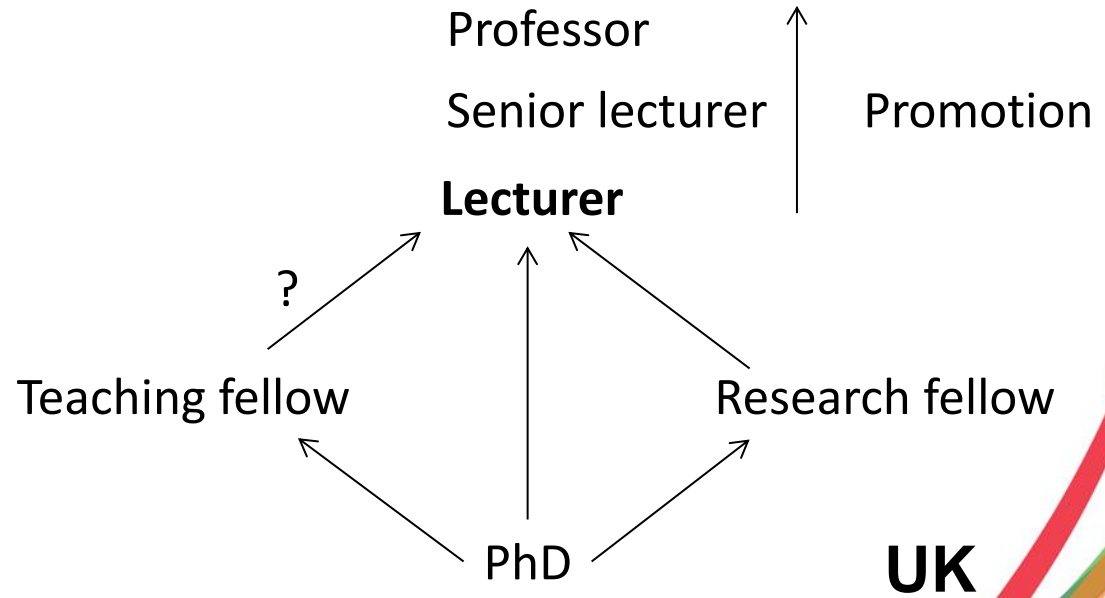
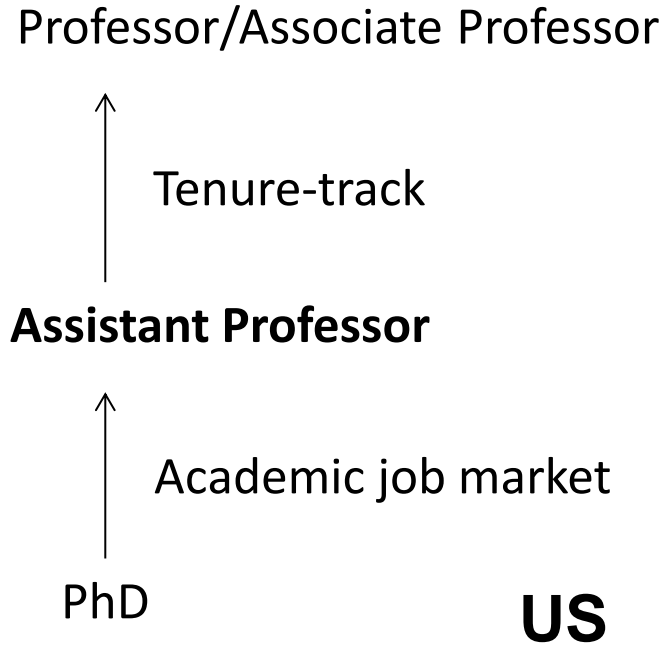
- 194,000 full time academic
- 60,000 part time academic
- ~200,000 non-academic roles

2015 HESA Data




# Academic career paths

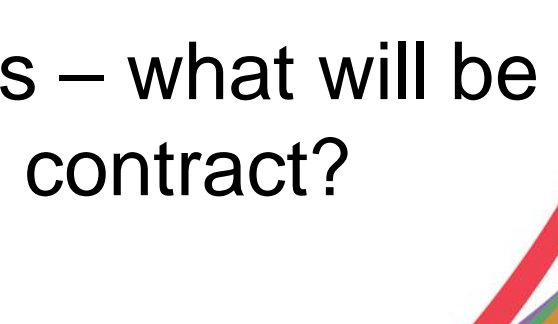
- Pay negotiated nationally
- Jobs advertised on: [www.jobs.ac.uk](http://www.jobs.ac.uk)



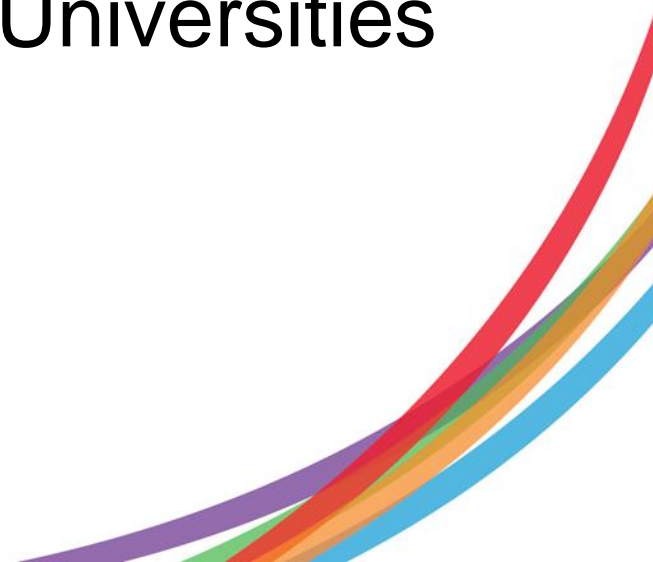
# Research Fellowships

- Either work on someone else's project or get own funding
  - Applying for own funding takes a long time, a year or more
  - Sources of funding: research councils, Leverhulme Trust, charities.....
  - Oxbridge college fellowships – prestigious, highly competitive
- 

# When thinking about first academic job post-PhD.....

- Do you want to focus on teaching or research or a mixture of both?
  - Teaching load – time for research?
  - Job security/length of contract
  - For fixed term contract positions – what will be your next step at the end of the contract?
  - How well do you ‘fit’?
- 

# League Tables

- Sunday Times Good University Guide
  - The Times Good University Guide
  - The Guardian Good University Guide
  - Academic Ranking of World Universities
  - THES-QS
  - Complete University Guide
- 

# Evaluating Teaching

- Quality Assurance Agency (QAA): external audits
- Assess quality and standards
- Drive improvements
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education launched Dec 2011
- View institution's reports online at:  
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/Pages/institutions-by-region.aspx>



# First degrees

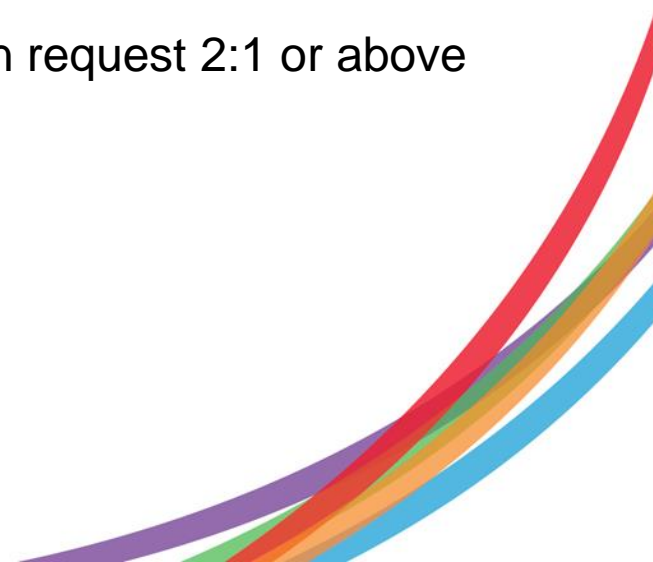
- Applications administered nationally through UCAS
- Usually 3 years in England and Wales
- Scotland has different education system to England and Wales – 4 year degrees, different school exams
- Classification:

First

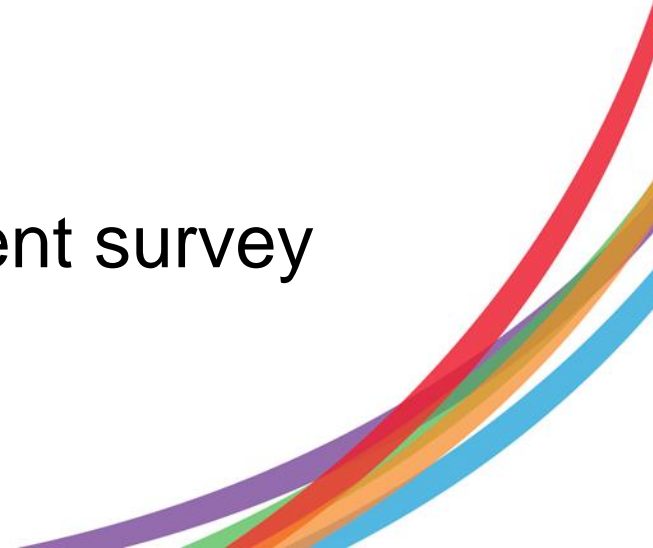
2:1 ←———— Employers often request 2:1 or above

2:2

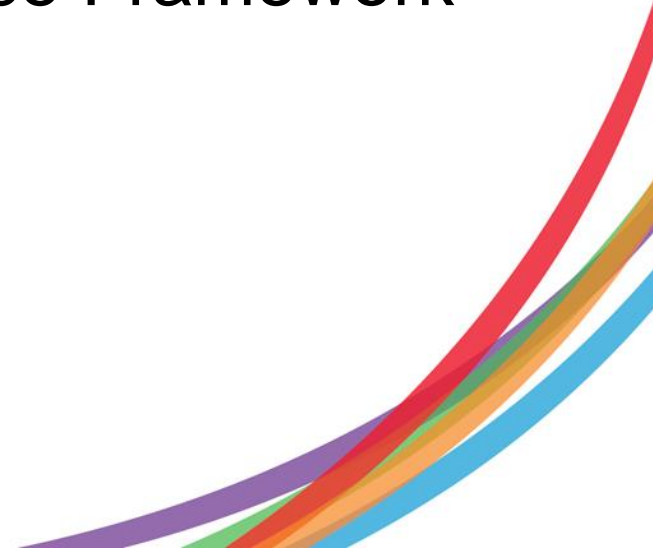
Third



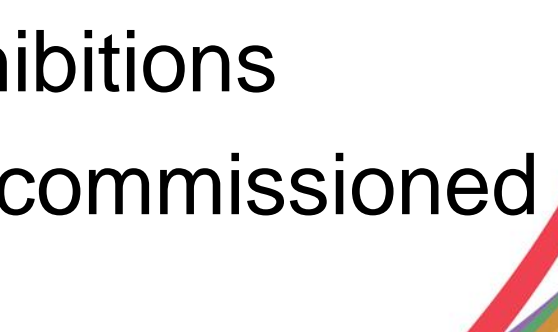
# Student Surveys and Stats

- **National Student Survey**
    - Since 2005
    - Feedback from final year undergraduates
  - **Unistats**
    - Review and compare official information about HEIs in UK
    - Run by HEFCE and UCAS
    - Includes results of national student survey
- 

# Measuring Research

- 1988 – first research assessment exercise (RAE)
  - Provide ratings of quality of research in universities and HE colleges in UK
  - 2008 – last RAE
  - Replaced by Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014. Next one 2020
  - 4 Panels
- 

# REF – Panel C outputs

- Books, parts of books
  - Journal articles
  - Physical artefacts e.g. buildings, installations
  - Digital artefacts e.g. archives, film
  - Temporary artefacts e.g. exhibitions
  - Other e.g. research reports, commissioned reports etc
- 

# REF - Results

Quality profile for each submission covering:

- Research outputs 65%: originality, significance, rigour
- Impact 20%: reach, significance
- Environment 15%: vitality, sustainability
- Four star, three star, two star, one star unclassified

<http://www.ref.ac.uk/subguide/>



# Building an Academic Career

Selection depends on:

- Research
- Teaching
- Service
- Public Engagement

Promotion depends on:

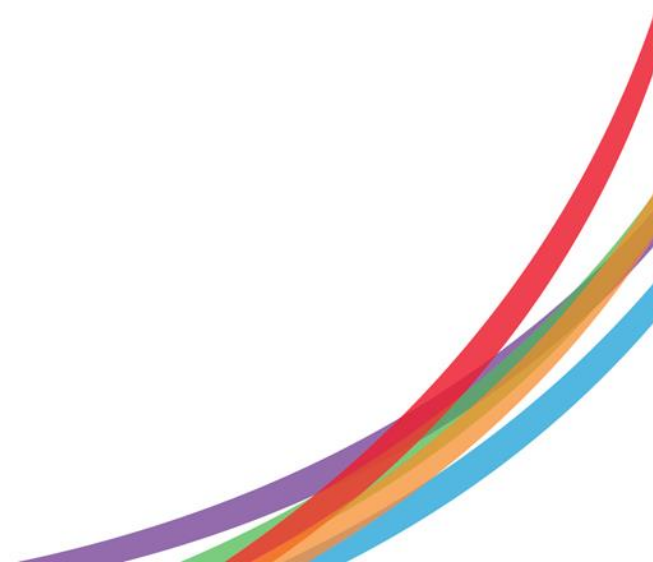
- All the above
- Internal promotion v moving institution





# Getting your self known

- Conferences
- Publishing
- Media & Social media
- Memberships
- Web presence




# Keeping Up to Date

- Times Higher Education Supplement  
THES
- Guardian Education
- HEFCE e-newsletters



# Further Reading

- [HEFCE](#): A Guide to UK Higher Education by HEFCE including list of UK HEIs updated Jan 2010
  - [Unistats](#) website – run by HEFCE and UCAS, includes results of National Student Surveys
  - [HESA](#) Higher Education Statistics Agency (data is public but pay for reports)
  - [REF](#): Panel criteria and working methods
  - [UKISA](#) Resources for International Students studying in the UK: Planning and Preparing Section
- 

# Further Support

- One-to-one appointments with Catherine Reynolds

Book: [careers.lse.ac.uk/](https://careers.lse.ac.uk/)

Email: [careers@lse.ac.uk](mailto:careers@lse.ac.uk)

- Careers Seminars for PhD students every term

[careers.lse.ac.uk/students/events](https://careers.lse.ac.uk/students/events)

- PhD section on Careers website

[www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/CareersAndVacancies/careersService/PhDsResearchStaff/Home.aspx](https://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/CareersAndVacancies/careersService/PhDsResearchStaff/Home.aspx)

- Academic and Professional Development Programme (PhDs)

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/PhDAcademy/home.aspx>

