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# **Version control**

Please complete this table and save each version with a new file name.

A final copy for sign off will be named V1. Please note that additional client changes requested following sign off may involve extra costs due to the additional time required to re-code and re-test the survey following changes.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Owner** | **Date** | **Notes** |
| Voob | Elsie Lauchlan | 03.05.2019 | Following qualitative interviews, final revisions |
| VOOB2 | David Payne | 08.05.2019 | Addressing Elsie feedback |
| V00B3 | Karen Kaplan | 10.5.2019 | “ |
| V00B4 | David and Karen | 10.5.2019 | Combined feedback back to Elsie |

# **Introductory text**

**Welcome to the Nature Research Group PhD Student Survey 2019!**

This survey aims to explore PhD students' career intentions and programme satisfaction. The results will help become part of a feature article later this year. We’ll also use the findings in other editorial content and for marketing products.

**Closing date: 9th July 2019**

**Completion time: 15-20 minutes**

**Prize draw: GBP £250 (or your local equivalent)**

This survey includes demographic questions to help us contextualise your answers. We will also be touching on sensitive subjects such as mental health and discrimination. You can opt-out of taking part at any time. Please note that your responses are strictly confidential and anonymous. If you are interested in entering the prize draw, we will require your personal contact information however this will not be linked to your responses. If you have any questions about the research or how your details will be stored, please contact [emily.terry@shift-learning.co.uk](mailto:emily.terry@shift-learning.co.uk) or visit our [website](https://www.shift-learning.co.uk/) or read our [privacy policy](https://www.shift-learning.co.uk/privacy-policy/).

Thanks again for your help!

Please click the button below to start the survey.

# **Questionnaire**

| **Question no.** | **Question and options** | **Type of question** | **Mandatory Y/N?** | **Routing** | **Notes between client and Shift** | **Rationale for research objectives & analysis thoughts** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| About you **To start the survey, we’d like to learn a little bit about you. This section asks about your current PhD programme** | | | | | | |
|  | Which, if any, of the following degrees are you currently studying for?   1. Dual doctorate degree (MD-PhD, PhD-PhD or other combination) 2. Doctorate degree (PhD/DPhil/MD) 3. Master's degree (MA/MS/MSc/PSM or other master’s) 4. Undergraduate student- Bachelor's degree (BSc/BA/BS) 5. Other, please specify 6. I am not studying for a degree | Single choice | Y | Ask to all  Screen out if not PhD student i.e. must select (a or b) |  |  |
| Thank you **Thank you very much for your time. Unfortunately, the rest of the questions in this survey are aimed at those who are currently PhD students. If you would like to provide further feedback please email us at audienceresearch@nature.com.** | | | | | | |
|  | Which was the most important reason you decided to enrol in a PhD programme?   1. I want to pursue an academic career 2. I want to pursue a non-academic career 3. No job I want is available without a PhD 4. Personal interest in my subject of choice 5. I wanted to continue pursuing my research 6. I wanted to live in another country 7. Other, please specify | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
|  | Are you studying in the country you grew up in?   1. Yes 2. No | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
|  | Where do you currently live?   1. Asia (including Middle East) 2. Australasia 3. Africa 4. Europe 5. North or Central America 6. South America | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
|  | Which country in Asia?   1. Afghanistan 2. Armenia 3. Azerbaijan 4. Bahrain 5. Bangladesh 6. Bhutan 7. Brunei 8. Burma (Myanmar) 9. Cambodia 10. China 11. Georgia 12. Hong Kong 13. India 14. Indonesia 15. Iran 16. Iraq 17. Israel and the Palestinian territories 18. Japan 19. Jordan 20. Kazakhstan 21. North Korea 22. South Korea 23. Kuwait 24. Kyrgyzstan 25. Laos 26. Lebanon 27. Malaysia 28. Maldives 29. Mongolia 30. Nepal 31. Oman 32. Pakistan 33. Philippines 34. Qatar 35. Russia 36. Saudi Arabia 37. Singapore 38. Sri Lanka 39. Syria 40. Tajikistan 41. Thailand 42. Turkey 43. Turkmenistan 44. United Arab Emirates 45. Uzbekistan 46. Vietnam 47. Yemen 48. Other, please specify | Drop down  Same page as above | Y | If living in Asia (Q4=a) |  |  |
|  | Which country in Australasia?   1. Australia 2. French Polynesia 3. Niue 4. Tonga 5. Christmas Island 6. Kiribati 7. Papua New Guinea 8. Tuvalu 9. Cocos Keeling Island 10. Nauru 11. Pitcairn Island 12. Vanuatu 13. Cook Island 14. New Caledonia 15. Solomon Island 16. Wallis Futuna 17. Fiji 18. New Zealand 19. Tokelau 20. Western Samoa 21. Other, please specify | Drop down  Same page as above | Y | If living in Australasia (Q4=b) |  |  |
|  | Which country in Africa?   * 1. Algeria   2. Angola   3. Benin   4. Botswana   5. Burkina Faso   6. Burundi   7. Cameroon   8. Cape Verde   9. Central African Republic   10. Chad   11. Comoros   12. Congo, Republic of   13. Congo, Democratic Republic of   14. Cote d'Ivoire   15. Djibouti   16. Egypt   17. Equatorial Guinea   18. Eritrea   19. Ethiopia   20. Gabon   21. The Gambia   22. Ghana   23. Guinea   24. Guinea-Bissau   25. Kenya   26. Lesotho   27. Liberia   28. Libya   29. Madagascar   30. Malawi   31. Mali   32. Mauritania   33. Mauritius   34. Morocco   35. Mozambique   36. Namibia   37. Niger   38. Nigeria   39. Rwanda   40. Sao Tome and Principe   41. Senegal   42. Seychelles   43. Sierra Leone   44. Somalia   45. South Africa   46. Sudan   47. Swaziland   48. Tanzania   49. Togo   50. Tunisia   51. Uganda   52. Zambia   53. Zimbabwe   54. Other, please specify | Drop down  Same page as above | Y | Ask if living in Afrcia (Q4=c) |  |  |
|  | Which country in Europe?   1. Albania 2. Andorra 3. Austria 4. Belarus 5. Belgium 6. Bosnia and Herzegovina 7. Bulgaria 8. Croatia 9. Cyprus 10. Czech Republic 11. Denmark 12. Estonia 13. Finland 14. France 15. Germany 16. Greece 17. Hungary 18. Iceland 19. Ireland 20. Italy 21. Latvia 22. Liechtenstein 23. Lithuania 24. Luxembourg 25. Macedonia 26. Malta 27. Moldova 28. Monaco 29. Netherlands 30. Norway 31. Poland 32. Portugal 33. Romania 34. Russia 35. San Marino 36. Serbia and Montenegro 37. Slovakia (Slovak Republic) 38. Slovenia 39. Spain 40. Sweden 41. Switzerland 42. Turkey 43. Ukraine 44. United Kingdom 45. Vatican City 46. Other, please specify | Drop down  Same page as above | Y | Ask if living in Europe (Q4=d) |  |  |
|  | Which country in North or Central America?   1. Anguilla 2. Antigua and Barbuda 3. Aruba 4. Bahamas 5. Barbados 6. Belize 7. Bermuda 8. British Virgin Islands 9. Canada 10. Cayman Islands 11. Clipperton Island 12. Costa Rica 13. Cuba 14. Dominica 15. Dominican Republic 16. El Salvador 17. Greenland 18. Grenada 19. Guadeloupe 20. Guatemala 21. Haïti 22. Honduras 23. Jamaica 24. Martinique 25. Mexico 26. Montserrat 27. Navassa Island 28. Netherlands Antilles 29. Nicaragua 30. Panama 31. Puerto Rico 32. Saint Barthélemy 33. Saint Kitts and Nevis 34. Saint Lucia 35. Saint Martin 36. Saint Pierre and Miquelon 37. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 38. Trinidad and Tobago 39. Turks and Caicos Islands 40. United States 41. United States Virgin Islands 42. Other, please specify | Drop down  Same page as above | Y | Ask if living in N. or C. America (Q4=e) |  |  |
|  | Which country in South America?   1. Argentina 2. Bolivia 3. Brazil 4. Chile 5. Colombia 6. Ecuador 7. Falkland Islands 8. French Guiana 9. Guyana 10. Paraguay 11. Peru 12. Suriname 13. Uruguay 14. Venezuela 15. Other, please specify | Drop down  Same page as above | Y | Ask if living in S. America (Q4=f) |  |  |
|  | What prompted you to study outside your country of upbringing? *Please select all that apply.*   1. To study at a specific university 2. Lack of quality PhD programmes in my home country 3. Lack of funding opportunities in my home country 4. Lack of PhD programmes in my subject of choice 5. Chance to pursue a specific research question 6. Higher salaries post-study 7. More job opportunities post-study 8. Family reasons 9. To experience another culture 10. Political reasons 11. Other, please specify | Multiple choice | Y | Ask if studying outside home country (Q3=no) |  |  |
|  | Do you have a job alongside your studies?   1. Yes 2. No | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
|  | What is your main reason for having a job?   1. To help make ends meet 2. To make myself more attractive to future employers 3. To develop additional skills 4. To broaden my contacts 5. Other, please specify | Single choice  Same page as above | Y | Ask if have second job (Q12=yes) |  |  |
| PhD highs and lows | | | | | | |
|  | What concerns you the most since you started your PhD?  *Please drag the options which are applicable to you and drop them into the grey box, which is next to or below the question depending on screen size.*  *You can then rank these in order, where 1st = your biggest concern.*     1. The difficulty of getting funding / low success rates for grant applications 2. Inability to finish my studies in the time period I had set out to 3. Impact of a poor relationship with my supervisor/PI 4. The number of available faculty research jobs beyond postdoc 5. The high numbers of PhD holders who are doing or have done multiple postdocs 6. The difficulty of maintaining a work/life balance 7. Uncertainty about the value of a PhD 8. Uncertainty about my job/career prospects 9. Student debt during my PhD· 10. Financial worries after my PhD (cost of living, inability to save for a house, children, retirement) 11. Political landscape 12. Impostor syndrome 13. Concern about my mental health as a result of PhD study 14. Poor support and acknowledgement of my parenting/elder care responsibilities | Drag and drop  Multiple choice  Ranking question | N | Ask to all | This will be a question which we’d like to focus on during the pilot i.e. if respondents have understood the question format and this works better than a multi or single choice question. | Analyse those which are likely to be selected, as well as those most likely to be ranked first |
| 14a. Additional Open question | Is there anything else not mentioned that has concerned you since you started your PhD? | Open | N | Ask to all |  |  |
|  | Overall, what do you enjoy most about life as a PhD student?   1. Intellectual challenge 2. Working with interesting and bright people 3. Social life 4. University/academic environment 5. Knowing I have a chance for a permanent academic research post 6. Knowing I will have a chance for a non-academic research job 7. Knowing I will have a chance to use my skills in a non-research science job 8. Creativity 9. A chance to consider professional options 10. Other, please specify | Single choice  Randomise | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
|  | How satisfied are you with your decision to pursue a PhD?   1. Very dissatisfied 2. Somewhat dissatisfied 3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 4. Somewhat satisfied 5. Very satisfied | Grid question  5 point scale | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| Satisfaction with your PhD experience | | | | | | |
| 17. | How satisfied are you with your PhD experience?  1=Not at all satisfied, 4 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 7 = Extremely satisfied | Grid question  7-point scale | Y | Ask to all |  | Possible for KDA  Scale changed from last year, 10 point |
| 18. | Since the very start of your graduate school experience, would you say your level of satisfaction has:   1. Significantly worsened 2. Worsened a little 3. Stayed the same 4. Improved slightly 5. Improved greatly | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 19.. | How satisfied are you with each of the following attributes or aspects of your PhD?   1. Availability of funding 2. Hours worked 3. Social environment 4. Degree of independence 5. Recognition from supervisor/PI 6. Overall relationship with supervisor/PI 7. Opportunities to collaborate 8. Number of publications 9. Stipend / financial support 10. Vacation time 11. Benefits (health care, leave, etc.) 12. Teaching duties 13. Guidance received from adviser in lab/research 14. Guidance received from other mentors in lab/research 15. Ability to attend meetings and conferences 16. Ability to present research at conferences 17. Work-life balance 18. Career pathway guidance and advice | Grid question  7 point scale  1=Not at all satisfied, 4 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 7 = Extremely satisfied, N/A  Split into 2 grids | Y | Ask to all |  | Possible for KDA  Scale changed from last year, 10 point |
| 20. | To what extent does your PhD programme compare to your original expectations?   1. Does not meet original expectations 2. Meets original expectations 3. Exceeds original expectations | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| Your programme | | | | | | |
| 21. | On average, how many hours a week do you typically spend on your PhD programme?   1. Less than 11 hours 2. 11-20 hours 3. 21-30 hours 4. 31-40 hours 5. 41-50 hours 6. 51-60 hours 7. 61-70 hours 8. 71-80 hours 9. More than 80 hours | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 22. | On average, how much one-on-one contact time do you spend with your supervisor each week?   1. Less than an hour 2. Between one and three hours 3. More than three hours 4. Other, please specify | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 23. | Overall, how would you describe the academic system, based on your PhD experience so far? | Open question | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 24. | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding other faculty members or scientists in your department?   1. Members of my department make time for frank conversations about my career 2. Members of my department are open to the idea of me pursuing a career outside academia 3. Members of my department have useful advice for careers outside academia 4. Members of my department have contacted potential employees on my behalf 5. Members of my department have encouraged me to attend career-promoting training and events 6. Members of my department have discouraged me from attending career promoting training and events | Grid question  5 point scale   * Strongly disagree * Disagree * Neither agree nor disagree * Agree * Strongly agree * Unsure/Not applicable | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| Mental health and discrimination **We understand the following questions are sensitive issues, so please only answer if you feel comfortable doing so. Again, all your responses are anonymous.** | | | | | | |
| 25. | Have you ever sought help for anxiety or depression caused by PhD study?   1. Yes 2. No 3. Prefer not to say | Single choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 26. | Did you seek help for anxiety or depression within your institution?   1. Yes, it was helpful 2. Yes, but I didn’t feel supported 3. No, I sought help elsewhere 4. I wanted to, but there was none available 5. I didn’t seek help 6. Other, please specify 7. Prefer not to say | Single choice  Same page as above | N | Ask if Q25=yes (sought help for anxiety or depression) |  |  |
| 27. | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?   1. Mental health and wellbeing services in my university are tailored and appropriate to the needs of PhD students 2. My supervisor/PI has a good awareness of support services and was able to signpost me to them if needed 3. My university offers adequate one-to-one mental health support 4. My university offers different types of support to promote mental health and wellbeing beyond one-to-one support (e.g. workshops, seminars, activities) 5. My university supports good work-life balance 6. There is a long-hours culture at my university, including sometimes working through the night | Grid question  5-point scale  Strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree, Prefer not to say | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 28. | Do you feel that you have experienced bullying in your PhD program?   1. Yes 2. No 3. Prefer not to say | Single choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 29. | Who was the perpetrator(s)?   1. Supervisor 2. Another student 3. Postdoc 4. Other academic staff member 5. Online troll 6. Other, please specify 7. Prefer not to say | Multiple choice  Same page as above  Prefer not to say exclusive | N | Ask if Q28=yes (experienced bullying) |  |  |
|  | Do you feel able to speak out about your experiences of bullying without personal repercussions?   1. Yes 2. No 3. Unsure | Single choice  Same page as above | N | Ask if Q28=yes (experienced bullying) |  |  |
| 30. | Do you feel that you have experienced discrimination or harassment in your PhD program?   1. Yes 2. No 3. Prefer not to say | Single choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 31. | Which of the following have you experienced?   1. Racial discrimination or harassment 2. Sexual harassment 3. Age discrimination 4. Gender discrimination 5. LGBTQ discrimination or harassment 6. Religious discrimination 7. Disability discrimination 8. Other, please specify 9. Prefer not to say | Multiple choice  Same page as above  Prefer not to say exclusive | N | Ask if Q30 = yes (experienced discrimination) |  |  |
| Future career plans **Thanks for your answers. We now want to find out about your career plans and expectations.** | | | | | | |
| 32. | How much do you expect your PhD to improve your job prospects?   1. Not at all 2. Barely 3. Somewhat 4. Substantially 5. Dramatically 6. Unsure | Grid question  5 point scale | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 33. | Which of the following sectors would you most like to work in (beyond a postdoc) when you complete your degree?  *Please rank these sectors in order of appeal, where 1st = most like to work in, by dragging and dropping them into the grey box.*   1. Academia 2. Industry 3. Government 4. Non-profit 5. Medical | Drag and drop  Ranking question | N | Ask to all | I’ve changed this questioning wording to allow us to cut down on questions. The previous questions were:  Q: Which of the following sectors would you like to work in (beyond a postdoc) when you complete your degree? *Please select as many as apply.*   * Academia * Industry * Government * Non-profit * Medical * I don't know * Other (please specify)   Followed by a masked question:  Q: Which of these sectors would you most like to work in?   * Academia * Industry * Government * Non-profit * Medical * I don't know * Other (please specify)   Another question to focus on during the pilot in regards to Q format. |  |
| 34. | Please use the scale below to indicate how likely you are to pursue one of these career paths upon completion of your programme.   1. Research in academia 2. Research in industry 3. Research within government or non-profit 4. Non-research in academia 5. Medical research 6. Non-research in industry 7. Non-research in government or non-profit | Grid question  5 point scale  ·         Not likely at all  ·         Not very likely  ·         Neither likely nor unlikely  ·         Likely  ·         Very likely  ·         Unsure | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 35. | If you’re unlikely to pursue an academic research career, what are the main reasons?   1. I am not interested in a research career in academia 2. I don't think I will be able to launch a research career in academia 3. The salary would be too low in academic research 4. The funding climate is discouraging 5. Academic research requires too much administrative work today 6. It is too demanding 7. Lack of work/life balance 8. The political climate where I am currently based is hostile to science 9. Other, please specify | Multiple choice  Randomise | Y | Ask if unlikely to work in academic research (Q34a=1,2) |  |  |
| 36. | What position do you most expect to occupy immediately after you complete your degree?   1. A postdoc in academia 2. A postdoc in industry 3. A postdoc in government lab 4. Lecturer 5. Assistant professor (tenure track) 6. Staff scientist (academic) 7. Staff scientist (industry) 8. Staff scientist (government) 9. Staff scientist (non-profit) 10. Contract scientist (academic) 11. Contract scientist (non-profit) 12. Contract scientist (industry) 13. Return as a student to another degree programme (e.g. medical school) 14. I don't know 15. Other, please specify | Single choice | Y | Ask if pursuing a research career (Q34a,b,c=4,5) |  |  |
| 37. | What type of career you are interested in pursuing after your graduate degree? | Open question | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| Career expectations | | | | | | |
| 38. | After completing your PhD, how long do you think it will take you to find a permanent (non-trainee) position?   1. Less than a year 2. 1 to 2 years 3. 2 to 3 years 4. 3 to 6 years 5. More than 6 years 6. Unsure | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 39. | How much more likely are you now to pursue a research career than when you launched your PhD programme?   1. Much less likely 2. Somewhat less likely 3. Equally likely 4. Somewhat more likely 5. Much more likely 6. Unsure | Grid question | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 40. | What is the main reason why you are more likely to pursue a research career?   1. I have become more interested in my area of specialism 2. I have become more aware of the future career opportunities 3. The available funding in my chosen area has increased 4. The support of a mentor has fuelled my interest in a research career 5. I have realised I don’t want to do anything else 6. I have identified a specific research group that I would like to work with 7. Other, please specify | Single choice  Randomise | Y | Ask if more likely (Q39 = d, e) |  |  |
| 41. | How did you arrive at your current career decision? *Please select all that apply.*   1. Careers training/seminar 2. Advice from colleagues 3. Advice from my supervisor/adviser 4. Observing my supervisor/PI 5. Advice from researchers who had secured the job I was interested in 6. My own internet or other research on the topic 7. *Nature* Careers 8. Other science-careers publications 9. Family influence 10. Unsure/Not applicable 11. Other, please specify | Multiple choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| Careers support **Thanks for your answers so far. Only a few more sections to go!** | | | | | | |
| 42. | How do you learn about available career opportunities that are beyond academia? *Please select all that apply.*   1. I am only interested in academic career opportunities· 2. My institution provides relevant workshops and resources 3. I cold-contact individuals in jobs that sound interesting 4. My family 5. Professional societies 6. *Nature* Careers 7. Other science publications/jobs boards 8. Another journal related to my area of speciality 9. Online resources including blogs 10. LinkedIn, Twitter and other social networks 11. Speaking with people in my lab 12. Speaking with people in my department 13. Scientific conferences 14. Other, please specify | Multi choice  Option a – exclusive | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 43. | Which of the following 3 things would you say are the most difficult for PhD students in your discipline? *Please select a maximum of 3 answers.*   1. Learning what career possibilities exist 2. Finding research careers within academia 3. Finding research careers within industry 4. Finding research careers within government 5. Finding research careers within charity/non-profit 6. Obtaining skills for careers in industry 7. Obtaining skills for careers in non-profits 8. Finding non-research careers that use my skills 9. Other, please specify | Multiple choice  Max 3 | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 44. | Which of the following would you say are the most difficult for PhD students in the country where you are studying? *Please select a maximum of 3 answers.*   1. Learning what career possibilities exist 2. Finding research careers within academia 3. Finding research careers within industry 4. Finding research careers within government 5. Finding research careers with charity/non-profit 6. Finding non-research careers that use my skills 7. Other, please specify | Multiple choice  Max 3 | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 45. | Which of the following resources do you think PhD students need the most in order to establish a satisfying career? *Please select a maximum of 3.*   1. Lower competition for grants 2. Mentorship with individuals in my field/department/institution 3. Gender-specific mentorship with individuals in my field/department/institution 4. Better data/information about available career opportunities 5. A record of or data on career paths of previous graduates from my programme 6. More jobs in academia 7. Grants to help PhD holders transition to permanent positions 8. Other­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­, please specify | Multiple choice  Max 3 | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 46. | How well is your programme preparing you to carry out each of the following activities?   1. Collecting data 2. Analysing data 3. Designing robust reproducible experiments 4. Writing a paper for publication in a peer-reviewed journal 5. Developing  resilience to manage rejection by a peer review panel 6. Presenting findings to a specialist audience 7. Presenting findings to a non-specialist (public) audience 8. Applying for funding 9. Finding a satisfying career 10. Managing complex projects 11. Developing a business plan 12. Managing people 13. Managing a large operational budget | Grid question  5 point scale   * Very badly * Badly * Neither well nor badly * Well * Very well * Unsure/Not applicable | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 47. | To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?     1. "I feel that my programme is preparing me well for a research career" 2. "I feel that my programme is preparing me well for a non-research science-related career" 3. “I feel that my programme is preparing me well for a career that straddles both industry and academia” | Grid question  5 point scale   * Strongly disagree * Disagree * Neither agree nor disagree * Agree * Strongly agree * I don't know | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 48. | Which, if any, of the following activities have you done to advance your career? *Please select all that apply.*   1. Attended career seminars and/or workshops 2. Attended networking events 3. Developed my social media profile 4. Worked out an individualized development plan 5. Discussed my career future with a supervisor/PI 6. Discussed my career future with a mentor 7. Discussed my career future with a careers counsellor at my institution 8. Other, please specify | Multiple choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 49. | Which of the following social media networks have you used to build your professional network? *Please select all that apply.*   1. LinkedIn 2. Twitter 3. Facebook 4. WeChat 5. Blogs/Online threads 6. Other social media networks, please specify 7. None | Multiple choice  None exclusive | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| Reflection **We’re almost finished!** | | | | | | |
| 50.. | What would you do differently right now if you were starting your programme? *Please select as many as apply.*   1. Change area of study 2. Change supervisor/PI 3. Not pursue a PhD at all 4. Nothing 5. Other, please specify | Multiple choice  C and d as exclusive | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 51. | With the benefit of hindsight, what one thing do you know now which you wish you’d known about when you started your PhD? | Open question | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| Final questions **We have a few questions we’d like to ask about you to finish off the survey.** | | | | | | |
| 52. | What is your age?   1. Under 18 2. 18 - 24 3. 25 - 34 4. 35 - 44 5. 45 - 54 6. 55 - 64 7. 65 or over 8. Prefer not to say | Single choice | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 53. | Are you…   1. Male (including trans male) 2. Female (including trans female) 3. Gender queer / Non binary 4. Prefer not to say | Single choice  Same page as above | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 54. | Which of the following best describes you?   1. Caucasian 2. Latino/Hispanic 3. Middle Eastern 4. African 5. Caribbean 6. South Asian 7. East Asian 8. Pacific Islander 9. American Indian 10. Mixed ethnicity 11. Other, please specify 12. Prefer not to say | Multi choice  Same page as above  Prefer not to say exclusive | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 55. | Do you have any caring responsibilities?   1. Yes, to child/children under 12 2. Yes, to child/children over 12 3. Yes, to an adult(s) 4. No 5. Other, please specify | Multiple choice  No exclusive  Same page as above | Y | Ask to all |  |  |
| 56. | Thank you for taking part in the survey. Are there any more comments you’d like to share with us? | Open  Same page as above | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| Thank you | | | | | | |
| 57. | Would you like to be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win GBP £250? *You can find prize draw terms and conditions* [*here*](https://www.shift-learning.co.uk/prize-draw-terms-and-conditions/)*.* *Shift Learning will be administering the incentive and a winner will be contacted within 4 weeks of the survey closing date.*   * Yes * No | Single choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 58. | Nature may want to contact you again to ask for more information on the subjects discussed in this survey, or to ask you specific questions about your comments and answers. Are you happy to receive follow up requests?   * Yes * No | Single choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 59. | Springer Nature is keen to update PhD students with advice and information about their programme and career options via a regular newsletter. Would you like to be kept informed about this planned service from Nature Careers? *Please note that by ticking yes, you are giving permission for Springer Nature to contact you via email.* *Please review Nature's privacy policy for more information: https://www.nature.com/info/privacy*   * Yes, I would like *Nature* Careers to contact me about a newsletter | Single Choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 60. | Shift Learning carry out paid research in the education sector throughout the year. Would you be happy to be contacted about relevant future research opportunities? *Please note that by ticking yes, you are agreeing for Shift Learning to use the information provided in this survey to contact you for future research. If you do not wish to join our research list, please move onto the next question.*   * Yes, I would like to join the Shift Learning research list | Single choice | N | Ask to all |  |  |
| 61. | Please fill in your contact details below.  *Please note, we only ask you to provide details you are comfortable with sharing. These fields are not compulsory. Note that Shift Learning adheres to the* [*Market Research Society Code of Conduct*](https://www.mrs.org.uk/pdf/mrs%20code%20of%20conduct%202014.pdf) *and you will not be contacted for sales or marketing purposes. Please be assured that your survey responses will not be directly linked to your contact details in our analysis. For more information, please read our* [*privacy policy*](https://www.shift-learning.co.uk/privacy-policy/)*.* | * Name * Email address | N | Ask if prize draw or opt in |  |  |

# **Final text**

We have now come to the end of the survey. Many thanks for filling out our survey, your responses are extremely valuable and useful for *Nature.*

Please click the button below to submit your answers.

# Gaps in questioning

Topics that respondents felt were important and required more discussion:

* Power dynamics and relationships between students and supervisors.
* Impact of different peer relationships in labs.
* Ability to attend conferences – often hindered by lack of funding or supervisor approval.
* Politics of PhD students as ‘cheap labour’.
* Academia not seen as an ‘open’ profession – people should feel more comfortable talking about issues.
* Diversity within PhD community – more women and mature students should undertake PhDs.
* Length of time taken on PhD studies – unrealistic initial timescales, issues that are outside the student’s control, unexpected extensions.

# Potential questions to expand these topics:

* Do you have a good professional relationship with your supervisor? Do you feel that you can go to your supervisor for mental health support?
* What is the environment like in your lab? Do you spend time with your peers from your group away from the lab/work? If no, why not?
* Have you been able to attend conferences? Are you able to use university funding to attend conferences? Have you ever been prevented from attending a conference by your supervisor? If yes, what reason were you given?
* Have you been asked to complete work outside of your topic area? Have you been asked to write papers for research not directly linked to your project?
* If you have an issue with a supervisor/faculty member/peer, would you feel comfortable speaking to someone at your university about it?
* How many women are in your research group? Do you have a female supervisor?
* How many years are you funded for? What is the target length of your PhD? Do you feel this is achievable?