

Improving post-graduate study learner outcomes for learners from widening access backgrounds

Paul Wakeling

paul.wakeling@york.ac.uk

@pbjwakeling

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Outline

1. Evidence on postgraduate access (20 mins)
 - From research
 - From the Postgraduate Support Scheme
2. Exercise: an institutional strategy for PG* WP (25 mins)
3. Group discussion (15 mins)

* Focus is on taught postgraduate courses

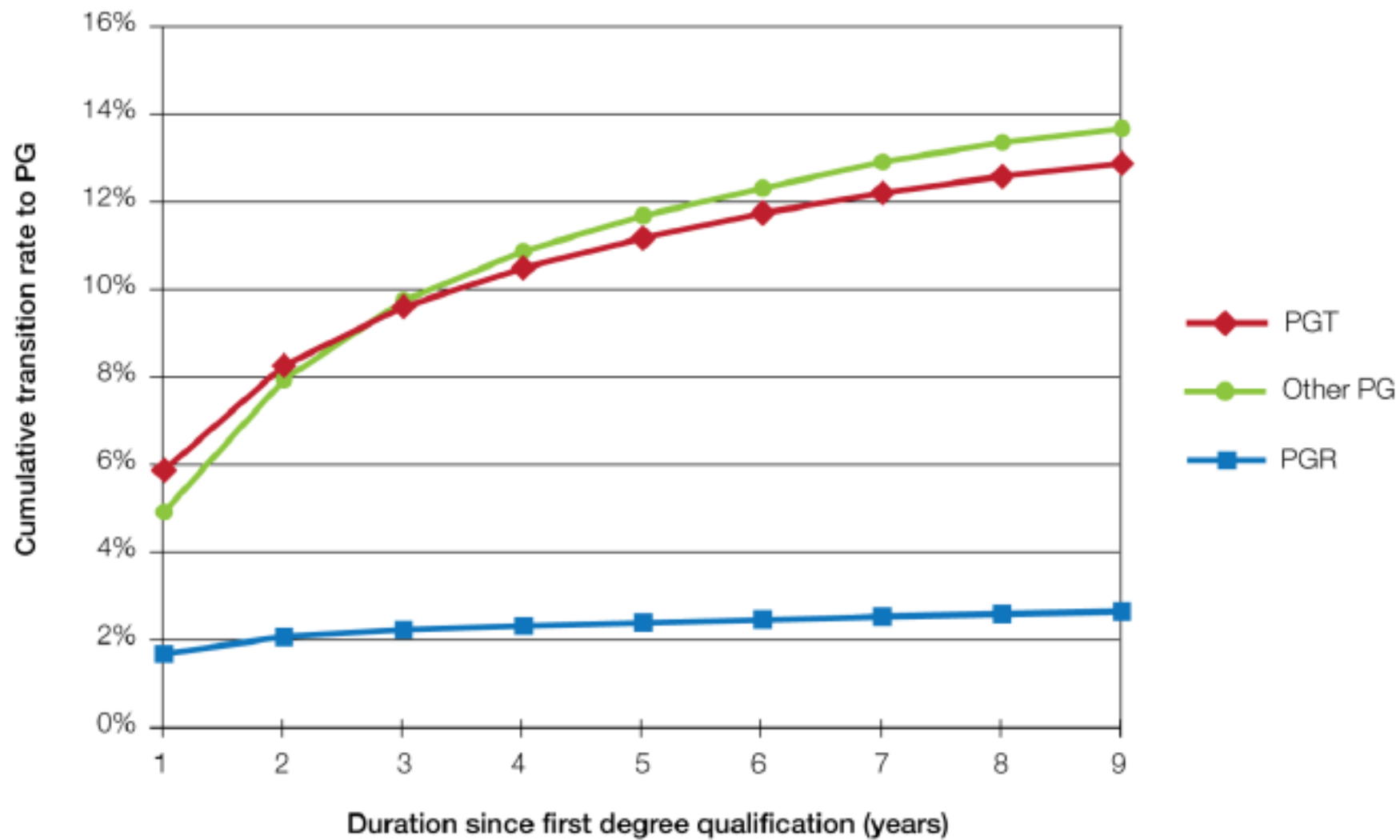
Evidence on postgraduate access

**complexity
inequalities**

Level of study

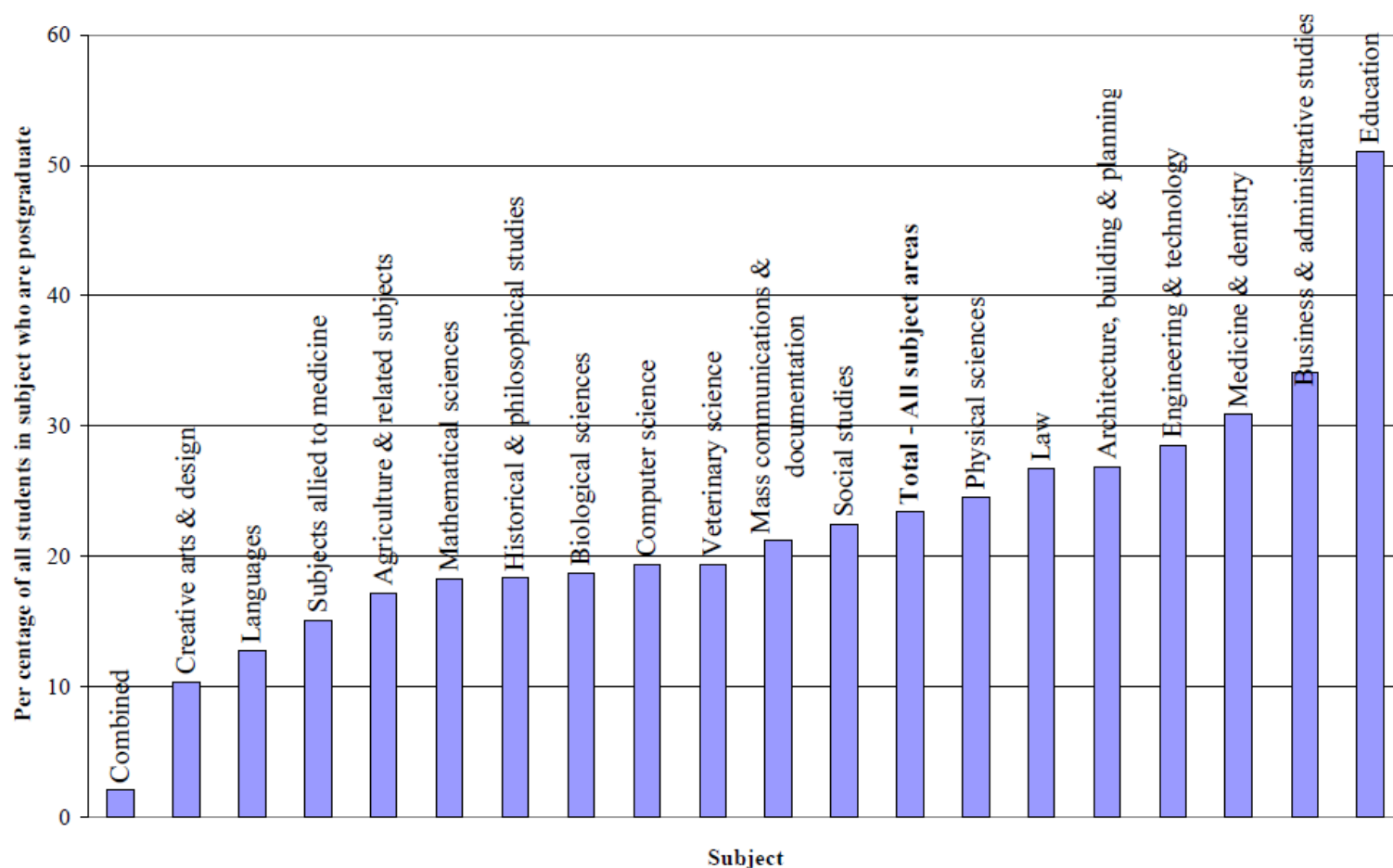
	PGR	PGT	Other PG
Part-time	≈30%	≈60%	≈70%
UK-domiciled	60%	54%	92%
Self-funded (UK)	37%	72%	43%
High tariff HEIs	66%	37%	24%
Largest subject	Biological sciences	Business & administrative studies	Education
Enrolments	94,645	282,905	123,785

Source: HEFCE (2013a, Figure 10, p.36)



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Figure 5.1: Postgraduates as a percentage of all students in UK HEIs, by subject discipline

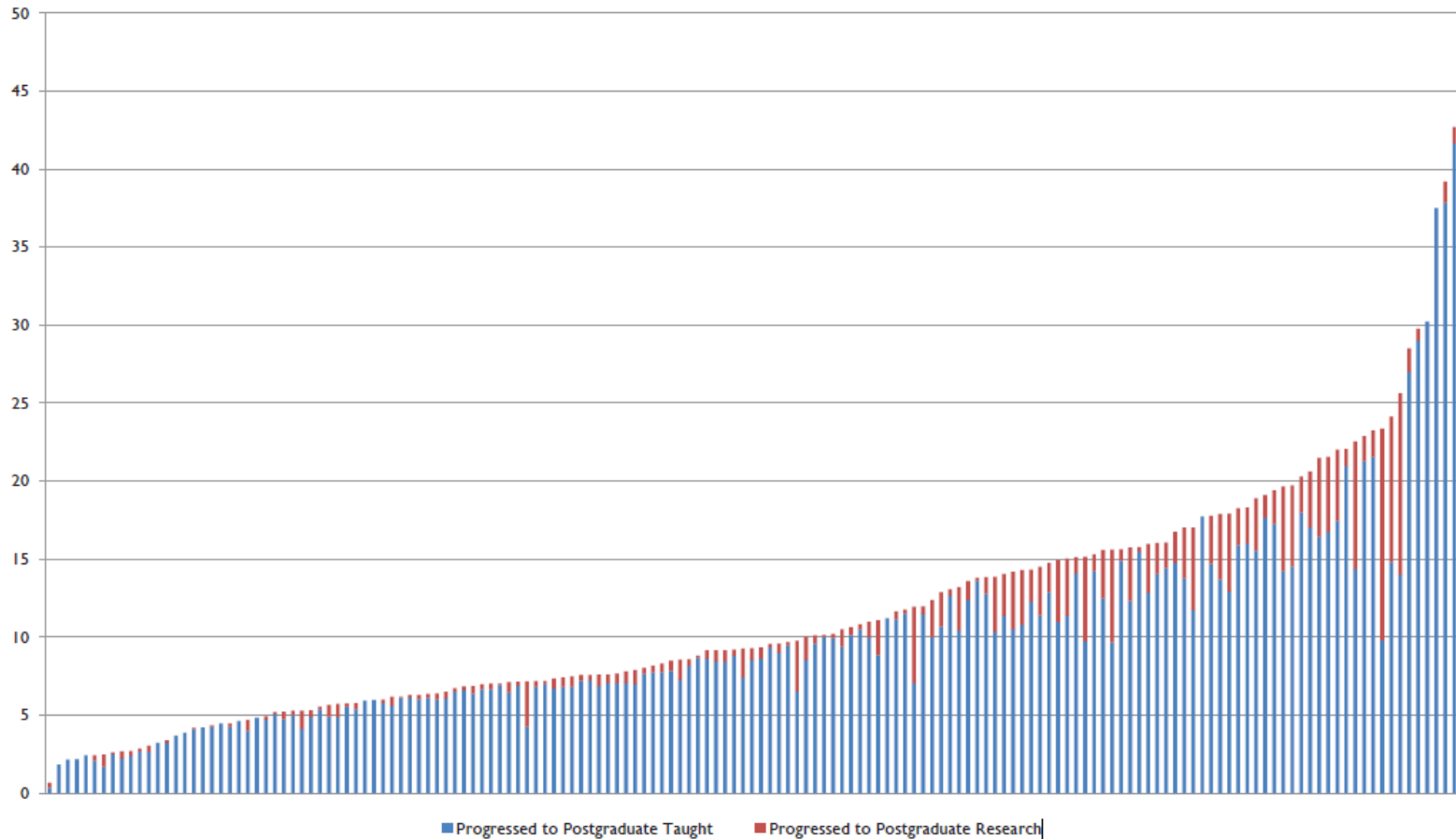


Source: HESA (2007a), Table 2e.

Taken from Wakeling (2009, p.124)

Institutional patterns

Figure 7.1. Percentage of first degree qualifiers by progression status to taught higher and research degree by first degree institution: 2009-10 & 2010-11 combined



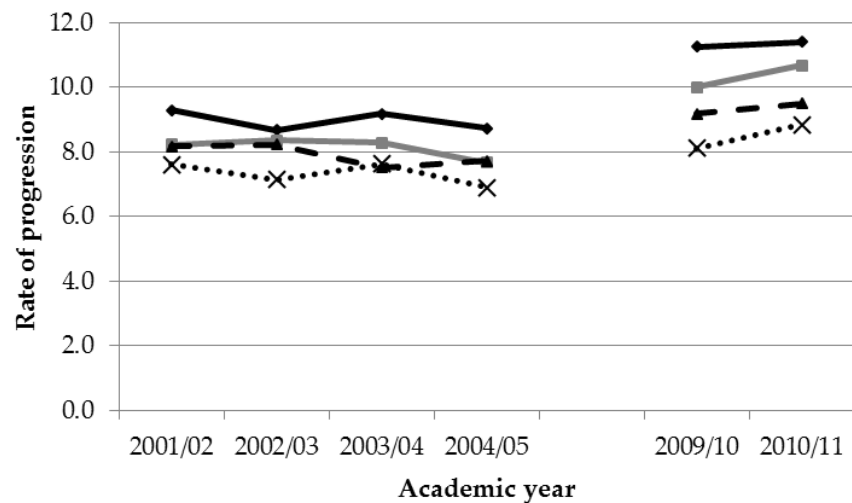
Note: Name of institutions purposely excluded.

Source: HESA Student Record and Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey 2009-10 - 2010-11

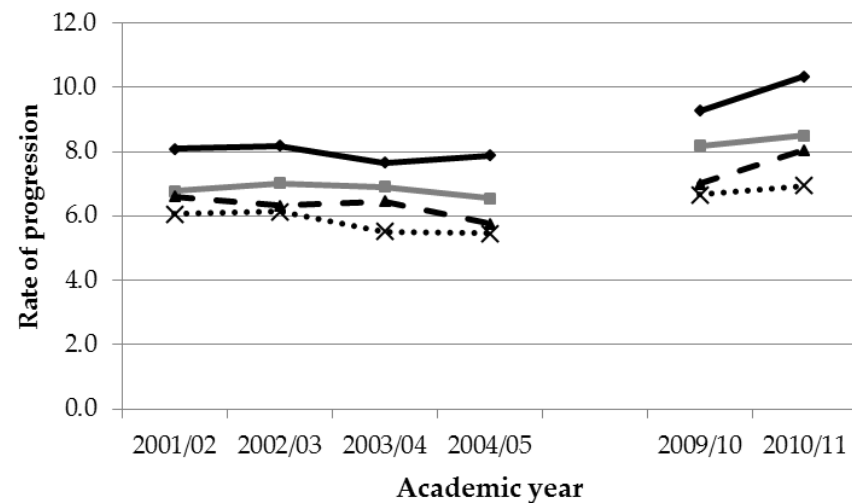
Source: Wakeling & Hampden-Thompson (2013, Figure 7.1 p.36)

Other complexities

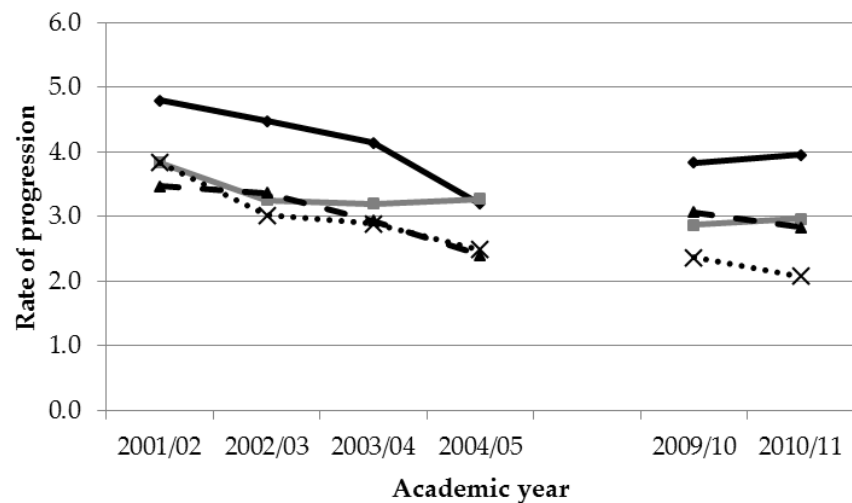
- Funding:
 - PGCE, PhD, masters
 - Loans
- Student intentions and motivations:
 - Academic or vocational
 - Career entry or development
 - Full-time or part-time
 - Vague or specific



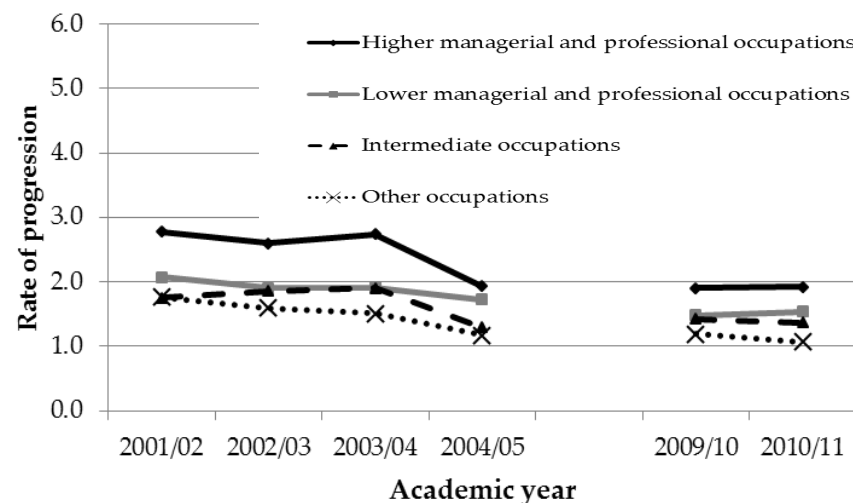
(a) Taught higher degree - men



(b) Taught higher degree - women



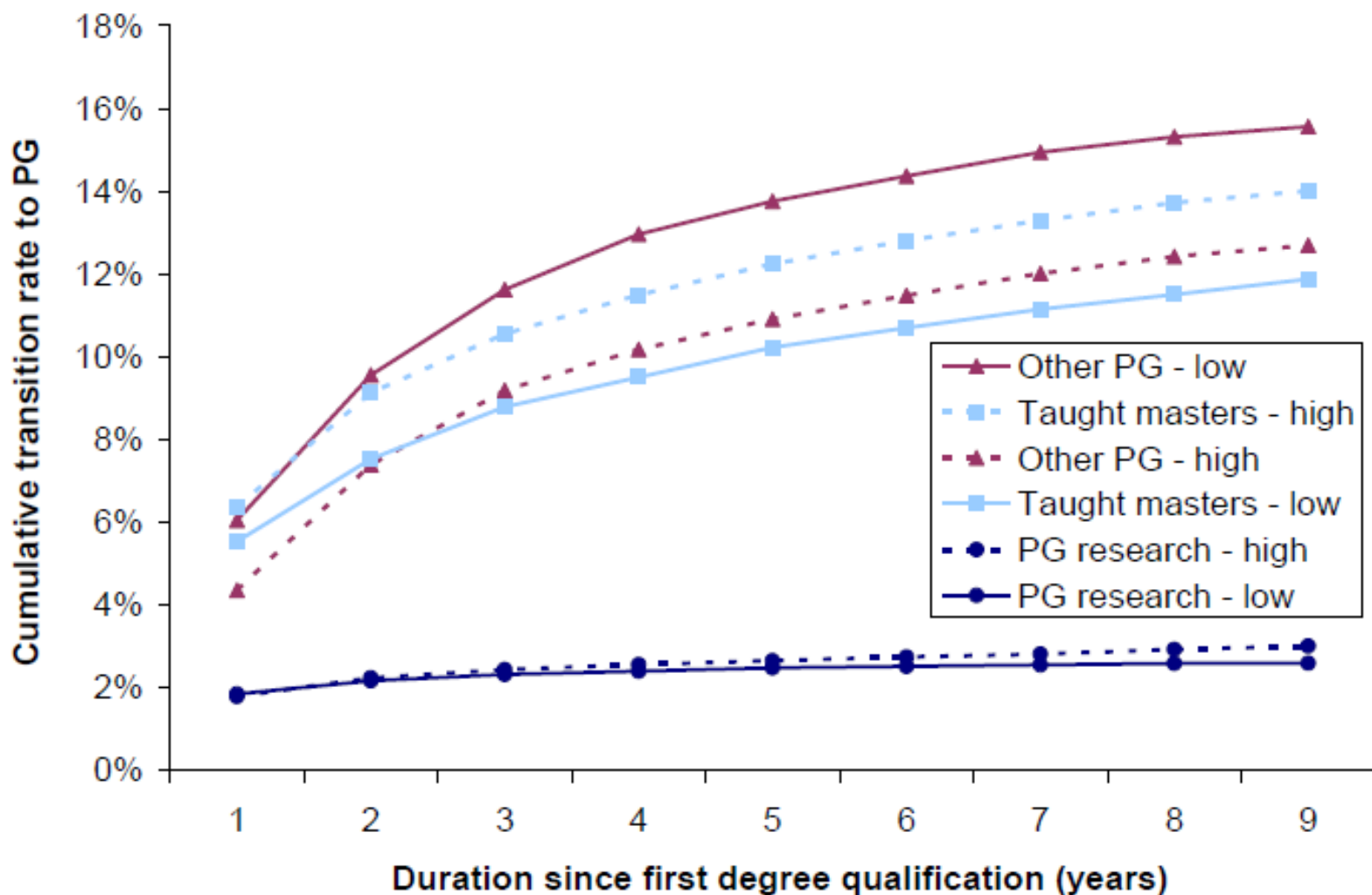
(c) Higher degree by research - men



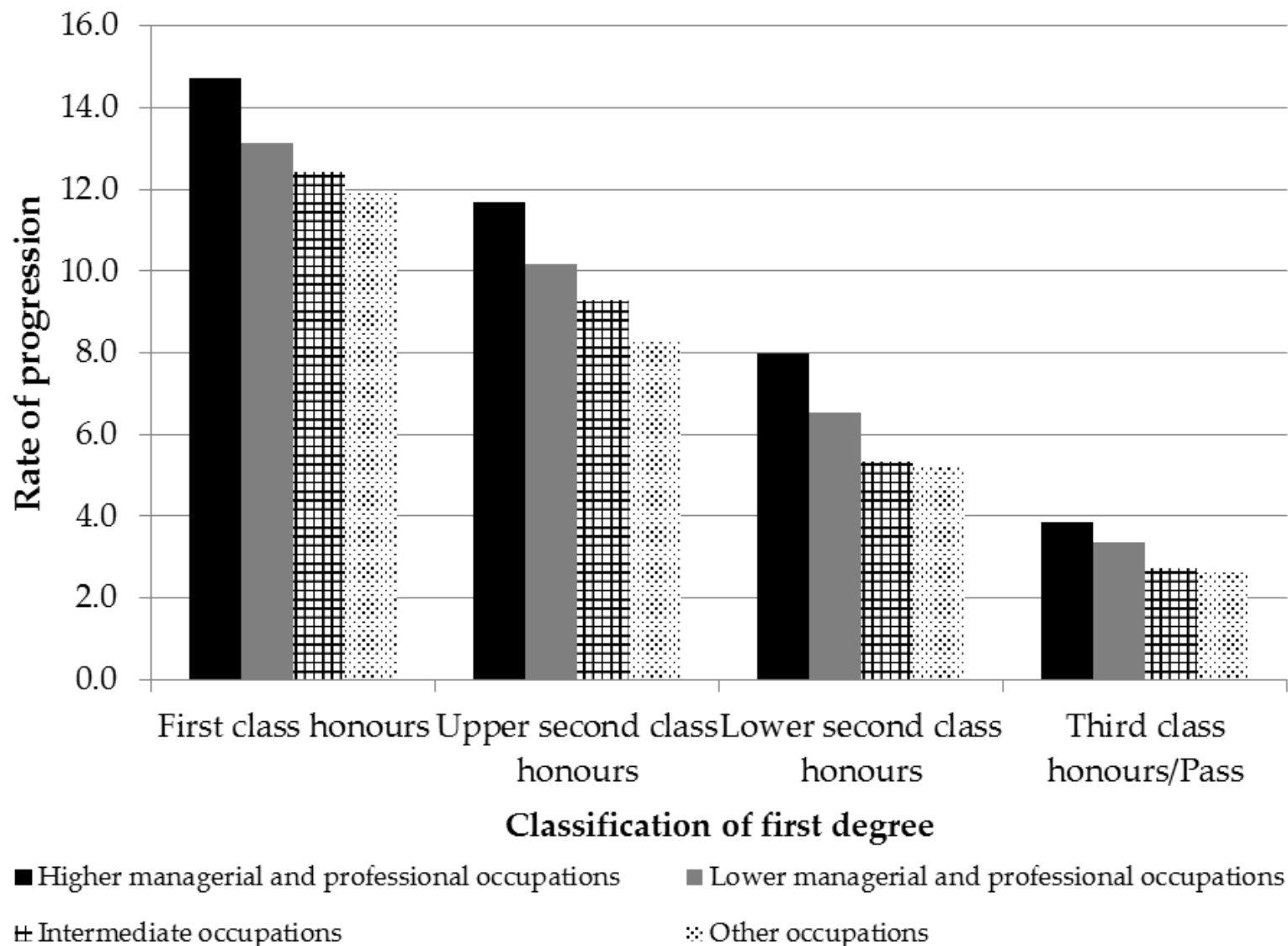
(d) Higher degree by research - women

UK-domiciled graduates' rates of immediate progression to higher degrees by social class and gender, 2001/02 – 2009/10

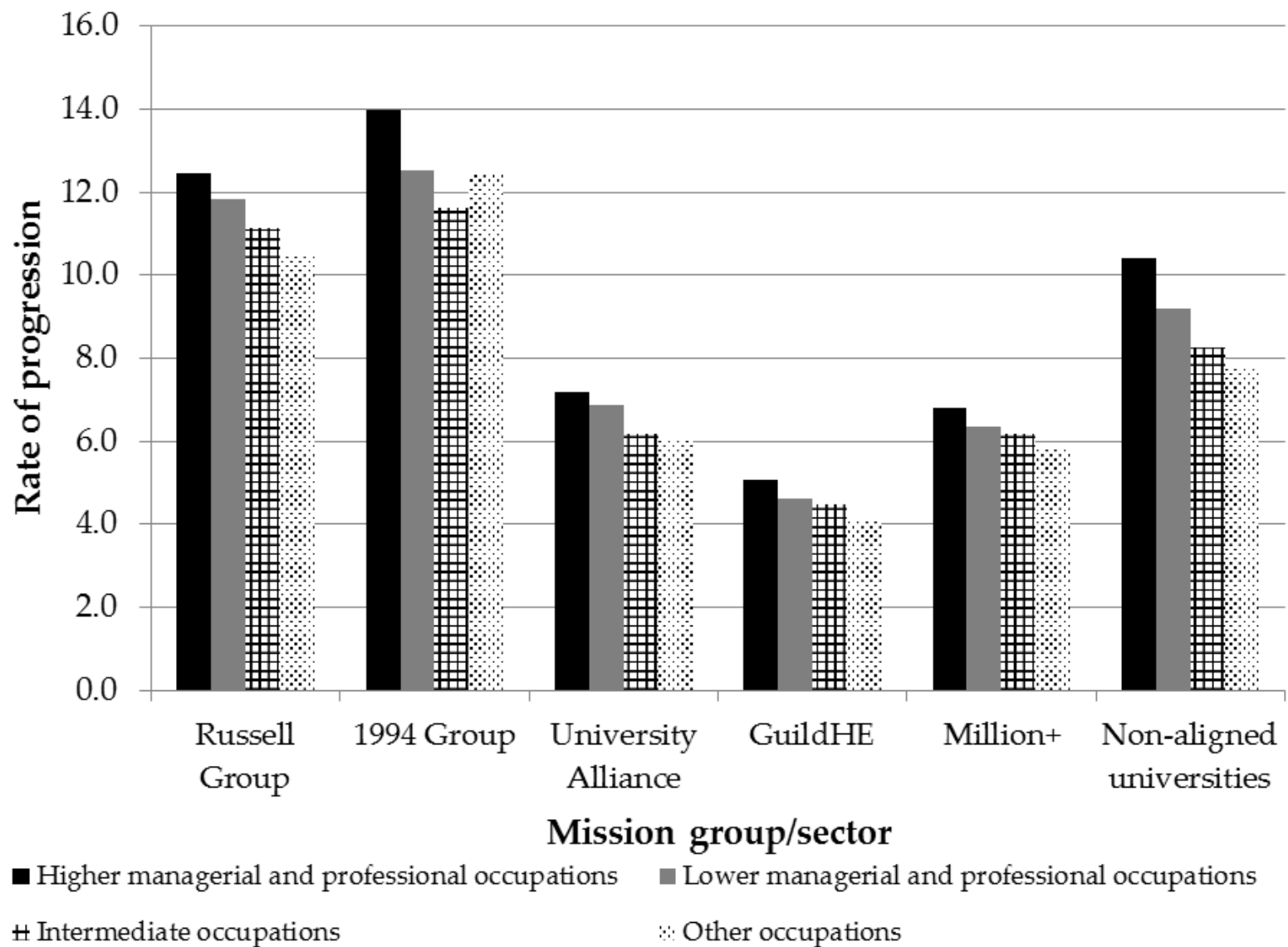
Figure 12 Cumulative transition rate to PG by duration, split by POLAR groups 1 (low) and 5 (high), for 2002-03 young UK full-time first degree qualifiers at English HEIs



Source: HEFCE (2013b) *Trends in transition from first degree to postgraduate study: qualifiers between 2002-03 and 2010-11*. Bristol: HEFCE, p. 36.



Rate of progression by UK-domiciled first-degree graduates to taught higher degree, by social class and first-degree classification, 2009/10 – 2010/11



Rate of progression by UK-domiciled first-degree graduates to taught higher degree, by social class and first-degree institution type, 2009/10 – 2010/11

Source: HESA Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey 2009/10 – 2010/11.

Intention/actuality

Social class background (NS-SEC 3-class scheme)	Taught postgraduate Master's study: intention and outcome			
	Realised intention	Did not realise intention	No intention but entered further study	No intention and no further study
Managerial and professional occupations	7.9%	26.7%	5.9%	59.5%
Intermediate occupations	6.1%	28.2%	4.0%	61.6%
Routine and manual occupations	6.1%	31.9%	3.9%	58.2%

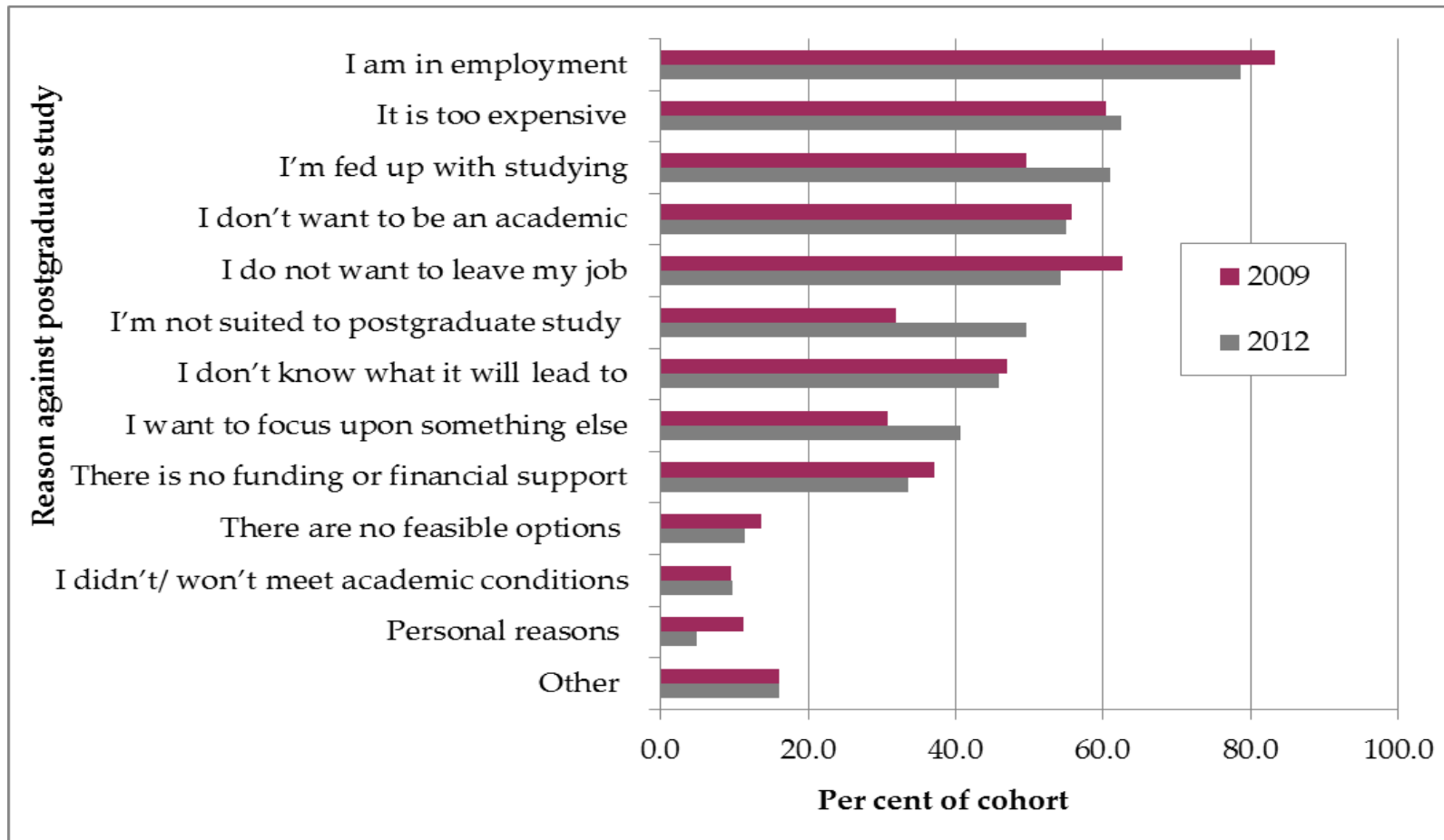
Futuretrack Wave IV respondents, UK domiciled graduates, undergraduate study in England, excl. Medicine and Dentistry, excl. Colleges and Specialist HEIs, full-time student at Wave II, N=4,988.

Intention for taught Master's study vs. outcome by socio-economic class background

Source: Wakeling *et al.* (2015)

(Similar results from HEFCE's analysis of NSS IAGS)

Barriers



Reasons for not enrolling in postgraduate study

Source: Wakeling *et al.* (2015), Figure 8.5.

Evidence on interventions What can be done about it?

Postgraduate Support Scheme and elsewhere

PSS Headlines

£25 Postgraduate Support Scheme I (2014/15):
overarching messages



1. Funding helps.
2. More than funding is needed.

Funding and finance

- Range of shapes and sizes of award
- Generally oversubscribed: latent and frustrated demand
- Student views: finance essential
 - Or for some projects key factor
 - Studying at all vs. studying better (PT work)

Funding and finance

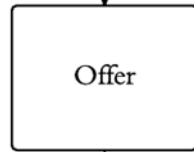
- Size of award:
 - Generous ones all did well
 - Partial funding: good enough...for some
- General, simple schemes worked best
- Debt, fee levels
- To address financial advantage, assess financial disadvantage (how?)

1a

Qualifies
(e.g. has a first degree)



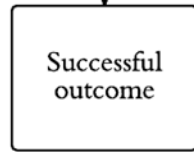
1b



2



3



Background
characteristics

Financial means

- Enthuse
- Inform
- Monitor
- Demystify
- Support
- Monitor
- Finance
- Mentor
- Advise

Group exercise (20-25 mins)

In groups of (ideally) **FIVE**:

You are the widening participation manager for a university (description provided)

You are asked to come up with a **five point plan** to widen participation to postgraduate study

You will have some (limited) resources

What ideas and approaches might you 'borrow' from undergraduate WP work?

Be prepared to present your plan to the group

Some concluding thoughts

(...if we have time)

Measures

- Monitor aspiration; attainment; discrimination; application; choice:
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - First degree institution
 - Socio-economic class (?)
 - Parental education
- Means test (material)

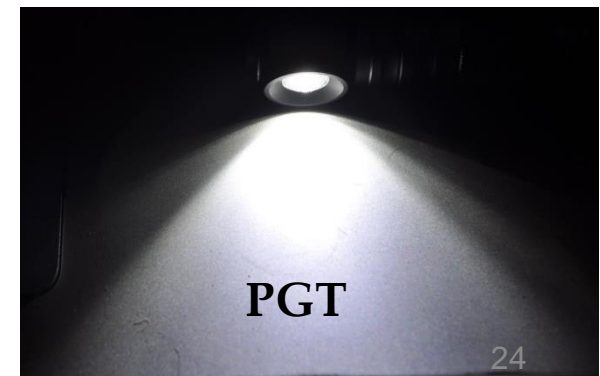
Admissions and 'co-opetition'

- Competition a barrier to IAG/ outreach/inreach
- No national application system
- Message to stakeholders about PGT atomised
- Examples of successful collaboration/ co-operation in PSS



Visibility and momentum

- PSS has raised the profile of PGT, within institutions
 - ...but 2014 PG=1997 UG?
- Frequently no institutional 'location' or policy
- Monitor data
- How to keep it going?



Interventions

- Inreach – IAG to our own undergraduates
- Outreach (trickier?)
- SPA for PGT (and a national application system?)
- Money
 - (my view: national system needed)

References

- HEFCE (2013a) *Postgraduate Education in England and Northern Ireland: Overview Report 2013*. Bristol: HEFCE.
- HEFCE (2013b) *Trends in transition from first degree to postgraduate study: qualifiers between 2002-03 and 2010-11*. Bristol: HEFCE.
- Wakeling, P. (2009) *Social class and Access to Postgraduate Study in the UK: a Sociological Analysis*. PhD Dissertation, University of Manchester.
- Wakeling, P. (2015) *Programme Analysis of HEFCE's Postgraduate Support Scheme: Final Report to ESRC and HEFCE*. Bristol: HEFCE.
- Wakeling, P. and Hampden-Thompson, G. (2013). *Transition to higher degrees across the UK: an analysis of regional, institutional and individual differences*. York: Higher Education Academy.
- Wakeling, P., Hancock, S., Hampden-Thompson, G. and Coxhead, A. (2015) Understanding the student: consortium research on taught postgraduate access and motivations. In Strike, T. and Toyne, J. M. (eds) *Widening Access to Postgraduate Study and the Professions: Final Report*. Sheffield: University of Sheffield.