

The Future of Postgraduate Training and Skills Development

CA Roundtable Report

In June 2012 the QAA published new guidelines on the research, personal and professional skills training that universities should be providing for students on research programmes (*QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality – Chapter B11: Research degrees*). These guidelines replaced the 2004 Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education and became the reference point for the purposes of reviews carried out by QAA from June 2013. Chapter B11 sets out a series of 18 'Indicators' that reflect sound practice, and through which higher education providers can demonstrate they are meeting QAA expectations. Indicator 14 requires that:

Research students have appropriate opportunities for developing research, personal and professional skills. Each research student's development needs are identified and agreed jointly by the student and appropriate staff at the start of the degree; these are regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate.

The training to meet these needs is increasingly provided at institutional level, through Graduate Schools and Doctoral Colleges or similar. But what professional training should and could be delivered at Departmental level? Are we adequately preparing our PhDs for future careers in and outside academia? Are we providing adequate training in ancient and modern languages? Are we providing adequate support and training to help our postgraduates become effective lecturers? What models of sound practice exist in the sector that might be shared with other departments? And how can a commitment to developing personal and professional skills be reconciled against competing pressures to ensure that research students complete and submit on time, alongside financial pressures that require students to work and study part-time? The following papers, based on presentations at the Nottingham CA Roundtable, address these and other key questions.

During the plenary discussion at this roundtable we looked at some of the models of good practice that exist in Classics and Ancient History Departments internationally. Ronnie Ancona (Professor and Graduate Director at Hunter College, New York) generously shared the following:

<http://apaclassic.org/education/careers-for-classicists>

At this link are directions for downloading the whole document as a pdf or one can browse by section. We have encouraged departments to share this information with students and faculty. While some of it is clearly aimed at the US market, the overall points may be useful for UK based PGRs too. It includes some honest words about the job market...

http://www.aclclassics.org/uploads/assets/files/Standards_for_Latin_Teacher_Preparation.pdf

While this document is aimed at preparing secondary school Latin teachers, it has value for all of us who teach Latin or prepare (indirectly or otherwise) future Latin teachers.

Finally, here is a link to abstracts from a panel Ronnie co-organized for APA on graduate education in pedagogy for PhD students. The papers themselves have now been published in the Paedagogus section of Classical World 106 (2012), 103-129:

<http://apaclassics.org/education/2012-education-committee-panel-and-abstracts>

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