



# Worth the paper it's written on?

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**One: My journey:**

**‘Pasts’**

**(Or setting the scene)**

# My first semester as an academic



# Five conversations with my supervisor

## 1. I am a fraud

# Five conversations with my supervisor

## 2. I have writer's block

# Five conversations with my supervisor

**3. I understand  
(when I had no idea)...  
'smart person syndrome'**

# Five conversations with my supervisor

## 4. I cannot do this...

# Five conversations with my supervisor

## 5. I want to change topic



## **Five conversations with my supervisor**

**5. I want to change topic  
(or supervisors)**

## Five conversations with my supervisor

**5. I want to change topic  
(or supervisors  
or universities)**

# Two: The PhD

# What we now know...

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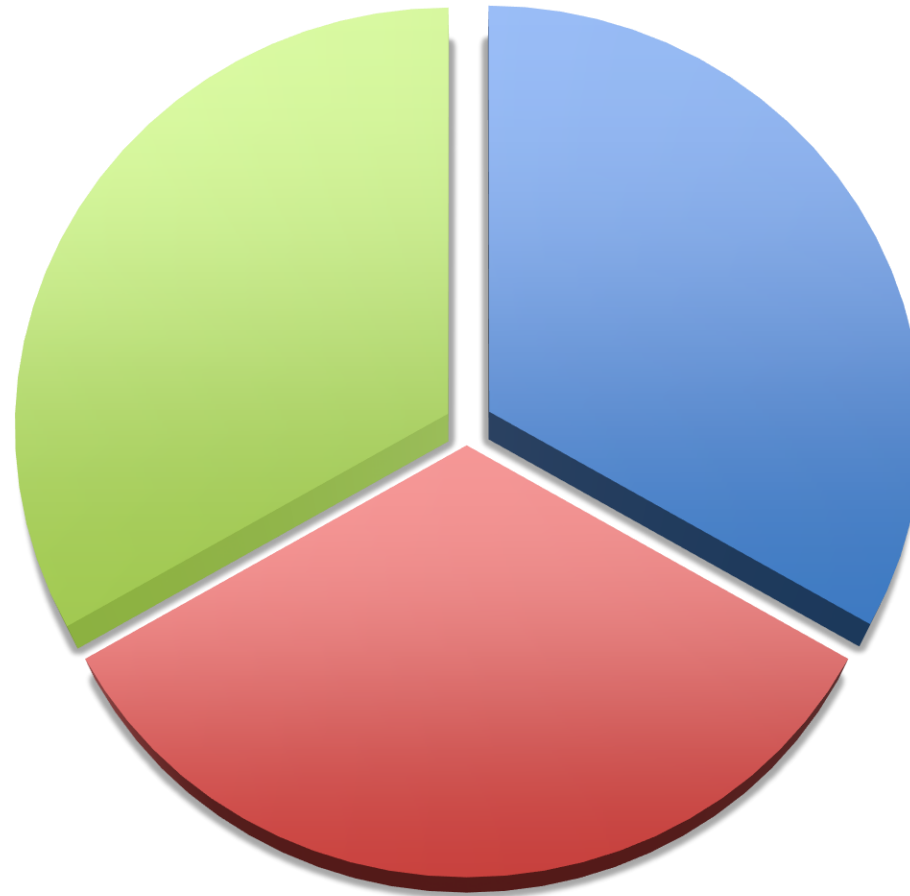
- 50 percent of postgraduates do not go into academia...
- Inter-discipline skills are valued...
- Collaboration is highly valued... but difficult to achieve...

# What we now know...

- 50 percent of postgraduates do not go into academia...
- Inter-discipline skills are valued...
- Collaboration is highly valued... but difficult to achieve...
- Pressure on completion and finances



# ACOLA: Review of Australia's Research Training System



■ Person ■ System ■ Nation

# A tension....



## Scholarship

## ‘Training’



# A (false) binary...

Scholarship



‘Training’



# A (false) binary...



A thousand year old industry on the cusp of  
profound change – Ernst & Young  
Change will be driven by five trends



University  
of the future  
A thousand year old  
industry on the cusp of  
profound change

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES



# ACOLA (DDOGS)



■ Person ■ System ■ Nation ■

# ACOLA (DDOGS)



■ Person ■ System ■ Nation ■

# ACOLA (DDOGS)

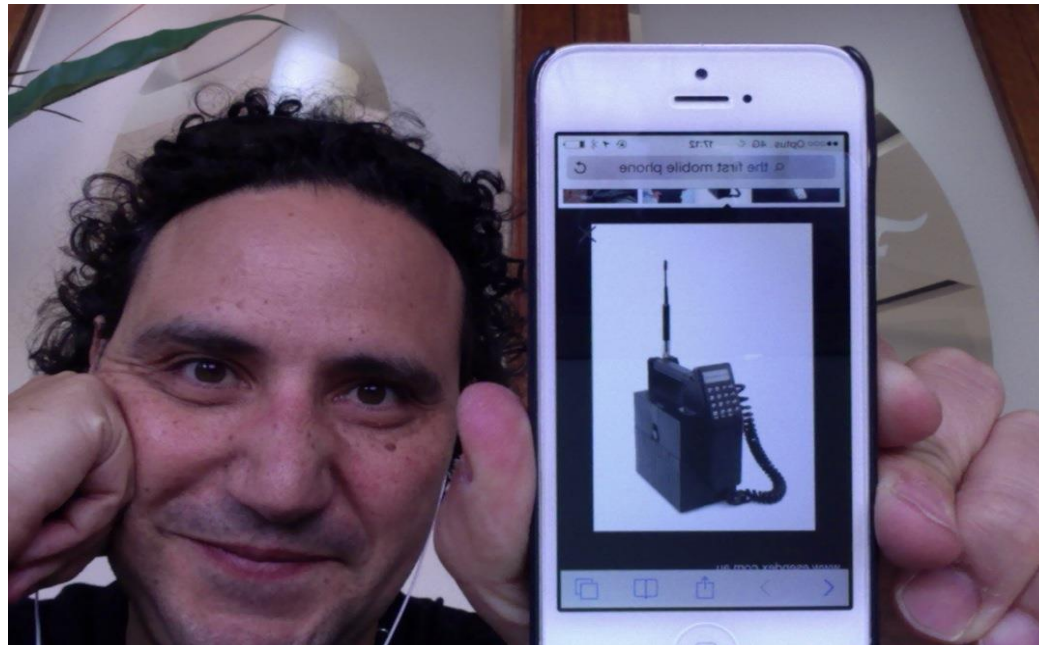


■ Person ■ System ■ Nation ■

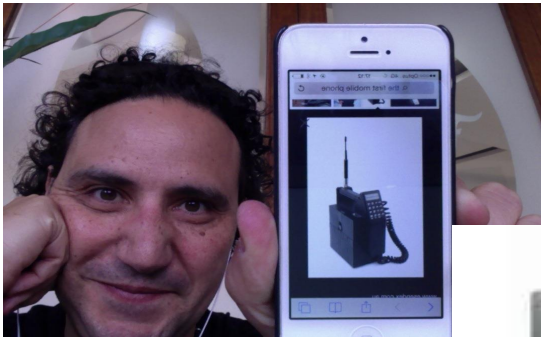
# Three: A changing environment: Futures



# Imagination...



# A rapidly changing world...







Re  
Labels

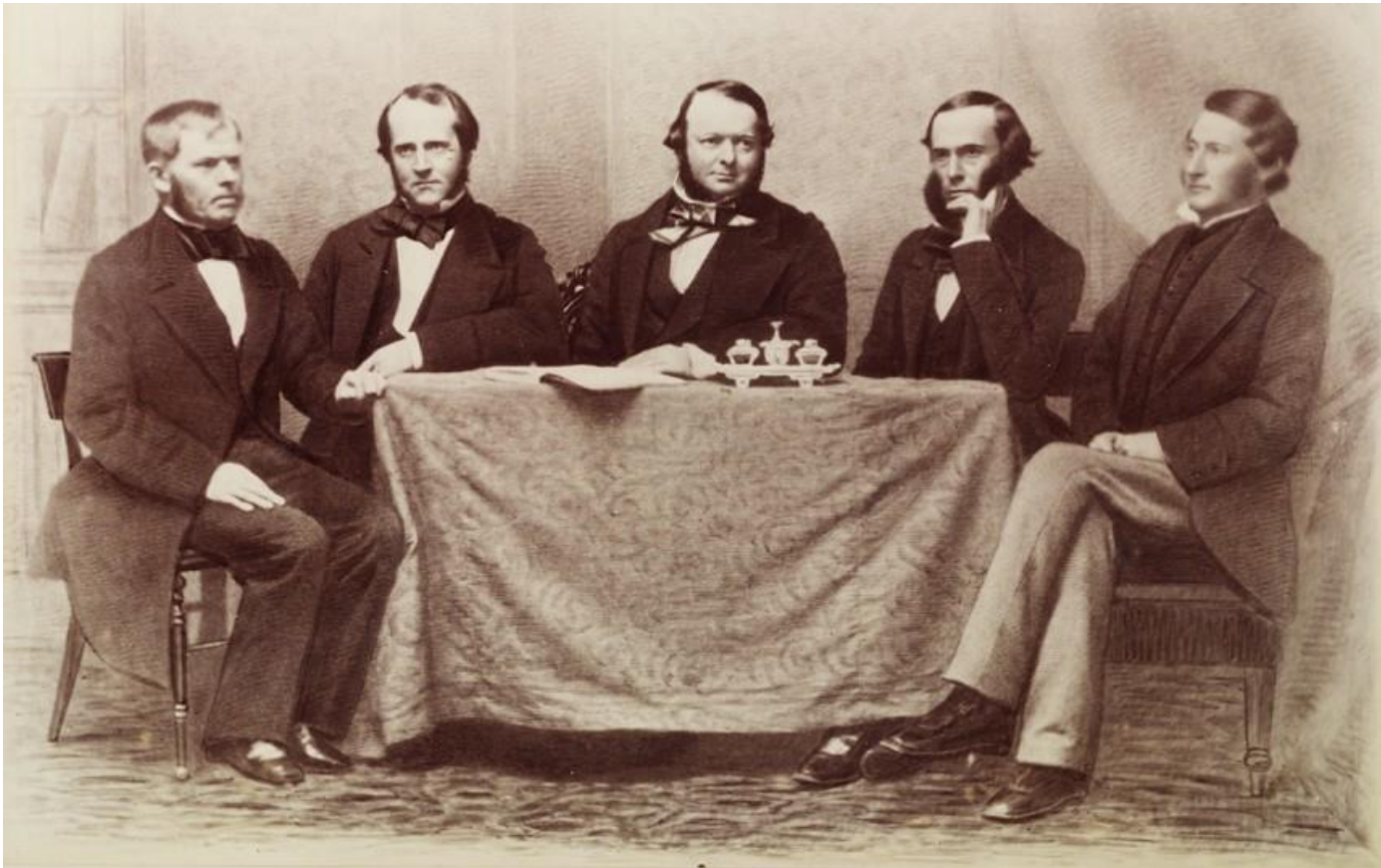
**What is our value proposition?**

**What does a PhD mean in a  
time of disruption?**

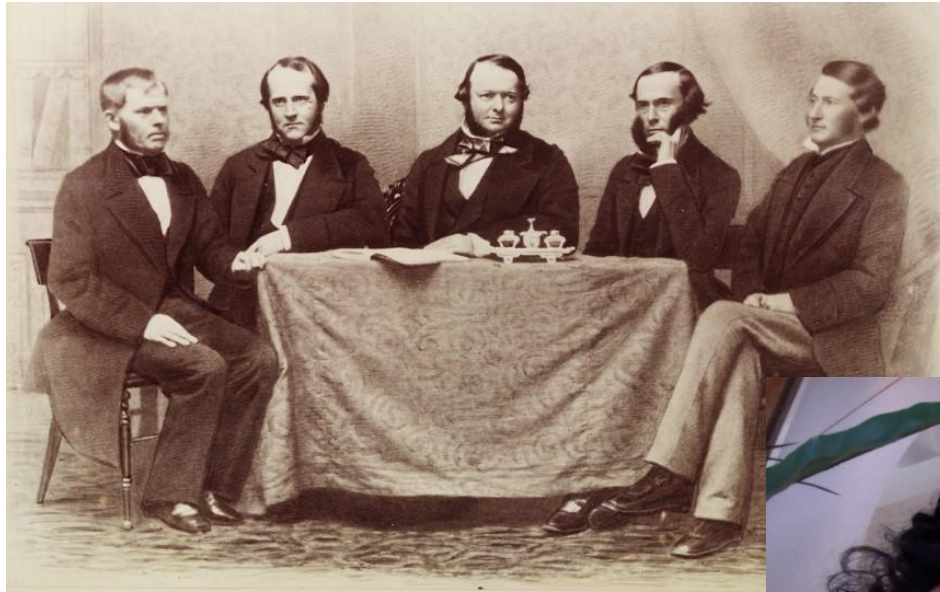


# A PhD established in Germany

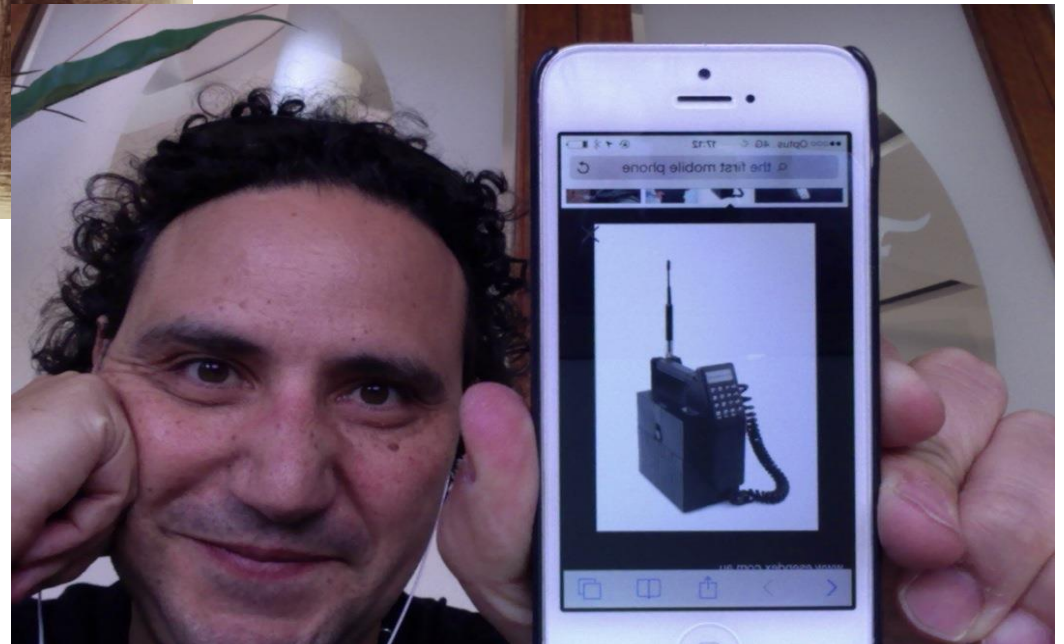
- 1880s



# What would these dudes say...



...about this?



# Has the PhD kept up?



# Four: The person

# What we know?

- Majority of research on *undergraduate* student FYE  
“very little reported research” on postgraduate  
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Nelson, 2005; Brown et al., 2013)

# What we know?

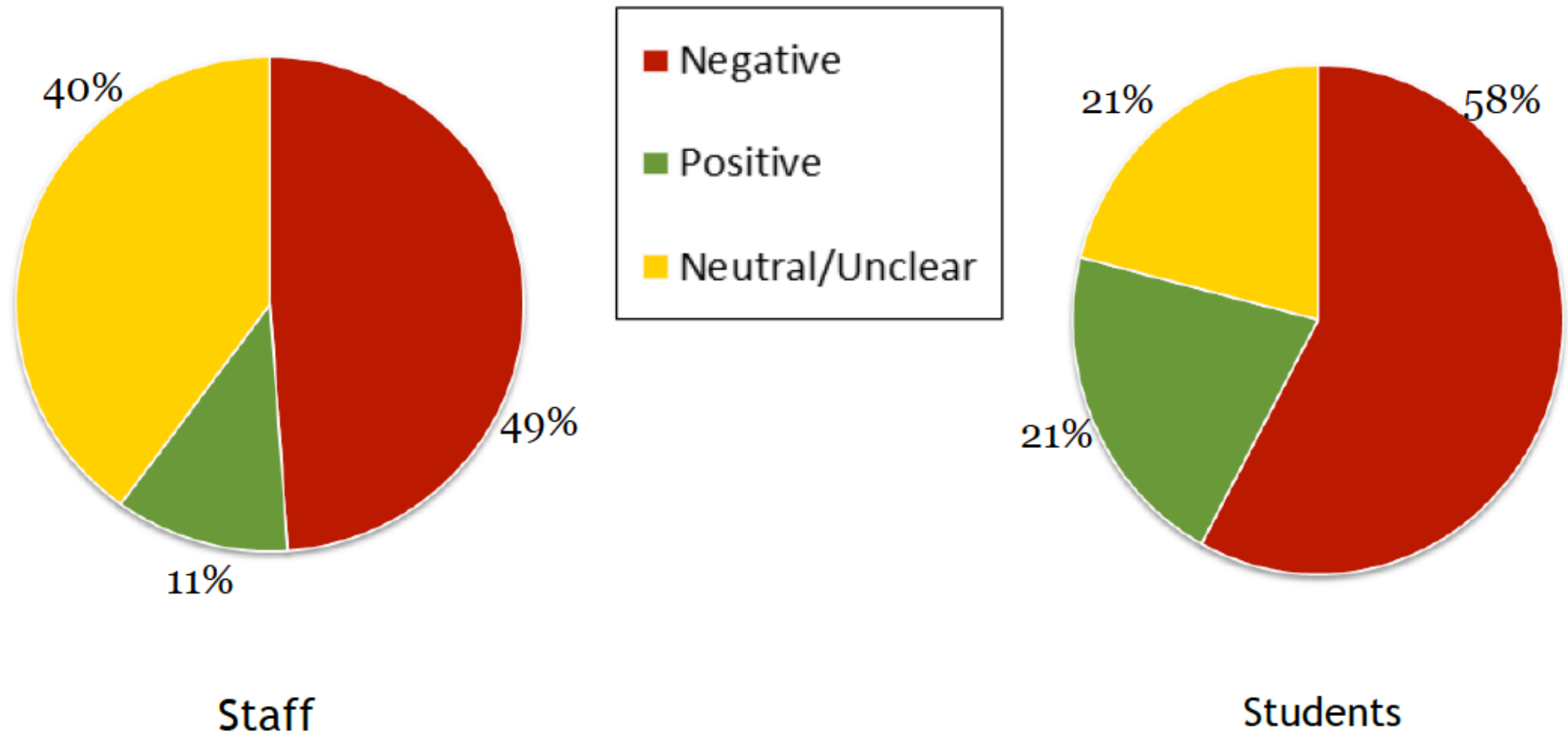
- Majority of research on *undergraduate* student FYE “very little reported research” on postgraduate (Larcombe & Malkin, 2011)
- A high proportion of under-grads are unsettled or dissatisfied with their first year experience (Kift & Nelson, 2005; Brown et al., 2013)
- We have little information on how this translates to the first year experience?

# What is the experience?

Overall Sentiment	Staff	Students (All)	Students (First Year)
Positive	5 (11%)	8 (21%)	2 (18%)
Negative	22 (49%)	22 (58%)	6 (55%)
Neutral	18 (40%)	8 (21%)	3 (27%)

e. Percentages represent the proportion of responses per staff/student group.

# Results: Overall Sentiment



# The student feedback...

*If I could think of one word it would be '**struggle**'... my experience has been coloured by external, sort of, unrest, be it housing stress, having to navigate a part-time job and full-time Uni and have a life, spend time with my partner and my friends... I feel it is a **struggle to balance** that and there is **not a lot of support**. So I think the **experience is hard... obviously there is a lot of stress that goes on**. ...it is very **challenging** because like a lot of us postgrads we are ...working... it is **time, flexibility, learning the work life balance**.*

Student Comments

# Student...

- *more of being a Lone Ranger running, not always with that knowledge that you need, **not always with the support that you need and not always knowing where to find that and how to get..** So I suppose it is good training in that sense but it is not always an enjoyable experience...*

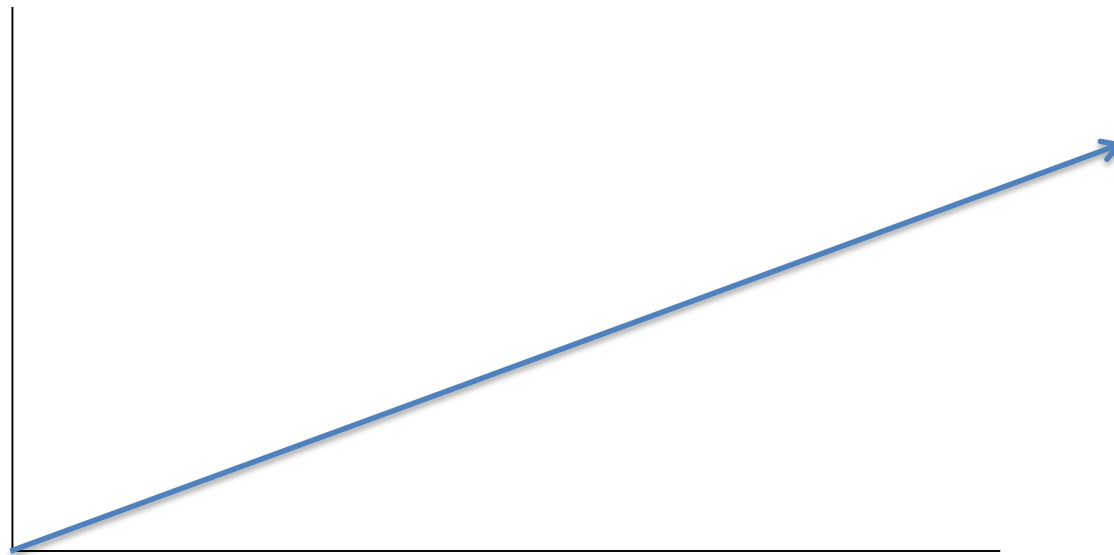


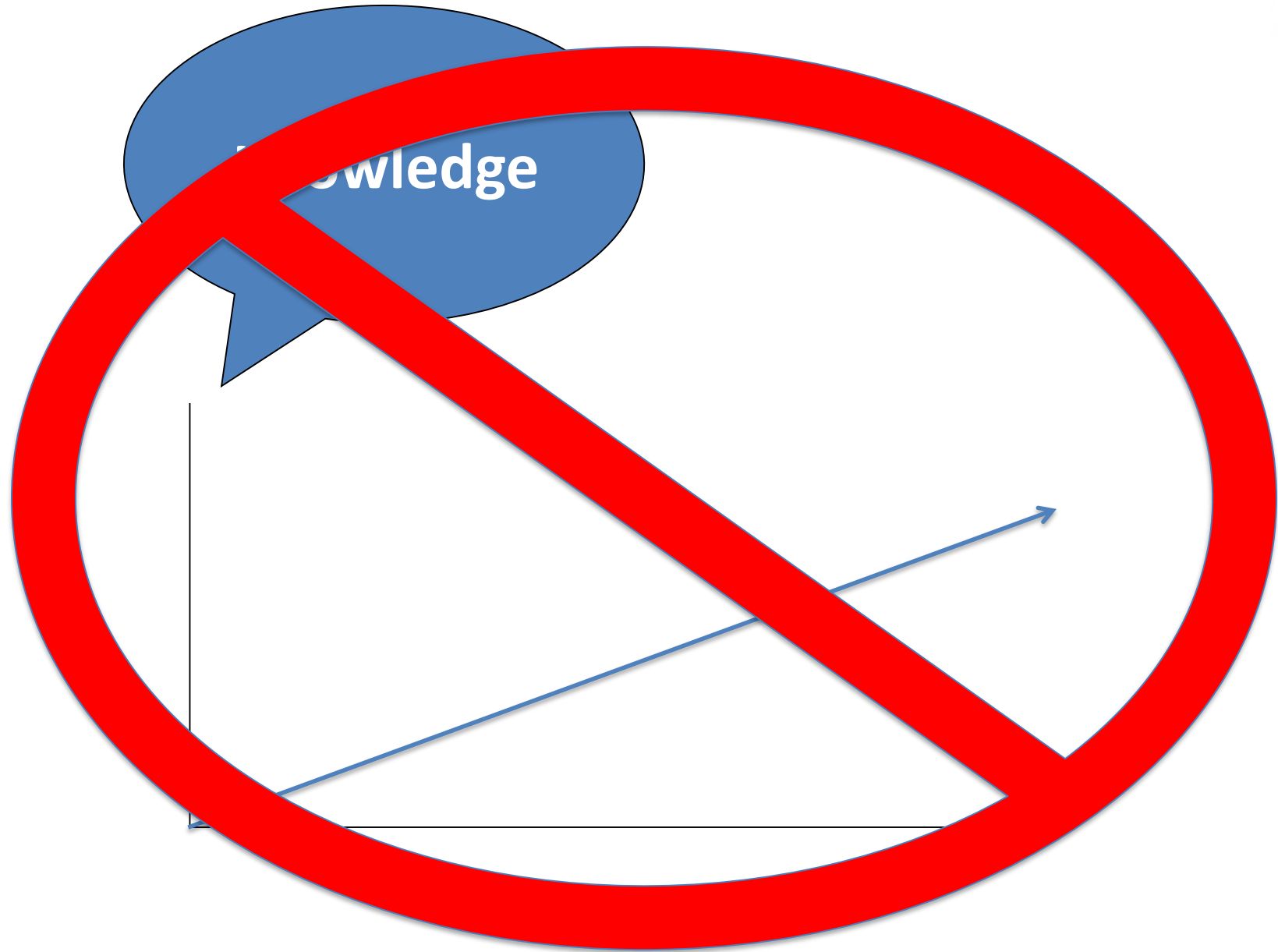
# Staff thoughts

*...the postgraduate student experience... means huge strain, isolation, very little interaction with other people doing the same thing. For a lot of students it is a very lonely process, this is because the face-to-face experience is not there for most of them.*

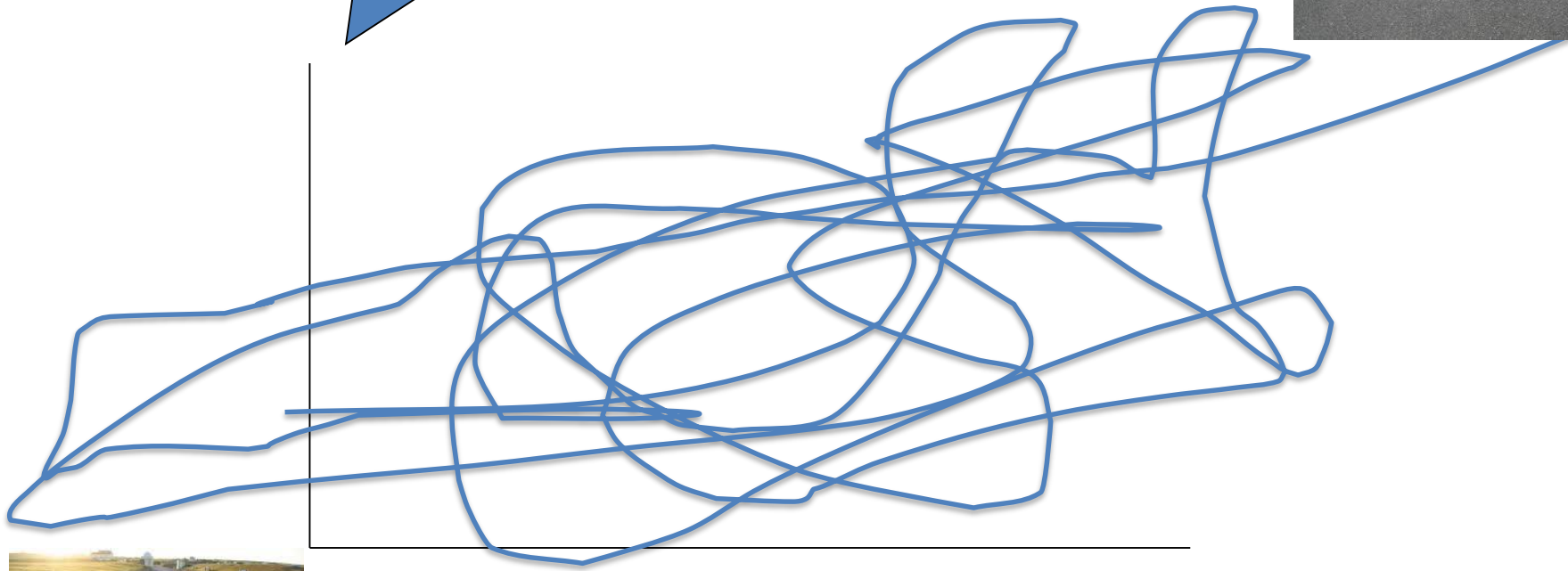
*People do not realize how frightened they are. How much lack of confidence exists, how nervous they are and that first introduction to study is an experience which could either make or break them.*

# Four: How to respond





Knowledge



Knowledge

Skills and Culture



Creativity

Resilience

# Citizen Scholar

(Citizenship/Communication Skills)

Critical Thinking

Adaptability

Mistakability

Reflective

Entrepreneur

Process

Ethical Leadership

People Centred

Aesthetics/Design

New Literacy

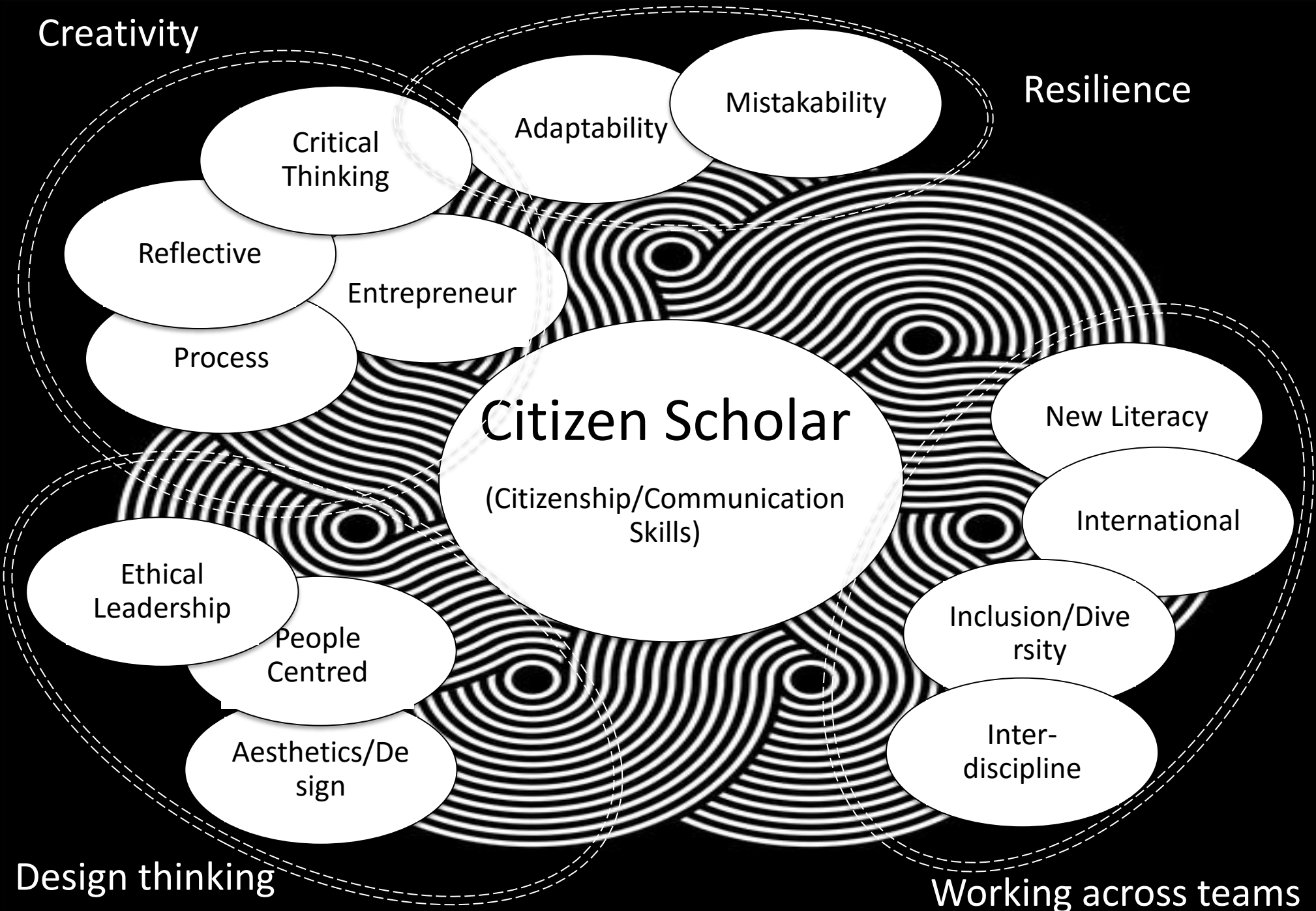
International

Inclusion/Diversity

Inter-discipline

Design thinking

Working across teams



Creativity

Resilience

Mistakability

Adaptability

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Process

Entrepreneur

Citizen Scholar  
Research  
(Citizenship/Communication  
Skills)

New Literacy

International

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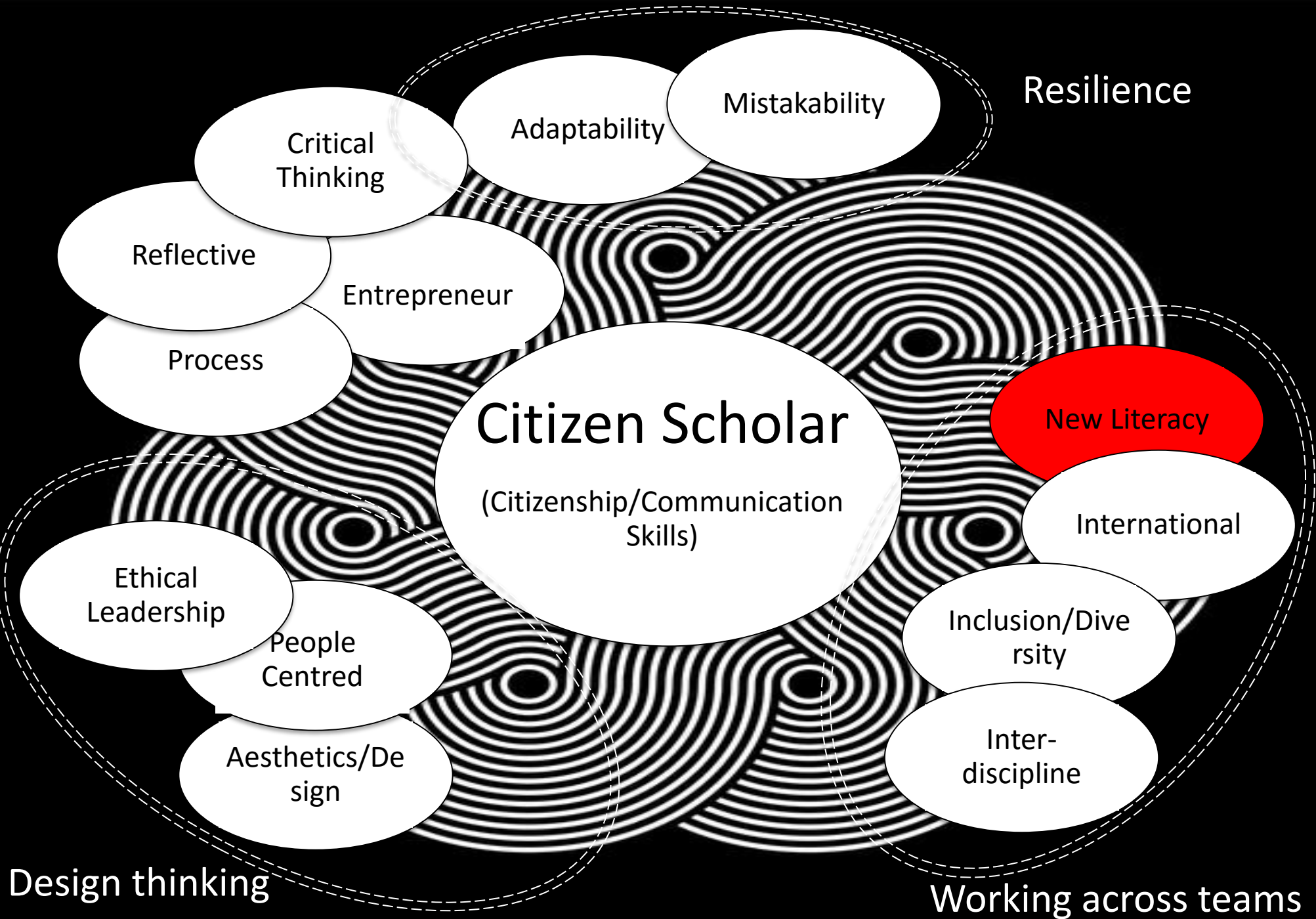
Aesthetics/De  
sign

Design thinking

Ethical  
Leadership

People  
Centred





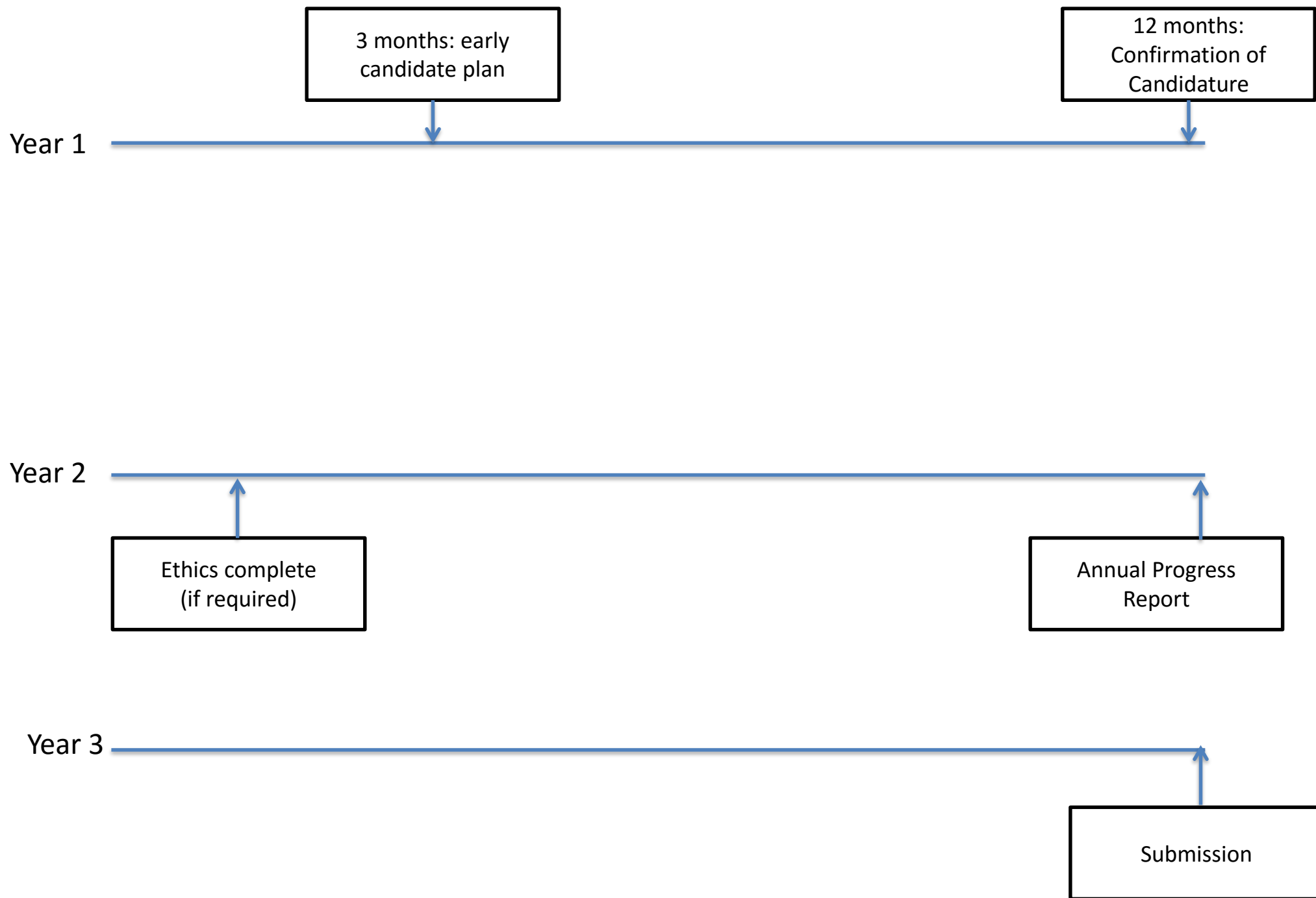
# Information scarcity v. information abundance

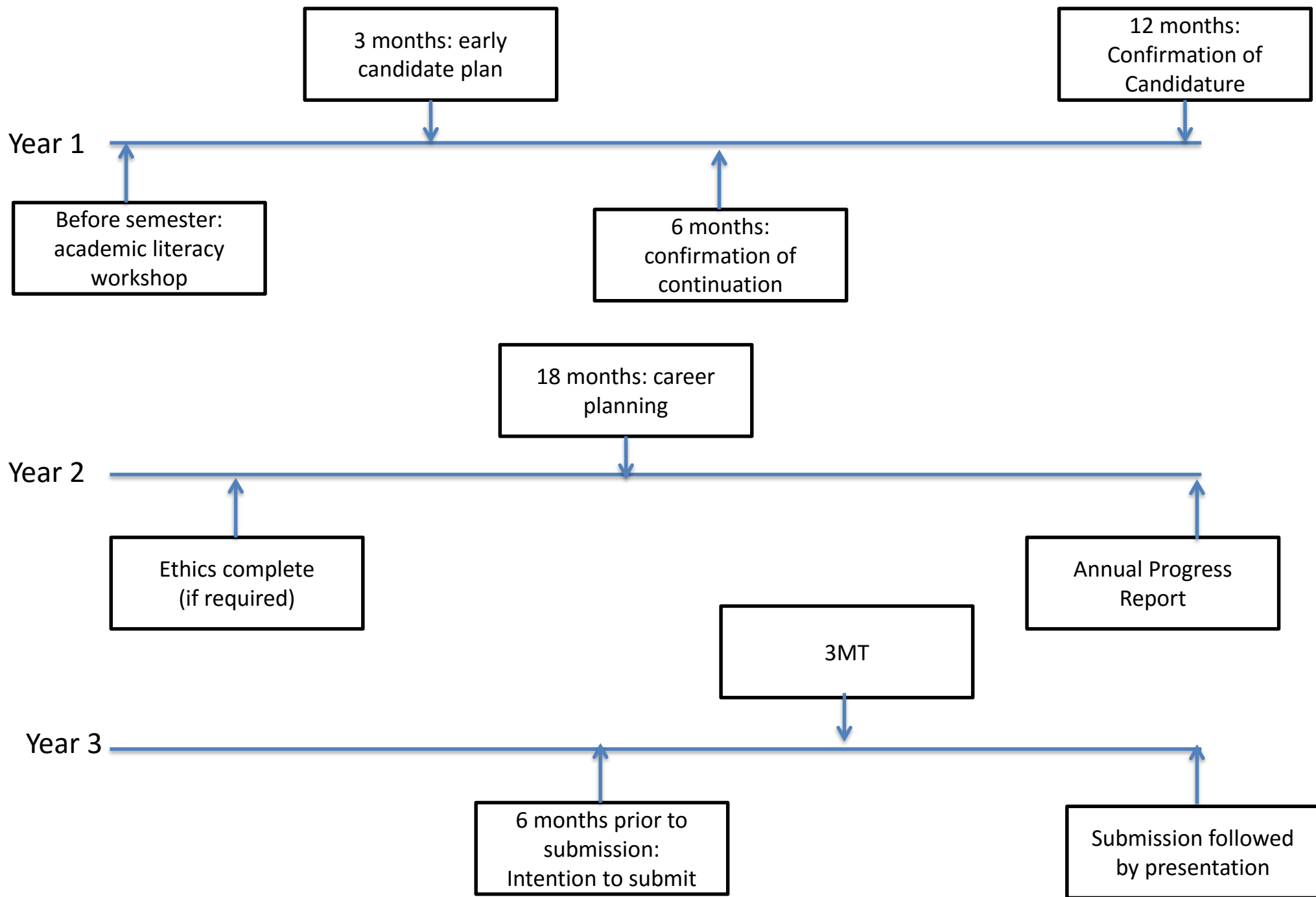


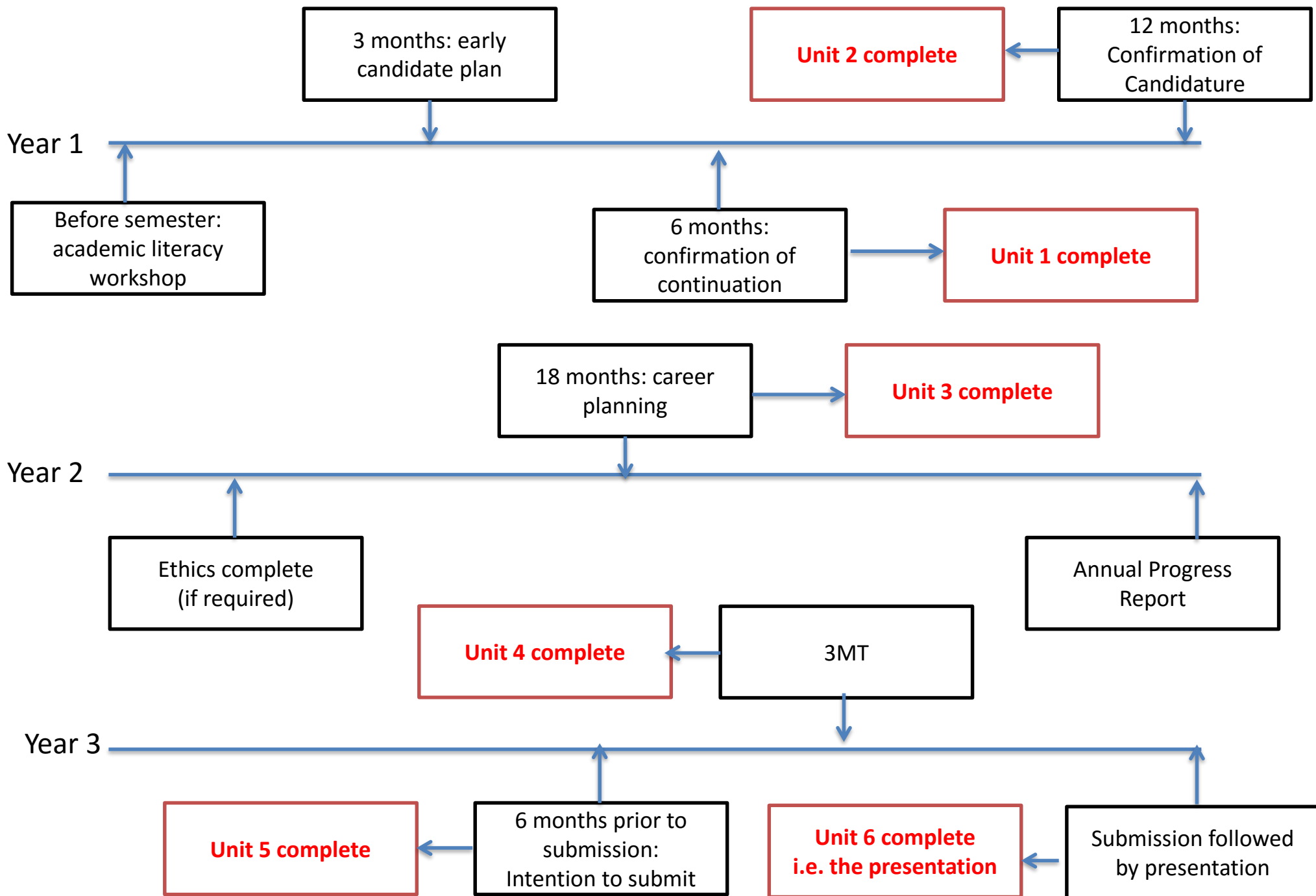
# **Four: What we are doing...**

## **Achievement**

# **i. A scaffolded journey**







## **ii. Career Planning**



## Career Planning

Non-  
Government

Academia

Entrepreneurial

Policy/Governm  
ent

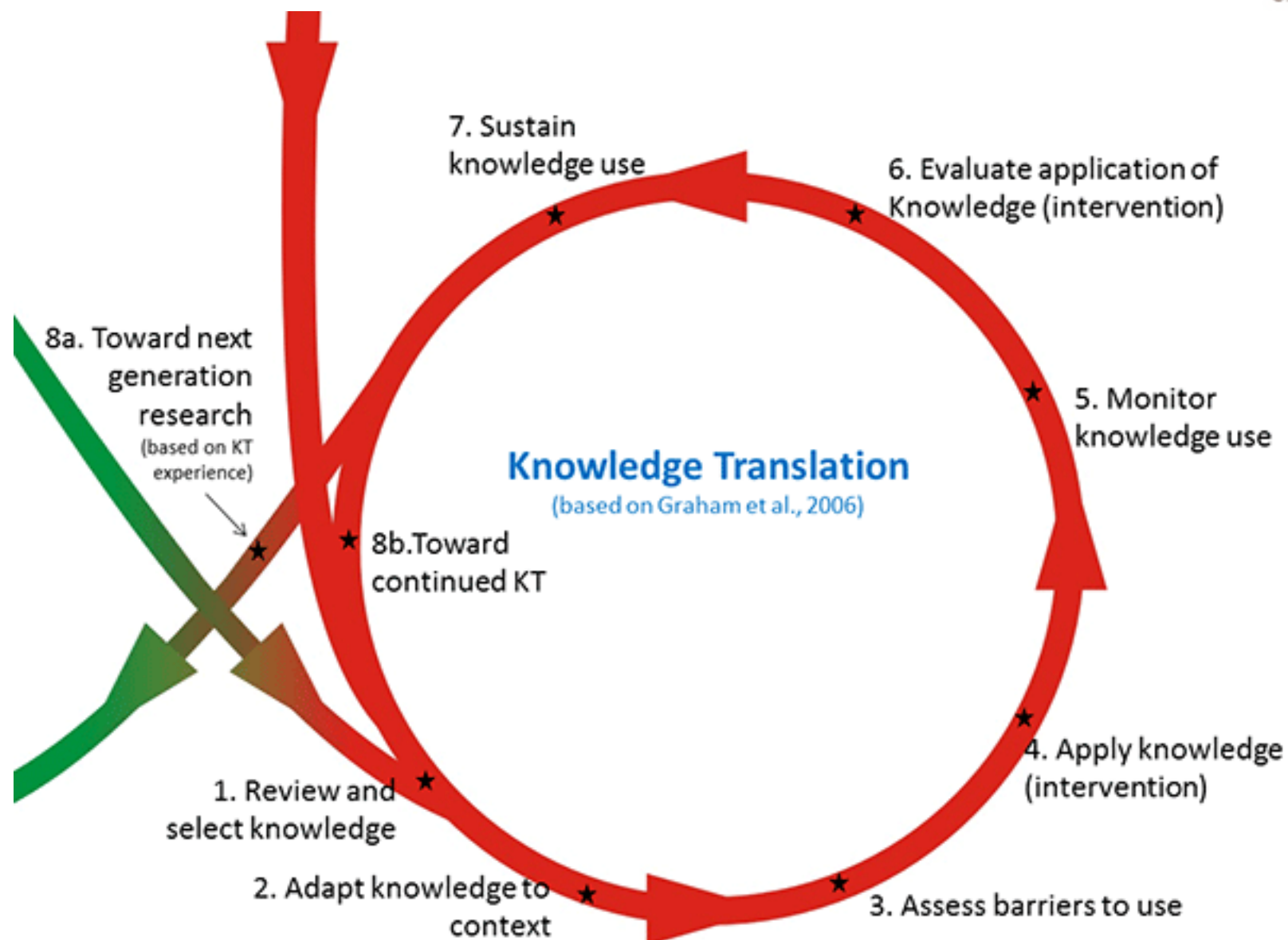
Industry

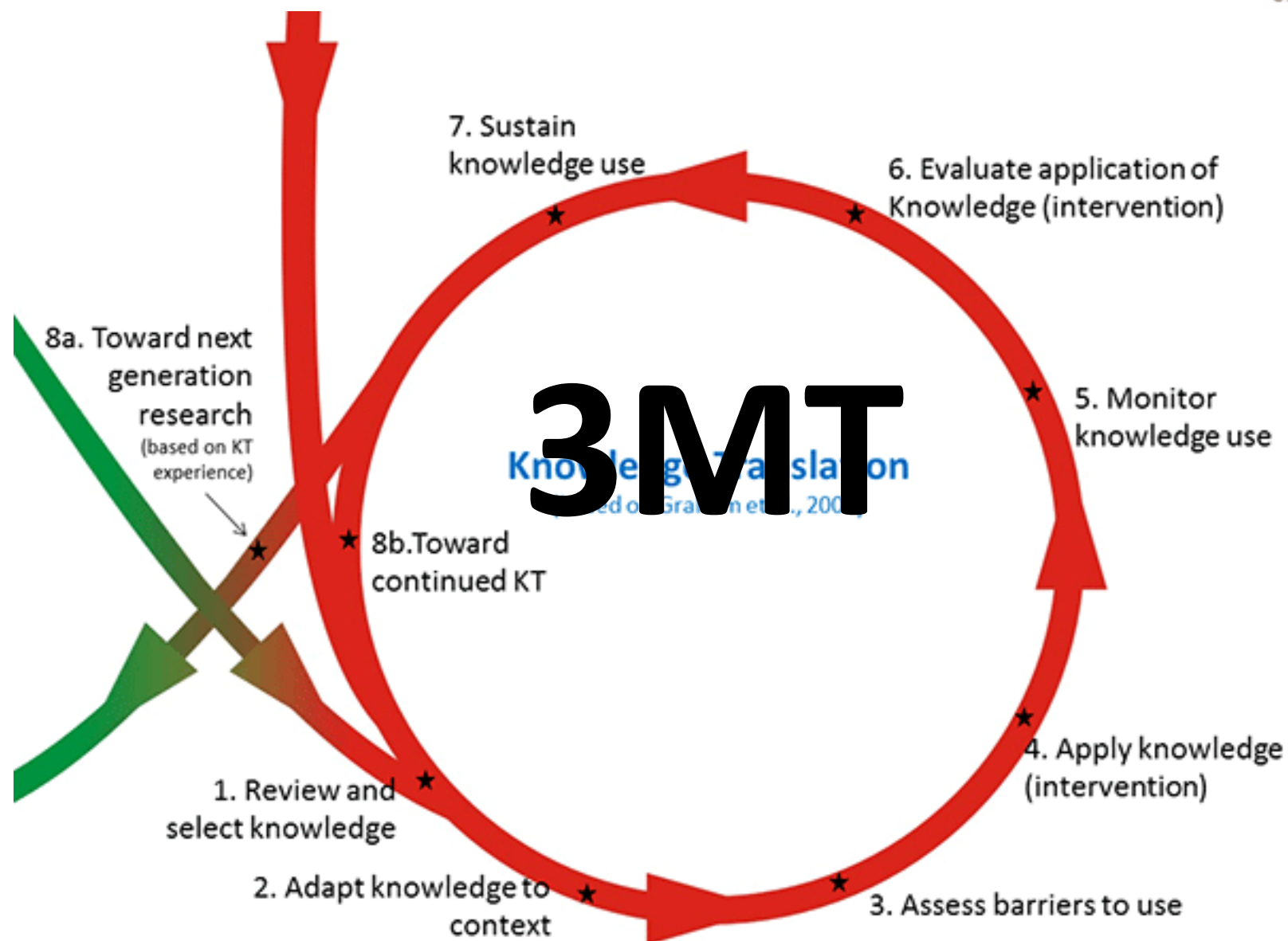
- FULI
- How to apply for funding
- How to publish
- Knowledge Translation
- IP
- Discipline workshops

- Incentives to publish
- Internships
- Connect to REDI/Careers

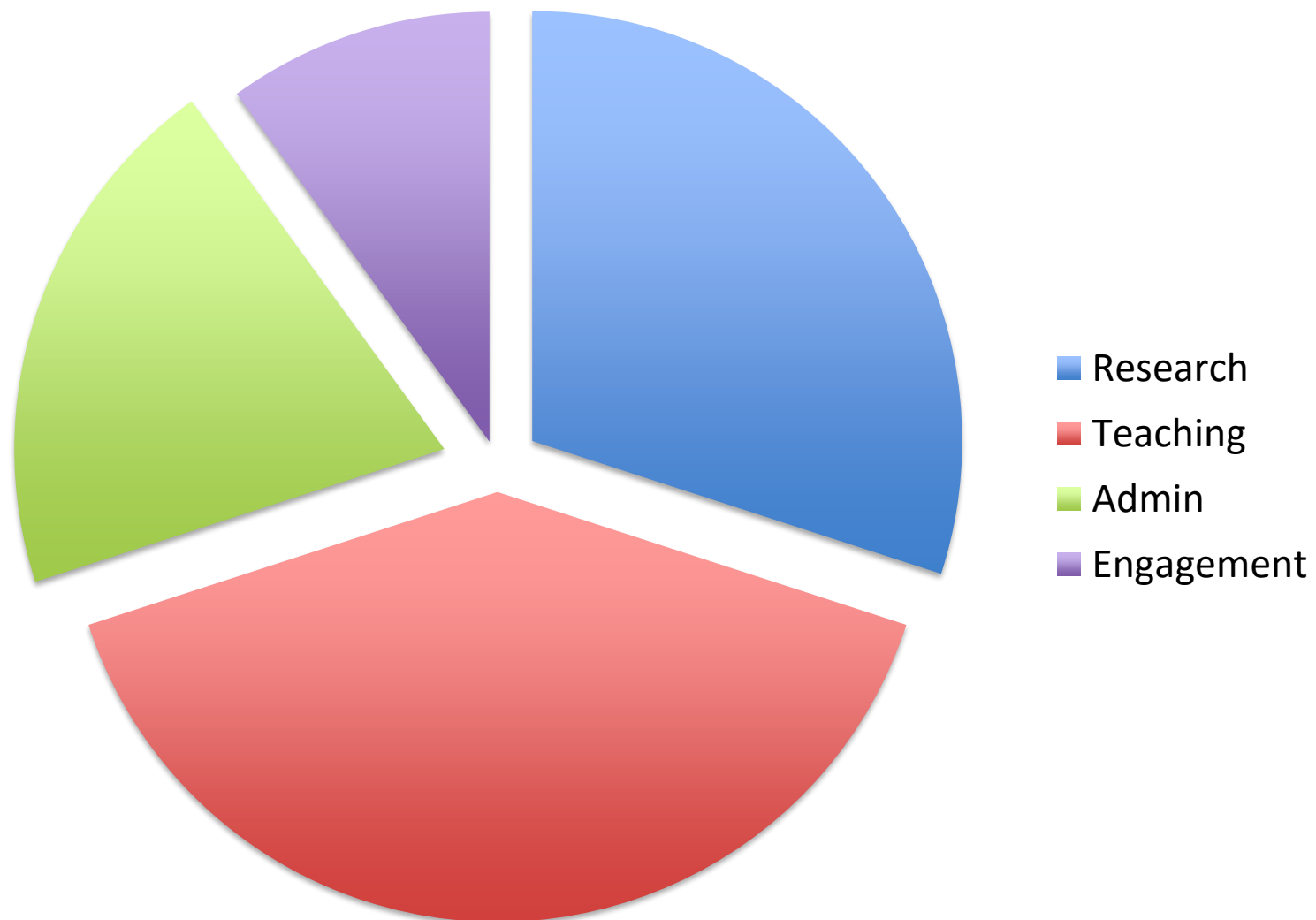
- Crowd funding
- Entrepreneurship/start-up
- Knowledge translation
- IP

# **iii. Communication: Knowledge Translation**

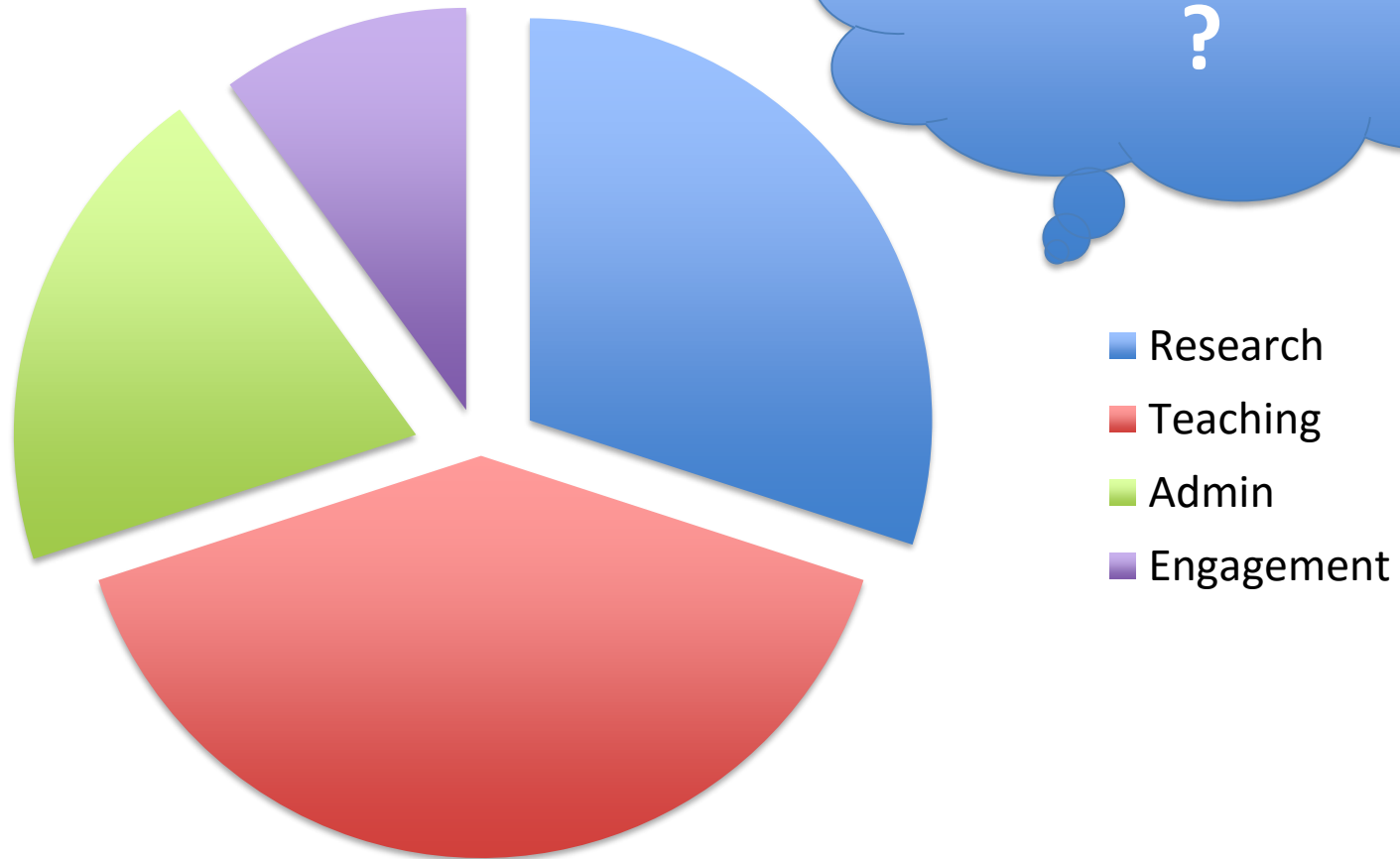




## **iv. Supervisor Development**

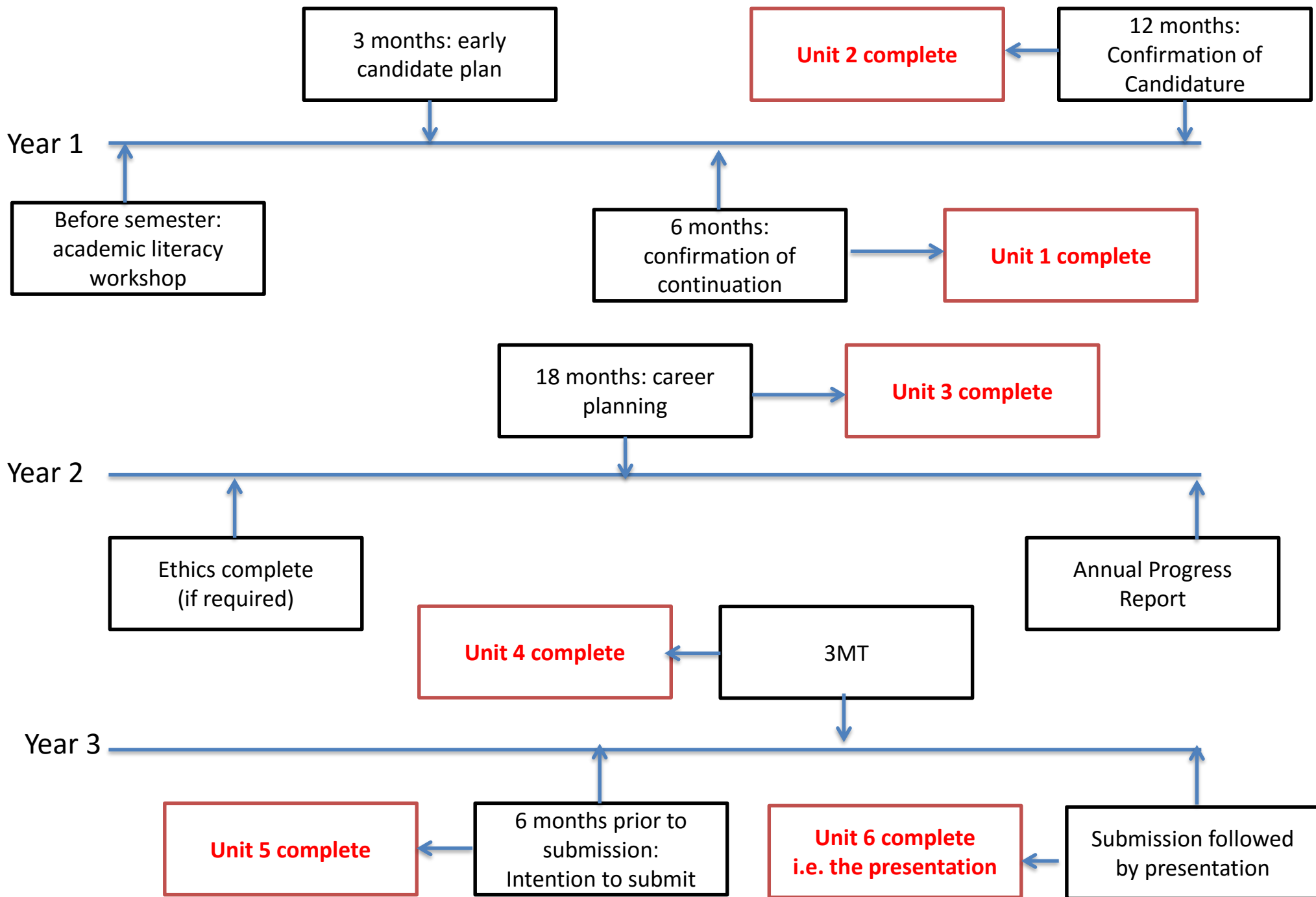


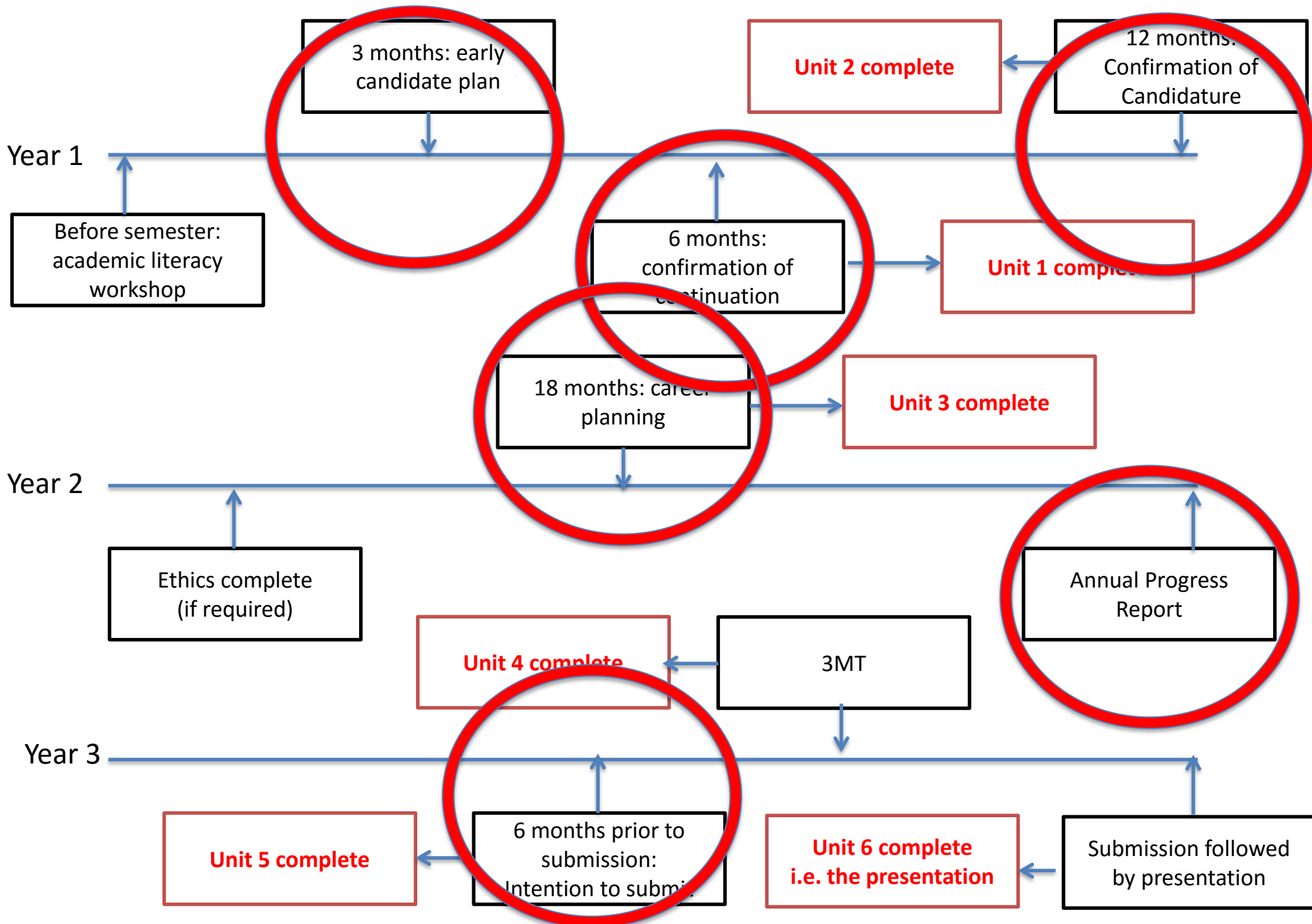
# Supervision ?



## **iv. Multiple feedback mechanisms**







## **v. Defining expectations...**

# Final thoughts

- We must not reify the postgraduate process...

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- We just not reify the postgraduate process...
- We need to contextualise it into the contemporary world...

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- We just not reify the postgraduate process...
- We need to contextualise it into the contemporary world...
- We must maintain standards despite these pressures...

**Thank you...**