

Trials and Tribulations of the Research Student: Case Histories

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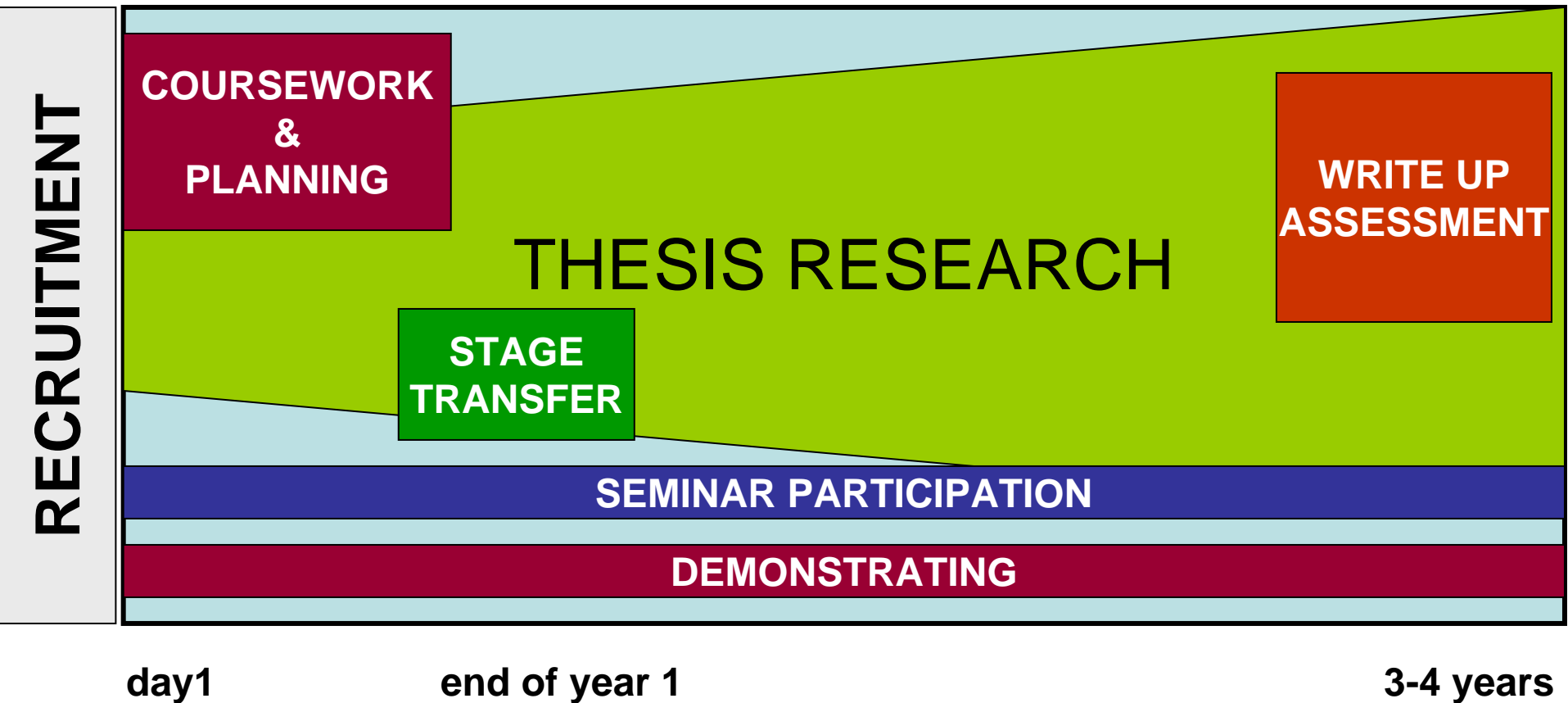
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An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath

Introduction.

Increased numbers of graduate students attending Third Level Institutions has **challenged capacity** at a number of levels.

Elements of the PhD life cycle are targets for actions which will reduce the transit time of students through Doctoral Programmes by identifying specific bottlenecks or '**rate determining steps**'.

Almost regardless of discipline, the life cycle of PhD studentships map to a common architecture



Four pivotal points in this cycle are bottlenecks

- 1. Advertising & Recruitment*
- 2. Early stage training*
- 3. The 'Hard Yards'*
- 4. Completion*

IMPORTANT SUPPORT ELEMENTS FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION

- Development plans/ Student log
- Effective planning and time management
- Supervisory panels to support mentorship
- Top level university support of graduate school governance
- Effective planning and time management
- Building support networks

SELF-FUNDED STUDENTS**SUPPORTED STUDENTS**

Who is the client?		
Who is the provider?		
Is there a simple business plan to cover both domains?		
Supervisor assignment or selection?		
Project assignment or selection?		
Are common support resources required?		

Summary.

1. Graduate student numbers will change.
2. Regardless of the (funding opportunities, career motivation or personal goals) greater student numbers will challenge the universities.
3. Analysis of traditional bottlenecks will identify targets which should be considered as action points to support the shared and individual needs of Ph.D. students without compromising the quality of their experience.