

Impact Statement Guidance Notes for UCL Research Students and Supervisors

For all career paths doctoral graduates need to be able to articulate the potential impact of their work. This applies outside the academic world, where no investment will be made without it, as much as it does within academia where researchers need to be able to articulate impact in grant applications, in the significance paragraphs for many journals, and in a more focused way for the Research Excellence Framework (REF). UCL's Research Strategy explicitly aims to 'Deliver impact for public benefit' so we aim train our students to consider the potential impact of their work and to be able to articulate it explicitly. By bringing it to a brief statement at the start of the thesis the importance is highlighted.

The following guidance describes the areas to consider in writing the thesis impact statement. The statement will need to be concise, and therefore should highlight those areas in which the research is likely to have the clearest impact. Supervisors can provide guidance and there are sessions about the impact statement by UCL's Impact Team as part of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme (DSDP) – see below.

The Impact Statement should be placed immediately after the abstract page in the thesis, before the table of contents.

CONTENT OF THE STATEMENT

The statement should describe, in no more than 500 words, how the expertise, knowledge, analysis, discovery or insight presented in your thesis could be put to a beneficial use. Consider benefits both **inside** and **outside academia** and the ways in which these benefits could be brought about.

The benefits inside academia could be to the discipline and future scholarship, research methods or methodology, the curriculum; they might be within your research area and potentially within other research areas.

The benefits outside academia could occur to commercial activity, social enterprise, professional practice, clinical use, public health, public policy design, public service delivery, laws, public discourse, culture, the quality of the environment or quality of life.

The impact could occur locally, regionally, nationally or internationally, to individuals, communities or organisations and could be immediate or occur incrementally, in the context of a broader field of research, over many years, decades or longer.

Impact could be brought about through disseminating outputs (either in scholarly journals or elsewhere such as specialist or mainstream media), education, public engagement, translational research, commercial and social enterprise activity, engaging with public policy makers and public service delivery practitioners, influencing ministers, collaborating with academics and non-academics etc.

Further information including a searchable list of hundreds of examples of UCL impact outside of academia please see [Research Impact](#) website. For thousands more examples, please see [REF2014](#) website.

A workshop, [How to Write an Effective Impact Statement](#), is run as part of the Doctoral Skills Development Programme to provide assistance to students in writing about the impact of their research.