

# What Do Employers Want from Post-Graduates?

But are afraid to ask...

# The Platonic Ideal of the Post-Graduate

## Cross between:

- Richard Branson
- Stephen Hawking
- Katharine Hepburn
- Boudicca

# The Platonic Ideal of the Post-Graduate



## Commercial Acumen

# The Platonic Ideal of the Post-Graduate



Ineffable cool

# The Platonic Ideal of the Post-Graduate



## Aggressive Leadership

# The Platonic Ideal of the Post-Graduate



Pitching ability

# How to create the Platonic Post-Graduate

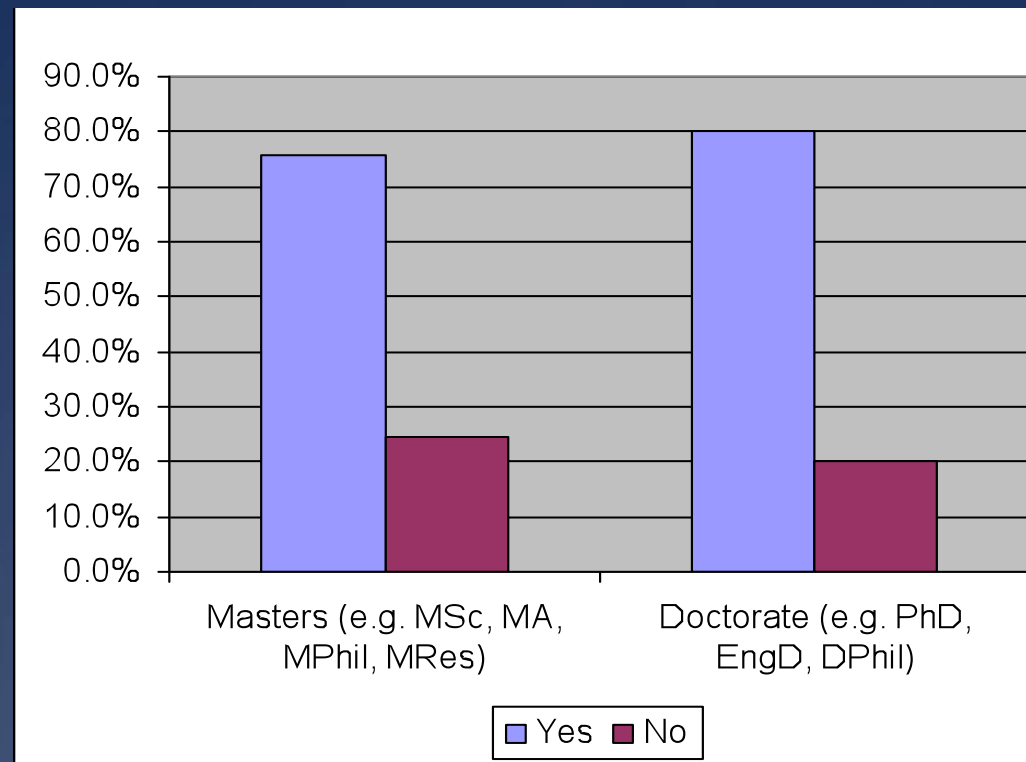


What do employers want?

- Joint CIHE/CBI Survey
- Fifty plus major global employers
- Sixteen in-depth interviews with HR Directors
- Sample bias towards big business



## Big business likes to hire post-graduates



## Three types of employers

### Same Difference:

- Recruited in the same round as other graduates
- Paid the same
- Same career trajectory (though a bit more mature)

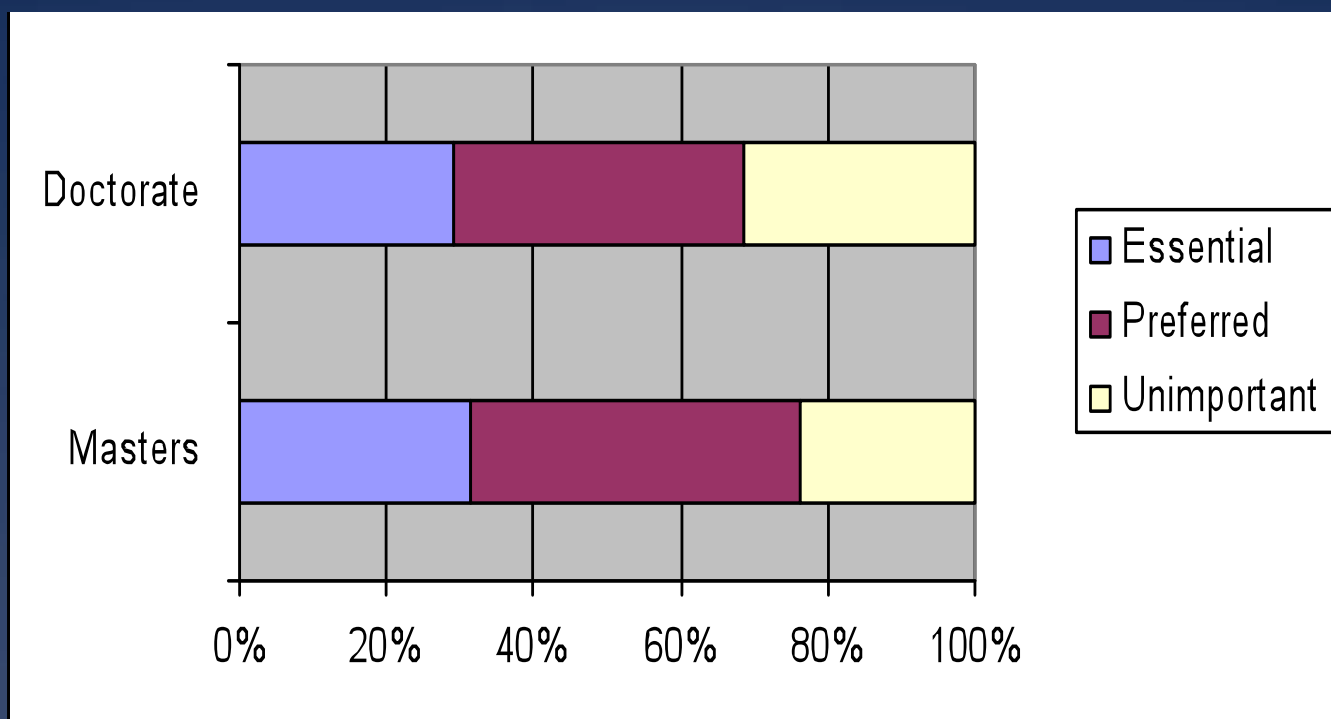
### One step up:

- Some research skills or specialist knowledge or capabilities relevant to the work expected to do.
- Not differentiated from Bachelor plus work experience

### Specialists wanted:

- Passionate about their science or subject
- More mature
- Solving a special problem in the business
- Leading specialists

## The Really Good News

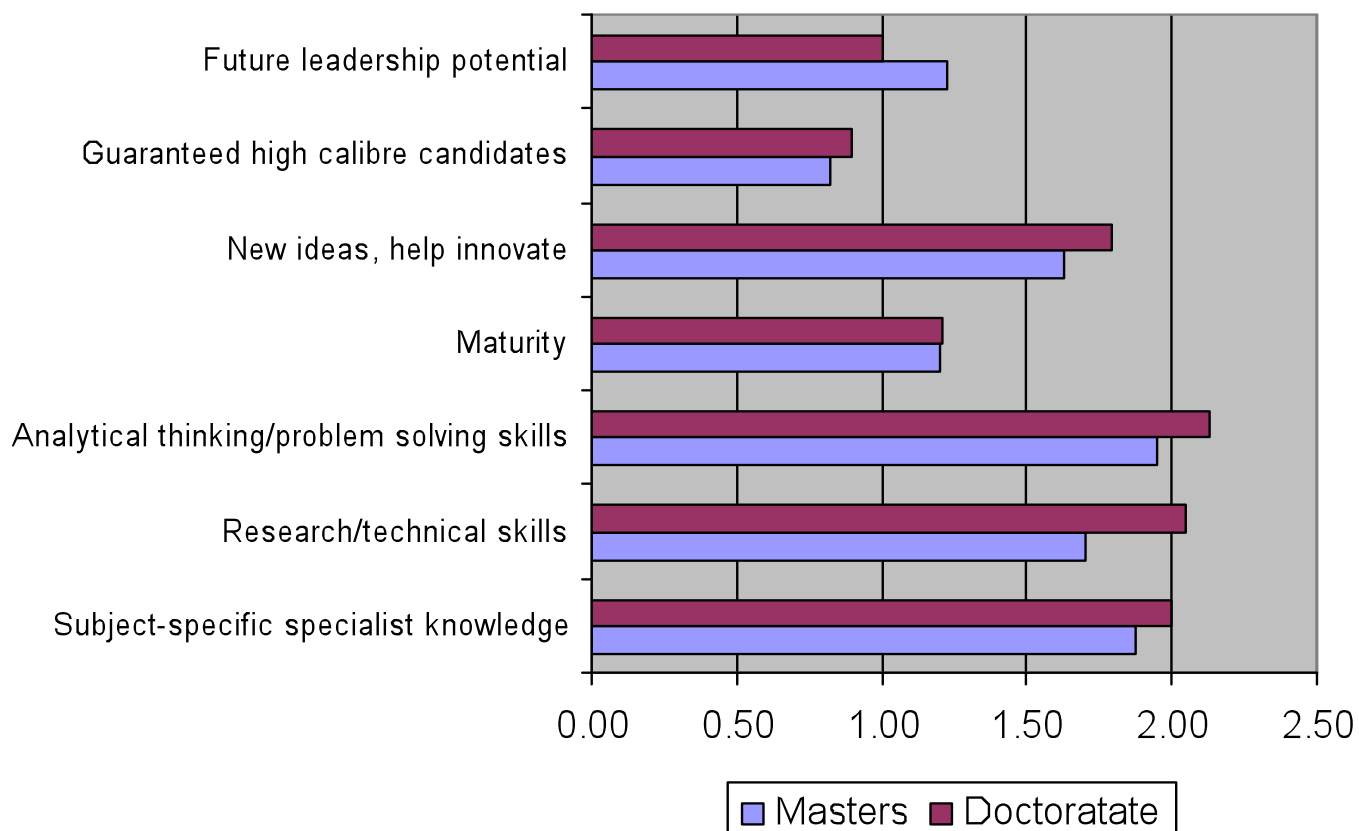


# Why are high level skills important?

*“Innovation, entrepreneurship, management,  
leadership and research and development”*

*Leitch Report*

## Value of Postgraduates



But...

There's always a but...

Question: What is the value of recruiting post grads?

	Masters	Ph.D
•Subject-specific specialist knowledge	46%	62%
•Research/technical skills	33%	56%
•Analytical thinking/problem solving skills	52%	58%
•Maturity	15%	21%
•New ideas, help innovate	23%	39%
•Guaranteed high calibre candidates	<u>6%</u>	<u>10%</u>
•Future leadership potential	<u>16%</u>	<u>9%</u>

If post-graduate education is a premium 'brand' of higher education, why isn't it a guarantor of quality in the eyes of recruiters?

# Leadership and quality

Businesses want leadership potential and guarantees of quality:

- *“leadership ... transcends all walks of life”*
- *“leaders ... are the only sustainable source of success in this changing world”*
- *“...traditional leadership models are becoming outdated.”*
- *“For the new leaders, specific academic or technical knowledge is increasingly just a part of the overall picture... we’re looking for rounded individuals with a broader skill set.”*

Jeremy Darroch, CEO of Sky, *Believe in Better*, CIHE 2010

Best relationships are deep and long-lasting

- joint course development;
- guest lecturing;
- staff secondments;
- external supervision;
- work placements and visits;
- co-sponsored research projects and mentoring.

CIHE Report 2008



# Big Questions

- Do universities need to focus more on quality and leadership potential?
- Seven in ten taught Masters students are non UK-domiciled. UK brand for quality.
- Do post-grads have enough business experience?
  - Prefer Eng Doc to Ph.D
  - Rise and rise of professional doctorates
  - ‘New Route’ Ph.Ds
  - Integrated masters
  - Access to Masters (Wales)
  - Advisory boards with business people
  - CPD
- Businesses need to be become better at articulating what they need.