



PRIFYSGOL  
**BANGOR**  
UNIVERSITY

Some (*hopefully useful*) advice on:

“life as a PhD student”

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## My thesis:

- Examines ‘Stock hyping’ by corporations prior to equity offerings.
  - How issuing firms manage investor expectations prior to an offer.
  - Whether and how firms “condition the market”.
- In the area of behavioural corporate finance.
  - Interdisciplinary – the psychology of investing.

## Stage of progression:

- Successfully defended the thesis last week.
- Working on making the required corrections.
- Developing the work into publishable papers.

- A PhD does not end with merely a certificate
  - View this as the beginning of your career
    - Keep regular office hours
    - Set broad goals/deadlines as well as more specific ones
    - Develop skills that you will need later in your career
    - Make the most out of the training resources available
  
- If planning to stay in academia:
  - Attend whatever conferences you can
    - Network with the wider academic community
    - Try to get yourself and your work known
  - Keep up to date with your discipline broadly
  - Get some practice teaching
  - Retain presence within your school

# The work can be frustrating and exhausting

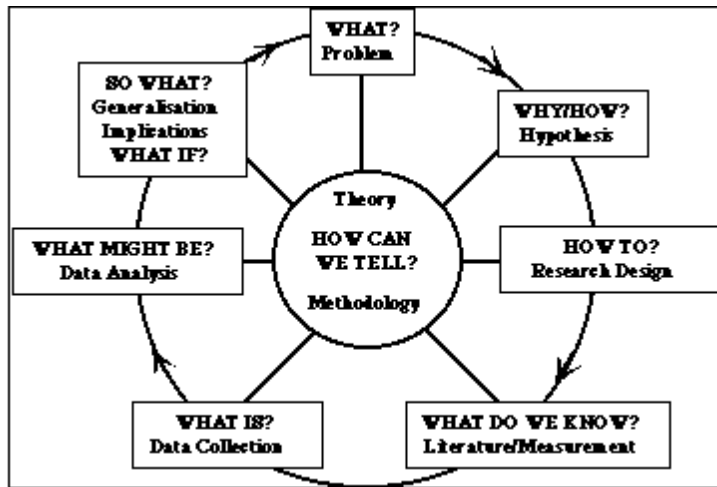
You may end up in a rut from time to time...

... but remember – this is normal!

– Some coping strategies:

- Don't panic
- Drink plenty of coffee (but not too much!)
- Work on something else for a few days
- Go for a run, swim, wash the dishes, ...
- Talk to your friends/colleagues, they can be extremely helpful!

# The Research Process?



We often have the impression that the research process is cleanly defined, straightforward, and that everything typically goes to plan.



Sometimes, things might not go exactly to plan, and you may even get a little lost at times...

**Remember, this is normal.**

- Be structured and organised
- Break tasks down into small steps
- But try not to lose sight of the big picture.
  
- Have a realistic timeframe, and stick to it
- Get feedback where possible
- Identify, confront, and overcome weaknesses.

- Don't rely on a mental map of your data
  - You will need to come back to some data after several months. If it is unorganised, you may spend many more months in frustration!
    - Keep notes/label your data
    - Organise your file system logically
- How valuable is your data?
  - Was there any financial cost?
  - How long would they take to reproduce?
  - Can they be reproduced?
    - Backup! – Make sure to keep additional up to date copies
    - Consider investing in storage devices for large/sensitive datasets

# Present whenever/wherever you can

- Presenting your work is vital in terms of:
  - i. Disseminating your work
  - ii. Receiving early feedback on your work
  - iii. Developing effective communication of your ideas
  - iv. ‘Sense-making’ – presenting forces you to be concise
- Don’t take criticism of your work personally.
  - critical comments demonstrate that:
    - i. You have effectively communicated your ideas
    - ii. That people are taking an interest in your work
    - iii. That improvements can be made
- Also make an effort to attend when others present
  - Support your colleagues with constructive criticism



# It may sound obvious, but...

- **Own your work.** Manage your research process.
- **Back-up your work.** Otherwise you will lose it, and it will be painful.
  - With Dropbox et al, there is no excuse
- **Organise your references.**
  - Some great reference managers are available i.e., Mendeley
- **Don't stay too narrow.** Read broadly, even if it is not directly relevant to the thesis (You won't be working on it forever).
- **Strike the right balance between your work and personal life.**
  - If you have a family at home, make sure they see you!
- **Make friends with the people around you.**
- **Don't overdo it, do take breaks.** Don't forget, you are only human.