

# Trends in Graduate Studies: Need for Institutional Changes

R.C. Abaidoo, PhD

# Outline

- Role of Universities in development
- Who do the Universities of Ghana want to be known for?
- Significance of postgraduate qualifications
- Trends in selected Universities in Ghana
- How do we increase enrollment sustainably
- My thoughts on needed institutional changes
- Need for a change in attitude towards postgraduate training-  
role model or not?
- Message for our young faculty

# Role of Universities in development

- Creation and dissemination of knowledge
- Develop impact-oriented relationship between research and innovation
- Stimulate, facilitate, demand, and celebrate the highest standards of excellence in research
- Create more effective linkages with business and other external stakeholders
- Create greater alignment with national goals for effective use new knowledge and uptake of technology
- Support Ghana to connect to global networks and research community
- Support communities and national development goals through being a repository of knowledge and expertise while questioning the relevance of existing

# The changing landscape for Africa

- The new agenda for Africa, while not ignoring the sustainable development challenges, should include promoting growth through improved rural development, increased manufacturing and having a far greater value-added input in the extractive industries. Higher education can contribute towards these goals by producing skilled and employable graduates in the relevant fields. **Prof Goolam Mohamedbhai**, Association of African Universities 29/09/13

# KNUST

- To be globally recognised as the Premier Centre of excellence in Africa for **teaching in Science and Technology for development; producing high calibre graduates with knowledge and expertise to support the industrial and socio-economic development of Ghana and Africa**

# University of Ghana

- Our vision is to become a “World Class **research-intensive University**” over the next decade

# University of Cape Coast

- “To have a University that is **strongly positioned, with world-wide acclaim**”

# University for Development Studies

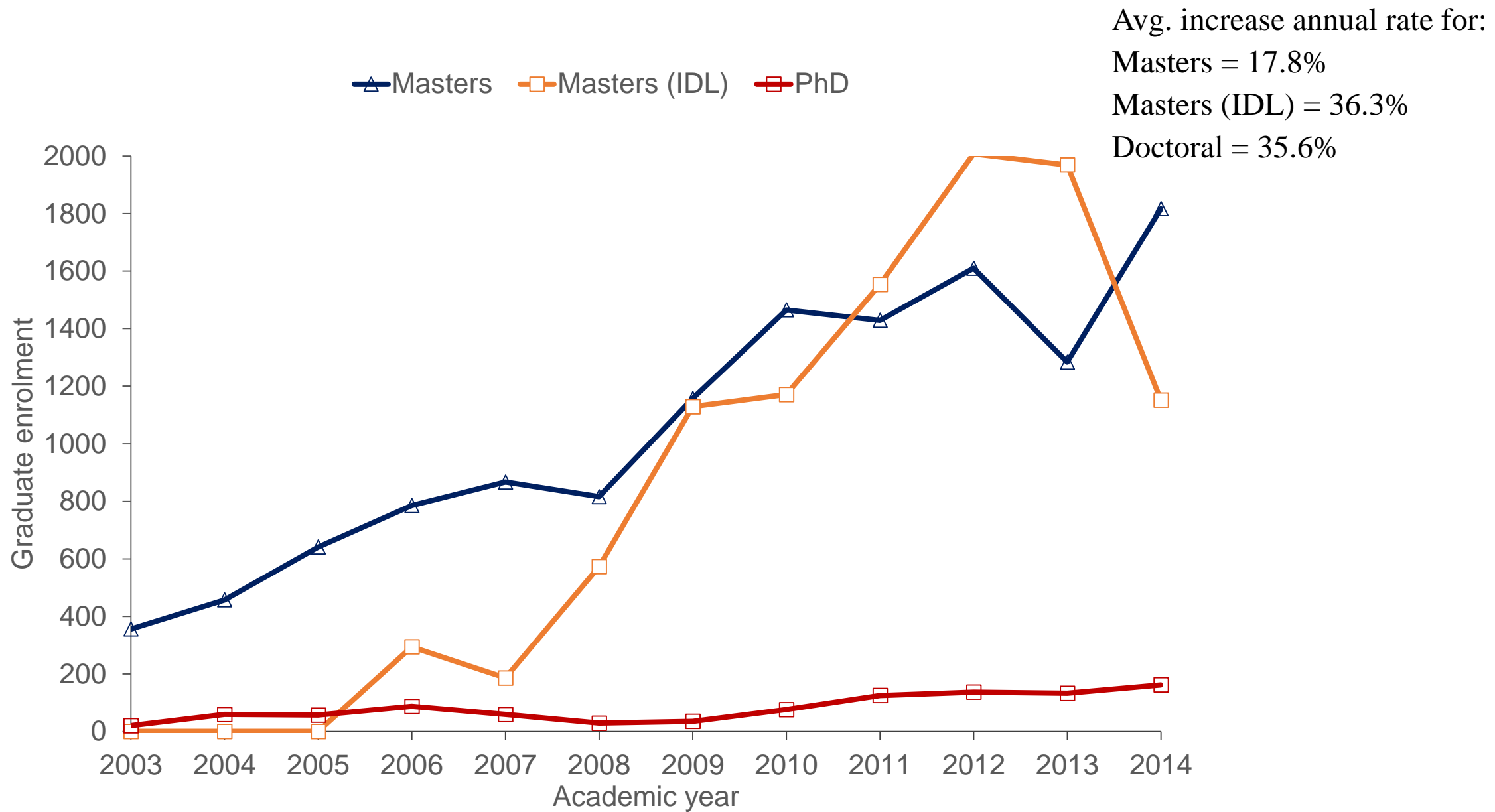
- Produce **scholars of high caliber and practitioners sensitive to and capable of providing practical and workable solutions to the development concerns of deprived communities** in Ghana and beyond through the implementation of the appropriate intervention



# Significance of postgraduate qualifications

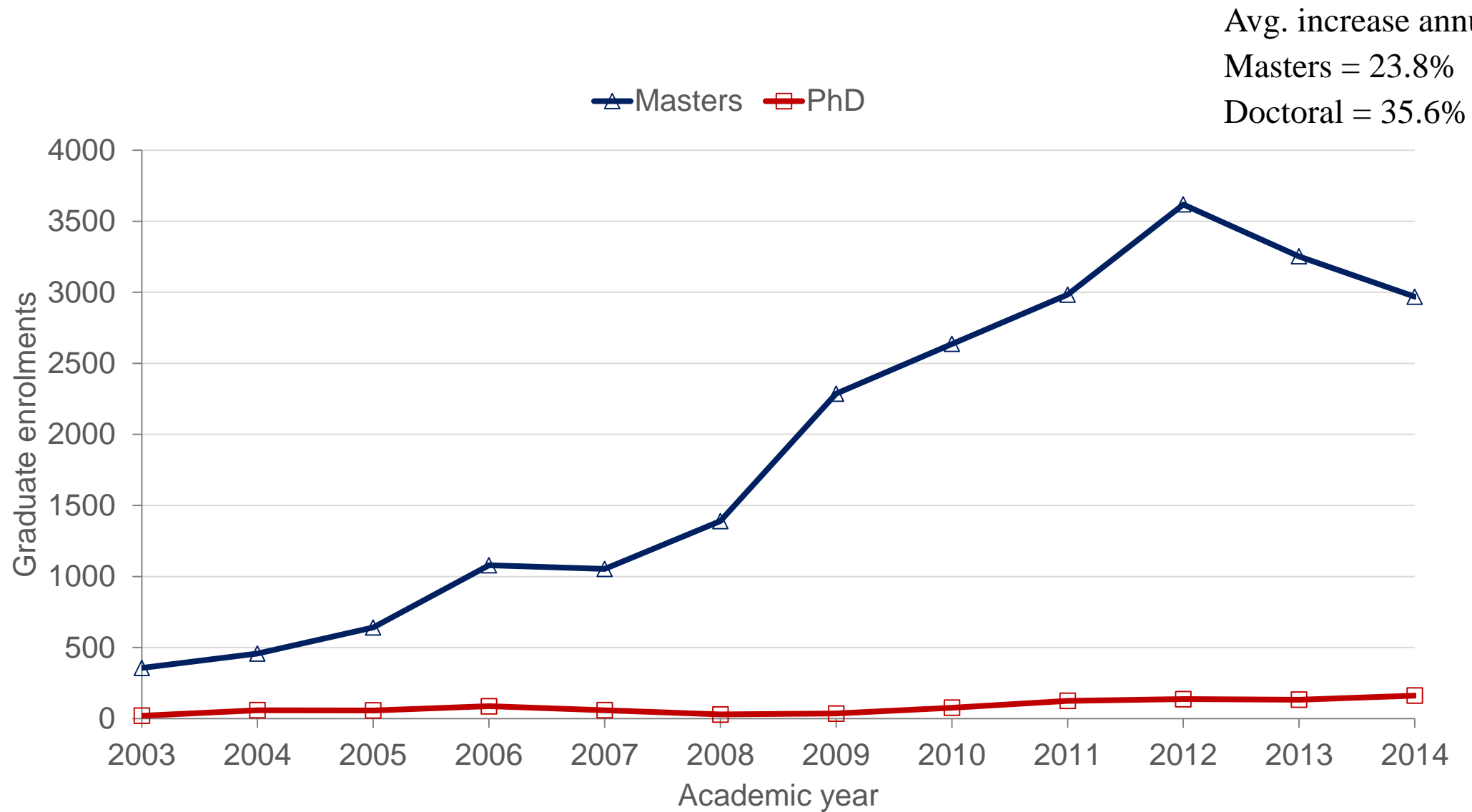
- Benefit to the individual
- Economy and society
- Important draw for international students
- Future researchers and professors
- A requirement for some professions (eg., health and social care workers, lawyers, and architects)

What are the current trends?



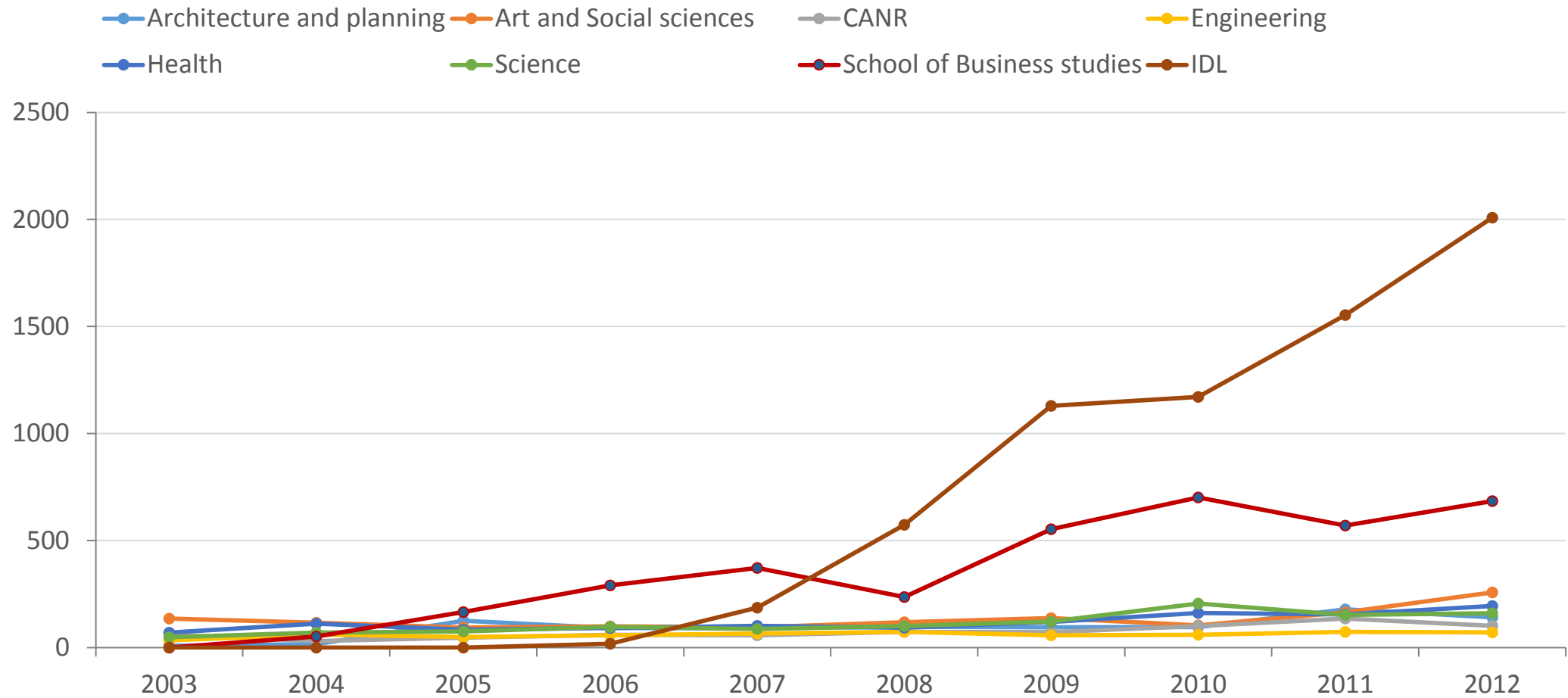
**Number of students enrolling on postgraduate courses at KNUST**

(Source: QAPU, KNUST)



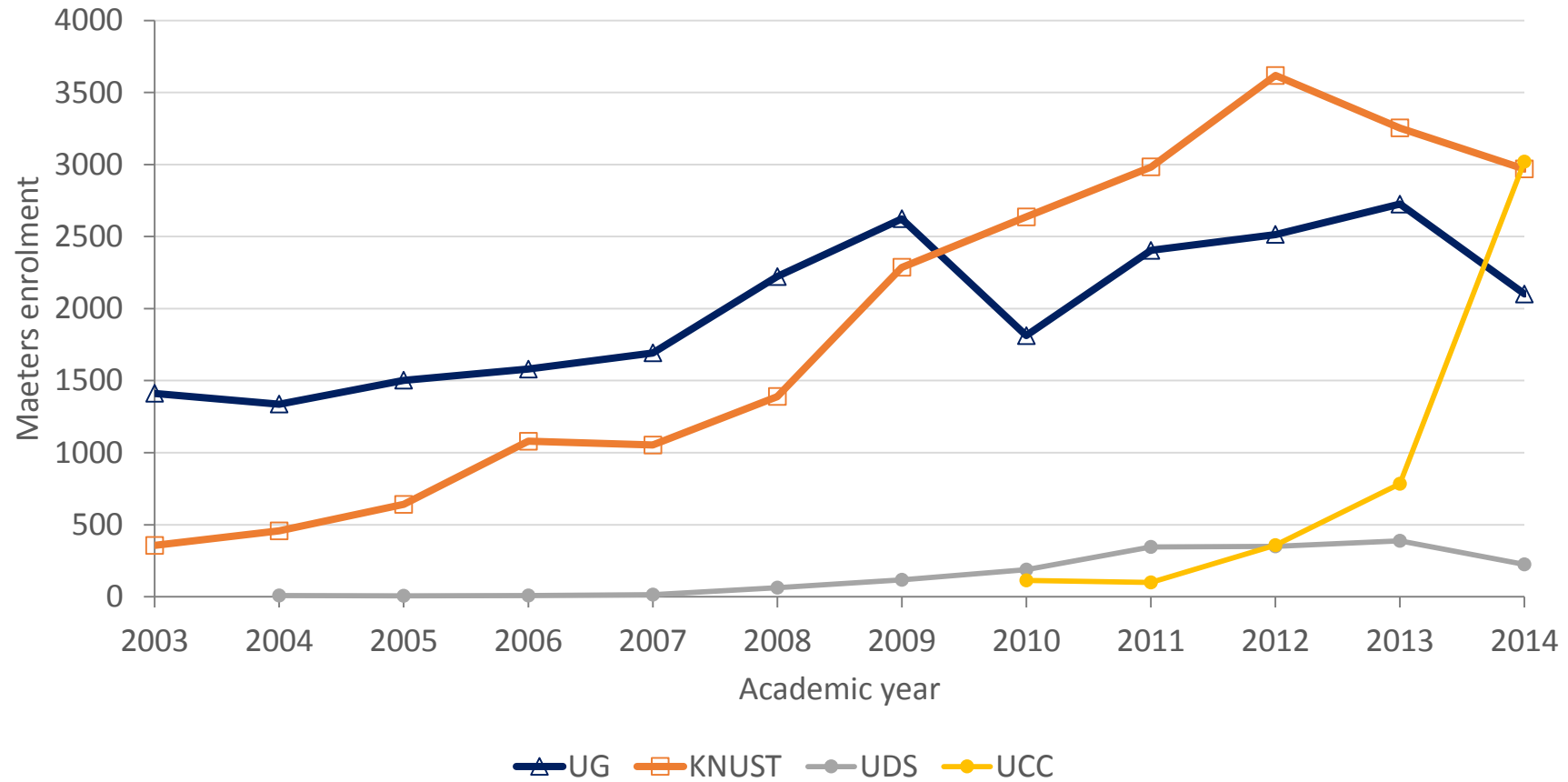
**Number of students enrolling on postgraduate courses at KNUST**

(Source: QAPU, KNUST)

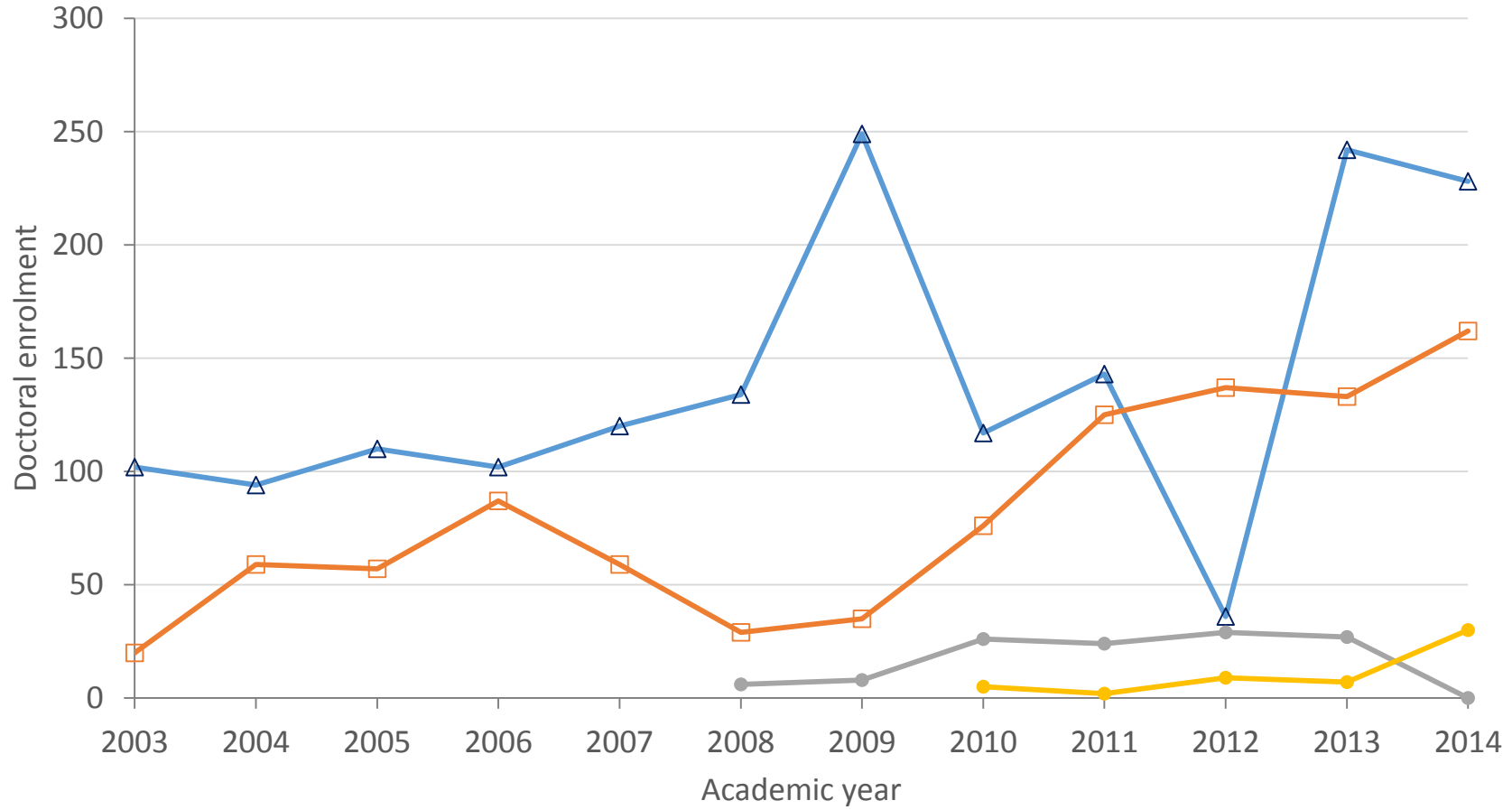


**Enrolment by college of KNUST** (Data source: QAPU, KNUST)

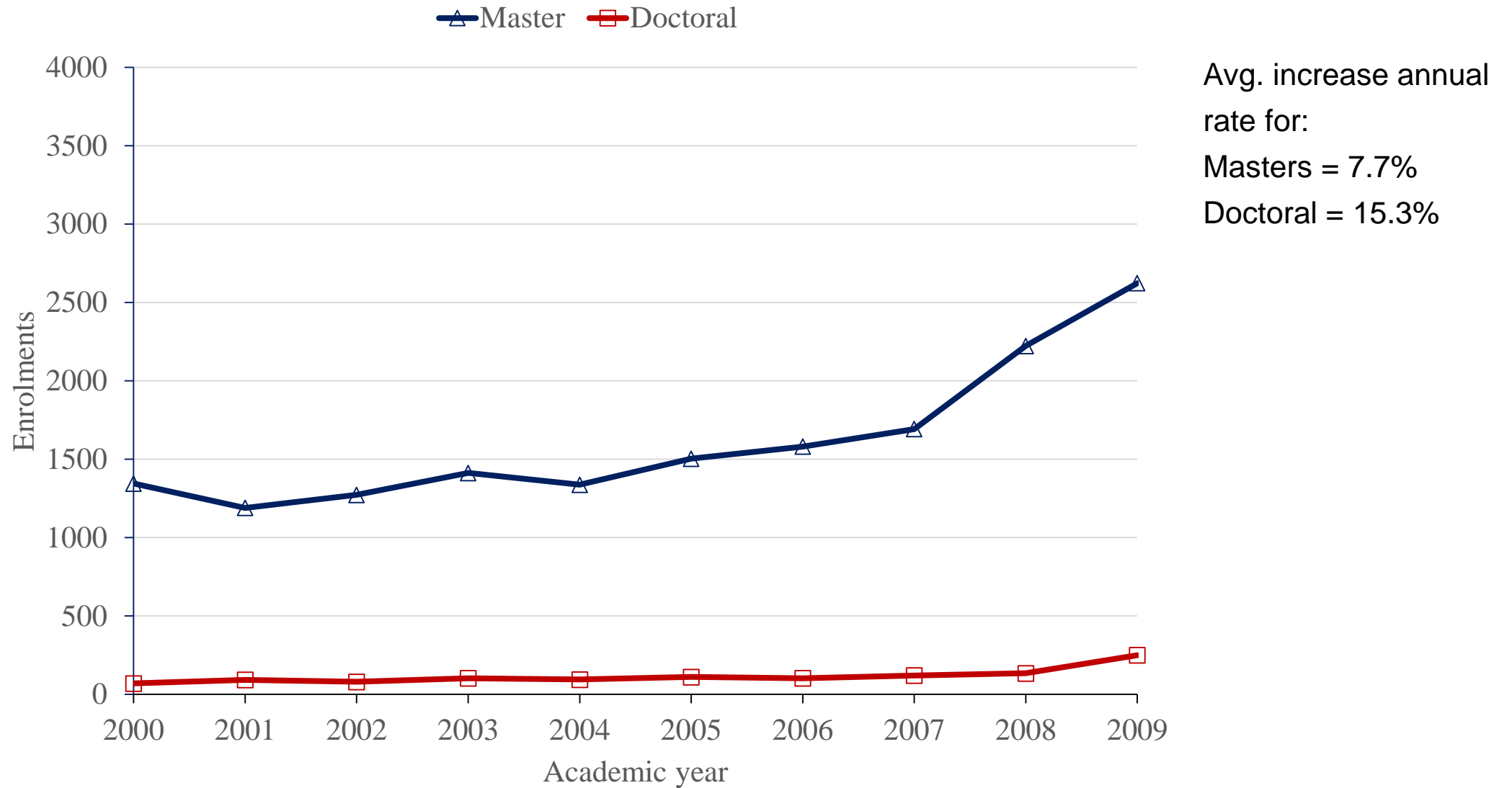
## Trend of students enrolled in masters studies



## Trend of students enrolled in Doctoral studies



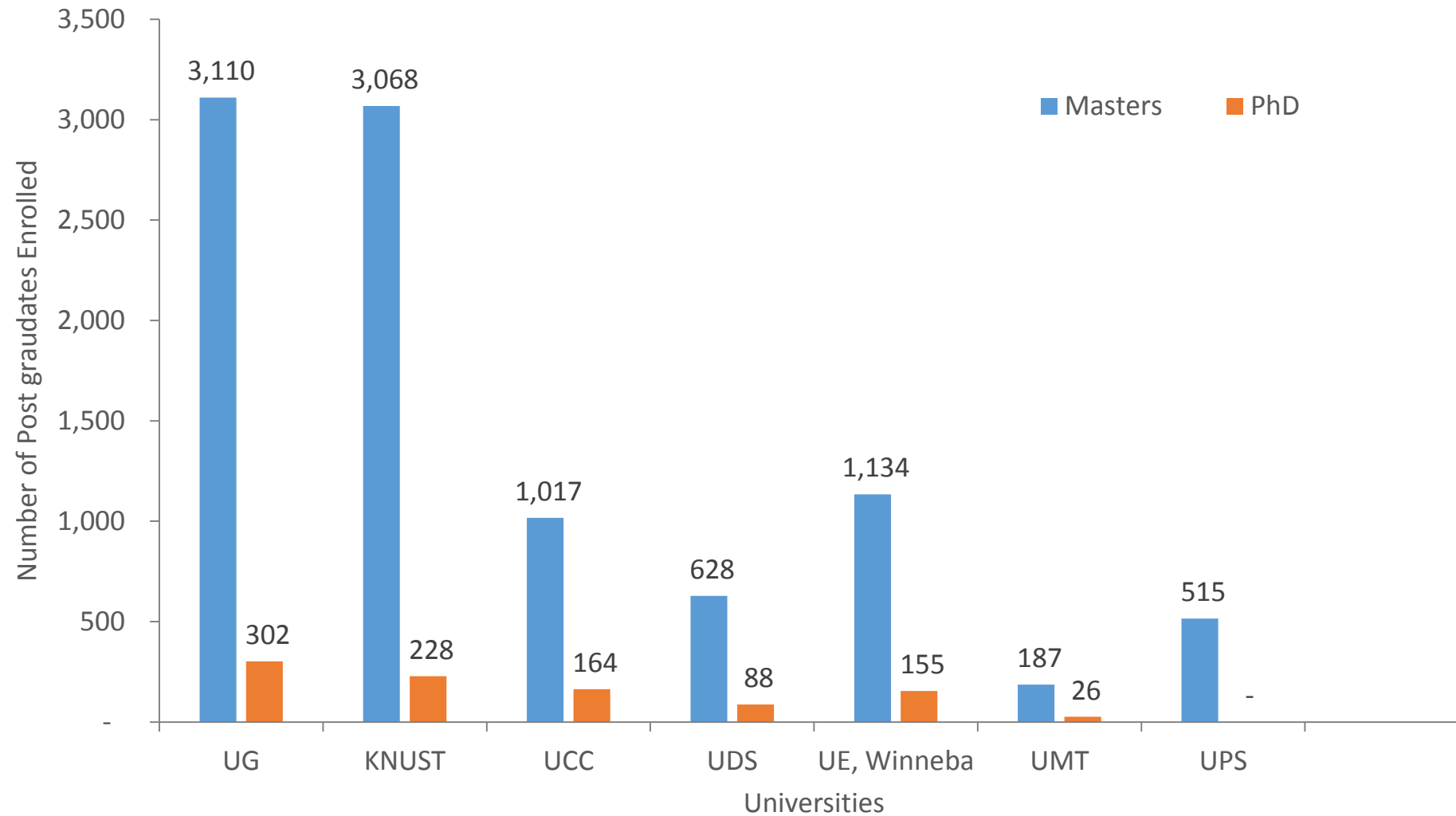
—△— UG —□— KNUST —●— UDS —●— UCC



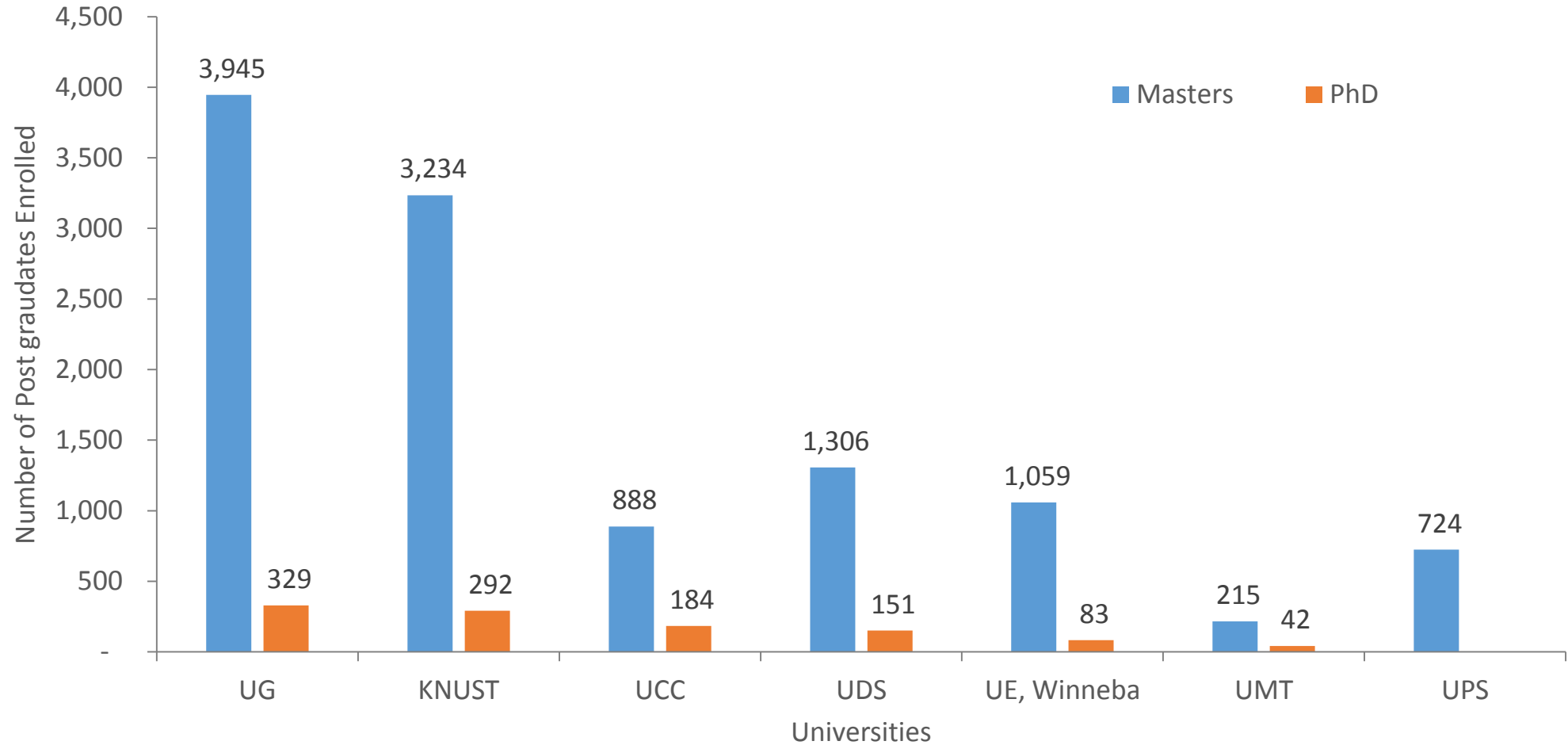
**Number of students enrolling on postgraduate courses at UG** (Source: University of Ghana Performance Indicators Profile)



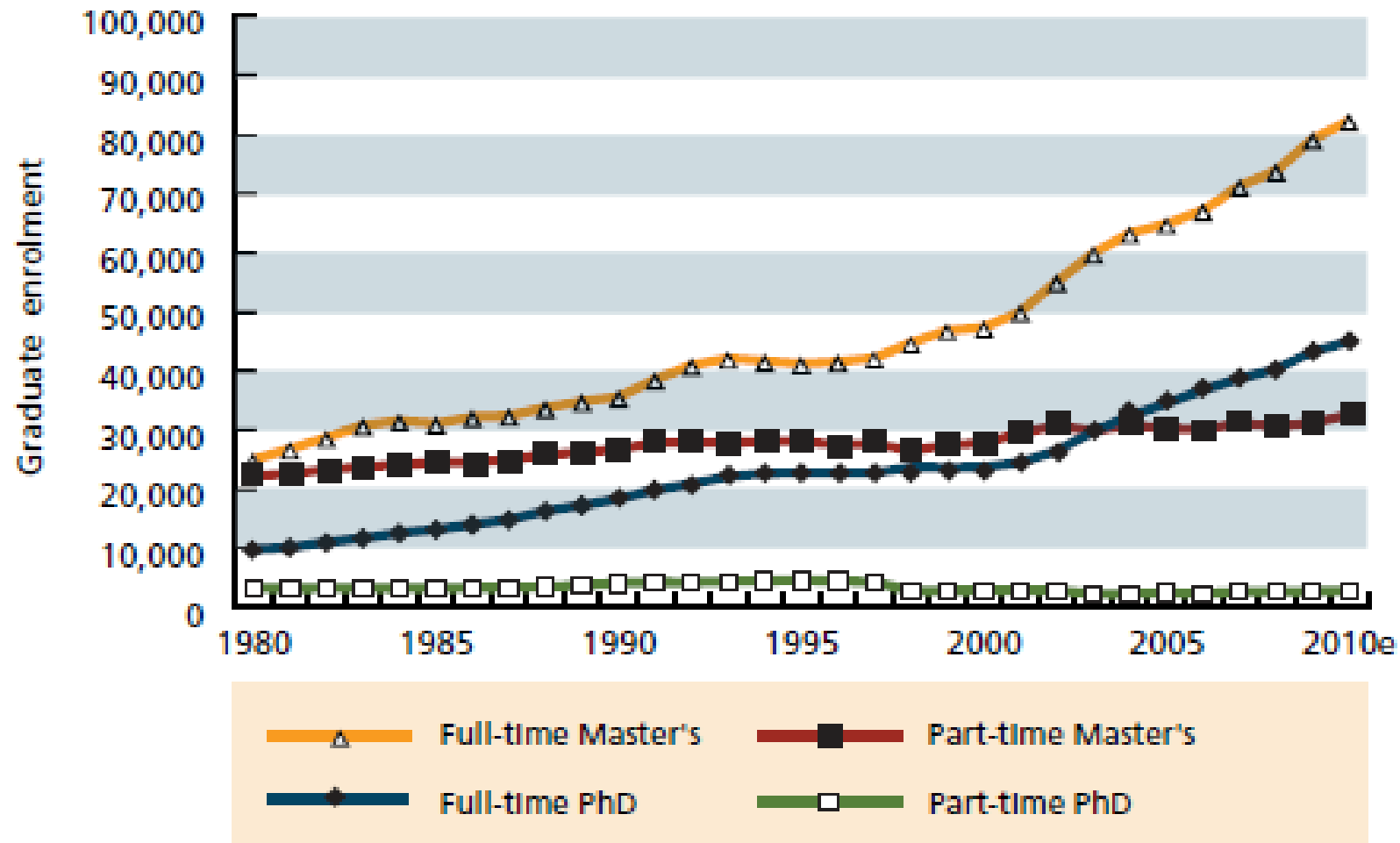
# Post graduates in 2012/2013



# Post graduates in 2013/2014



**FIGURE 5: Since 1980, full-time master's enrolment has tripled and full-time doctoral enrolment has grown more than four-fold**



Source: Statistics Canada data and AUCC estimates

Do we want a stronger postgraduate profile?

Increasing and sustaining the trends

# Value employers place on postgraduate education

- Source of professional training and accreditation
- Highest level of scientific knowledge and technical skills
- Motivation of staff
- Intelligence, critical thinking, research skills and improved methodologies
- Acquired skills, resources and attitude that facilitate resolution of complex problems
- Other transferrable skills

Meeting stakeholder needs/demands

# Suggested Institutional Changes

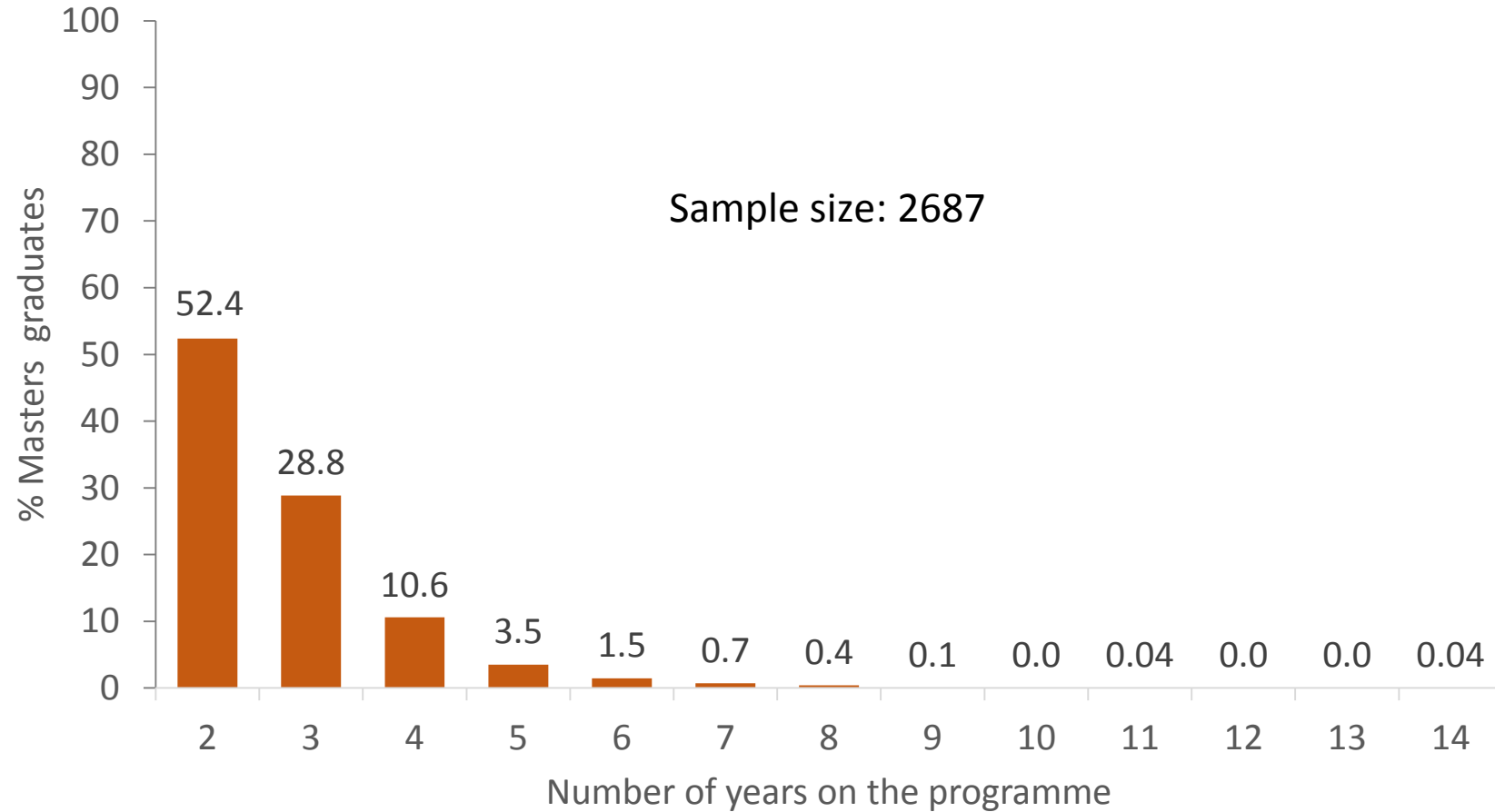
- Increased and sustained support from National Government
- New demand driven programmes for professional practice and of relevance
- Reduce delays in programme completion
- Candidate recruitment process
- Strategic interventions to attract more international students
- Improve availability of resources (research support fees; levy?)
- Increase the pool of qualified supervisors
- Establish contractual arrangements with students
- Need for a change in attitude towards postgraduate training



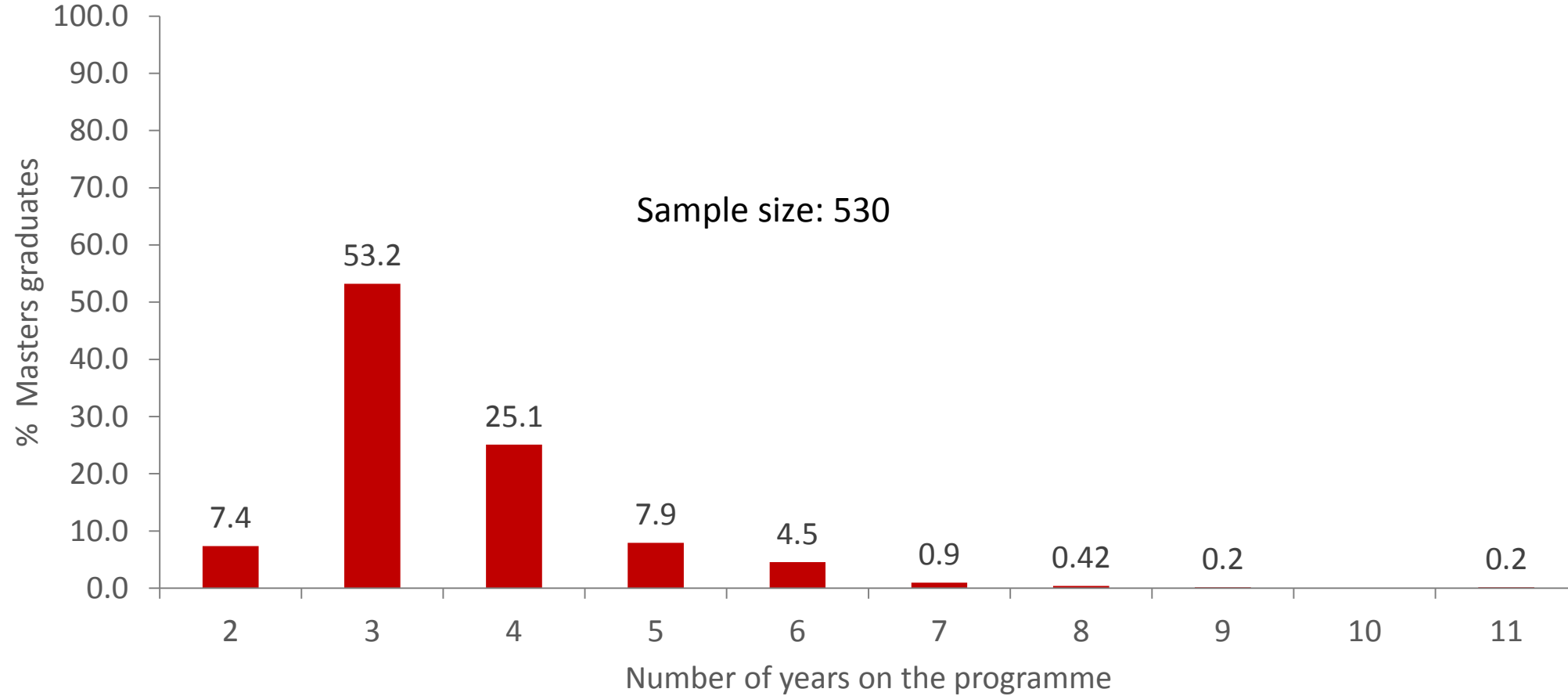
**Increased and sustained support from National Government**

Reduce delays in programme completion

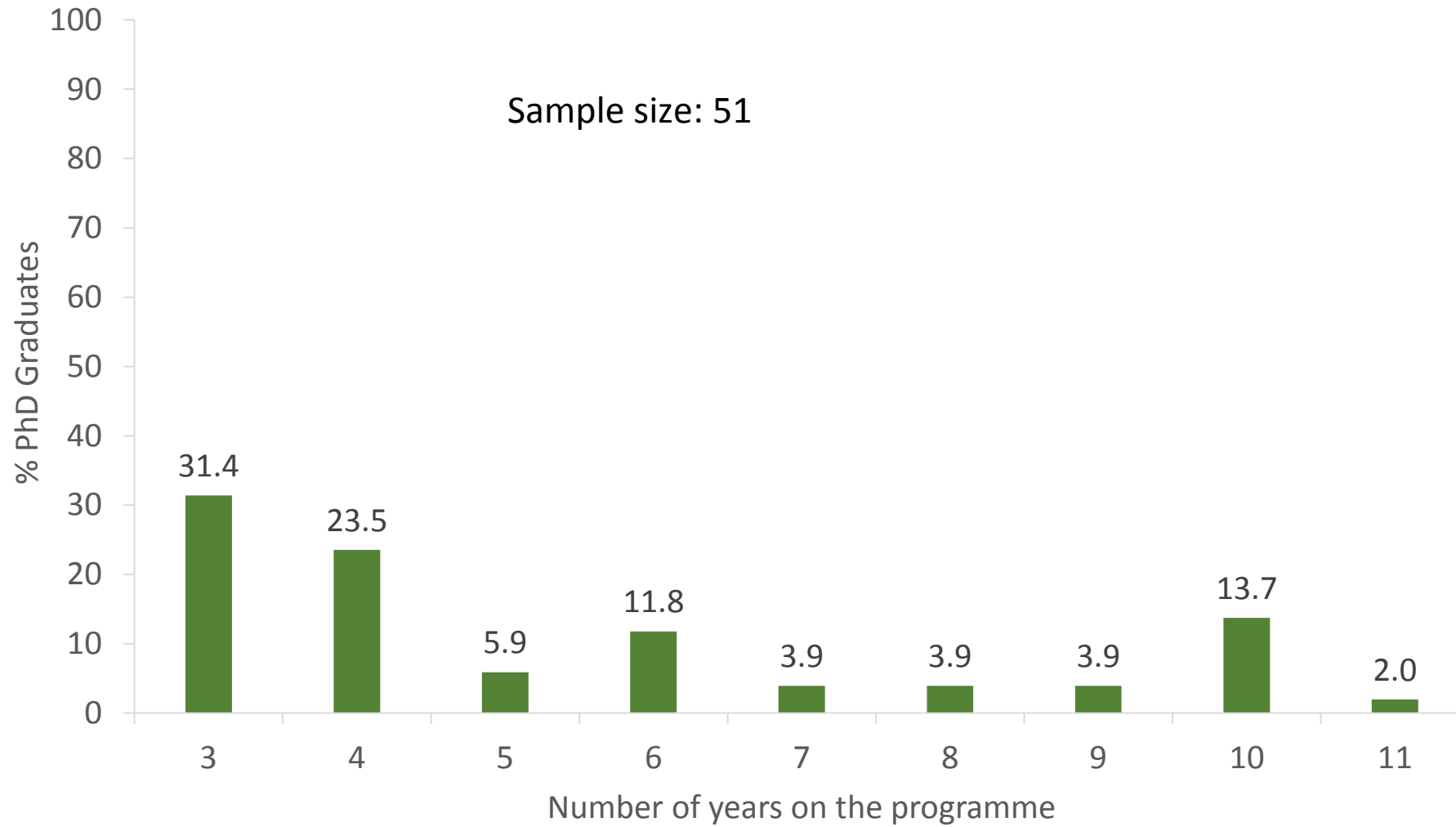
# Masters effective year of completion at KNUST (Source: School of Graduate Studies, 2014)



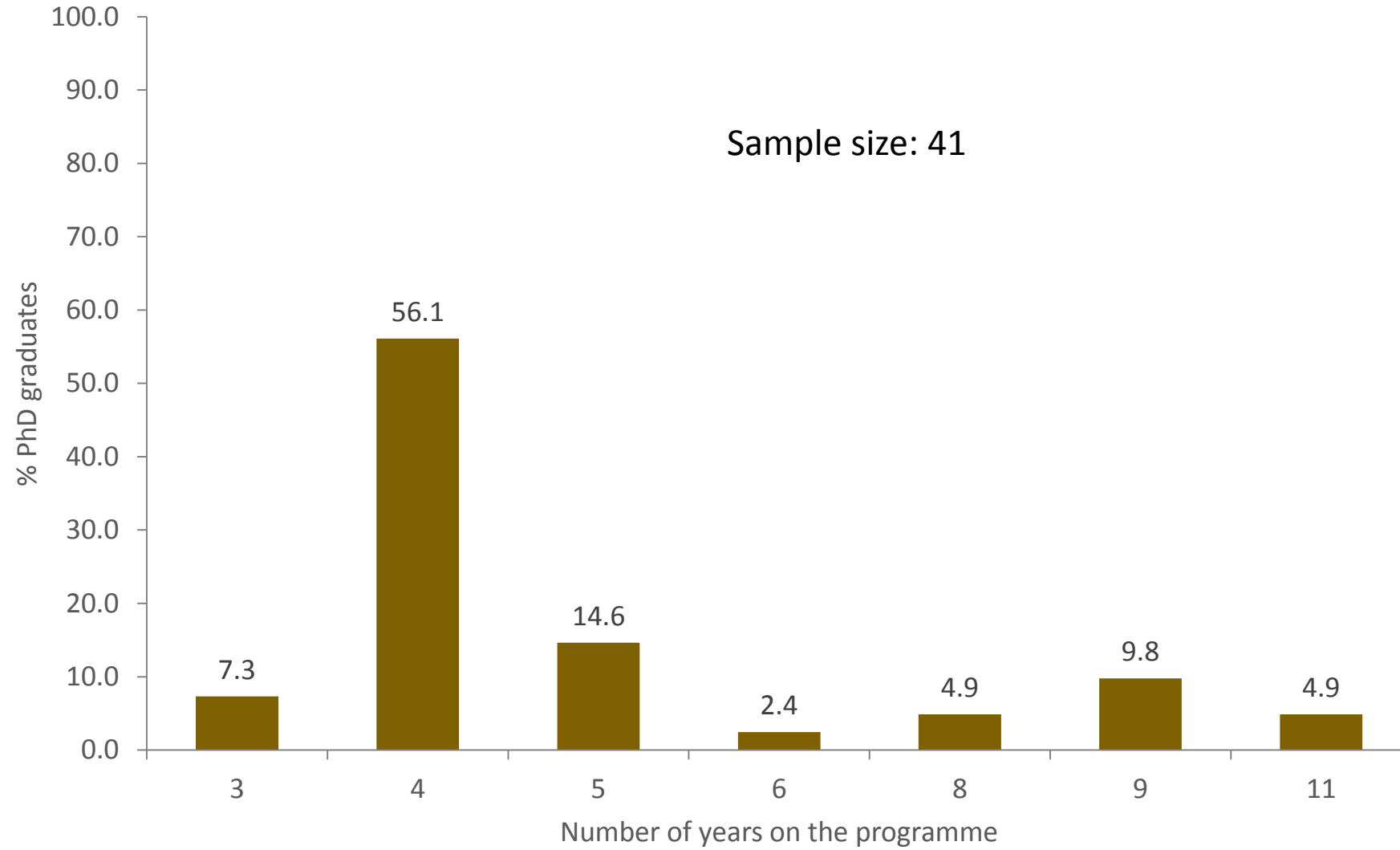
# Number of years on a Masters programme at KNUST (Source: School of Graduate Studies, June 2015)



# Number of years on a three-year Doctoral programme at KNUST (Source: School of Graduate Studies, 2014)



# Number of years on the Doctoral programme (Source: School of Graduate Studies June 2015)



# Delays in completing graduate programmes

- Increasing costs (privately funded students)
- Change in family status
- Full or part-time enrollment status
- Job/military commitments
- Needing to work
- Unconducive total learning and research environment
- Peer and parental pressure
- Dissatisfaction with the particular program

# Consequences for delays in completing programmes

- High public and private costs
- Undue pressure on Staff who have deal with incoming students
- Eroded benefits to the public and to the individual recipient of a degree awarded
- Portrays KNUST as an inefficient resource management institution
- “Paper/title guarantee” awarded out of sympathy



**Building additional Capacity of the Graduate student**

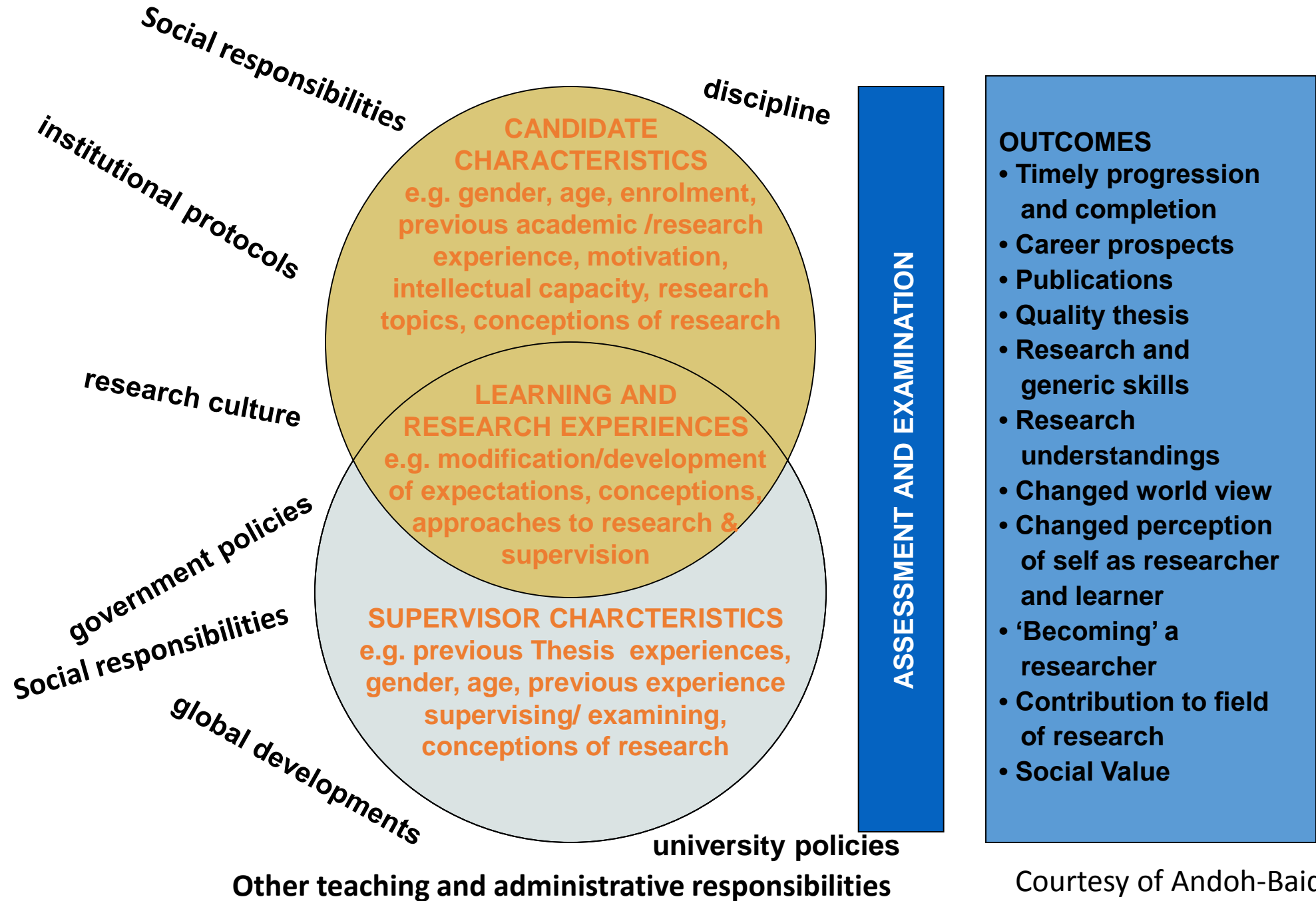
# Building additional Capacity of the Graduate student

- Mandatory and systematic transferrable skills training
- Organize local PhD-entrepreneurs/Industry clinics
- Introduce graduates to local businesses
- Organize workshops in career options, recruitment processes and business cultures within the private sector
- Expose students to real industry experience through an internship or participation in external research project
- Preparing students for the academia-non-academia transition

# Building additional Capacity of the Graduate student

- Public engagement skills (Vitae,2012)
  - Knowledge and intellectual abilities
  - Personal effectiveness
  - Engagement, influence and impact
  - Research Governance and organization

Effective supervision

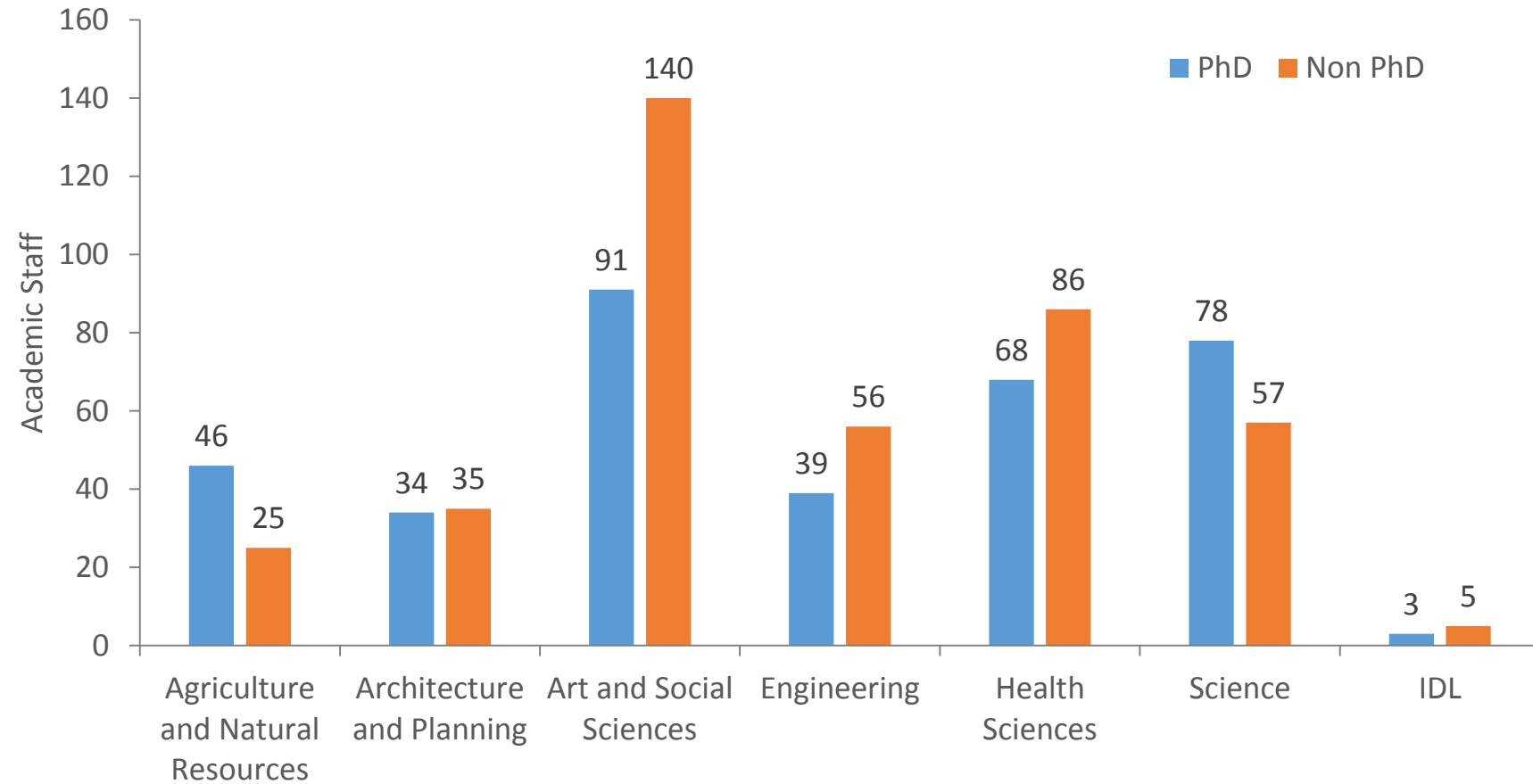


Courtesy of Andoh-Baidoo (modified)

How do we get our students to achieve these outcomes  
(the “little” impacts)

Need to increase the pool of highly confident and competent supervisors- effective use of local resources

# Academic Staff



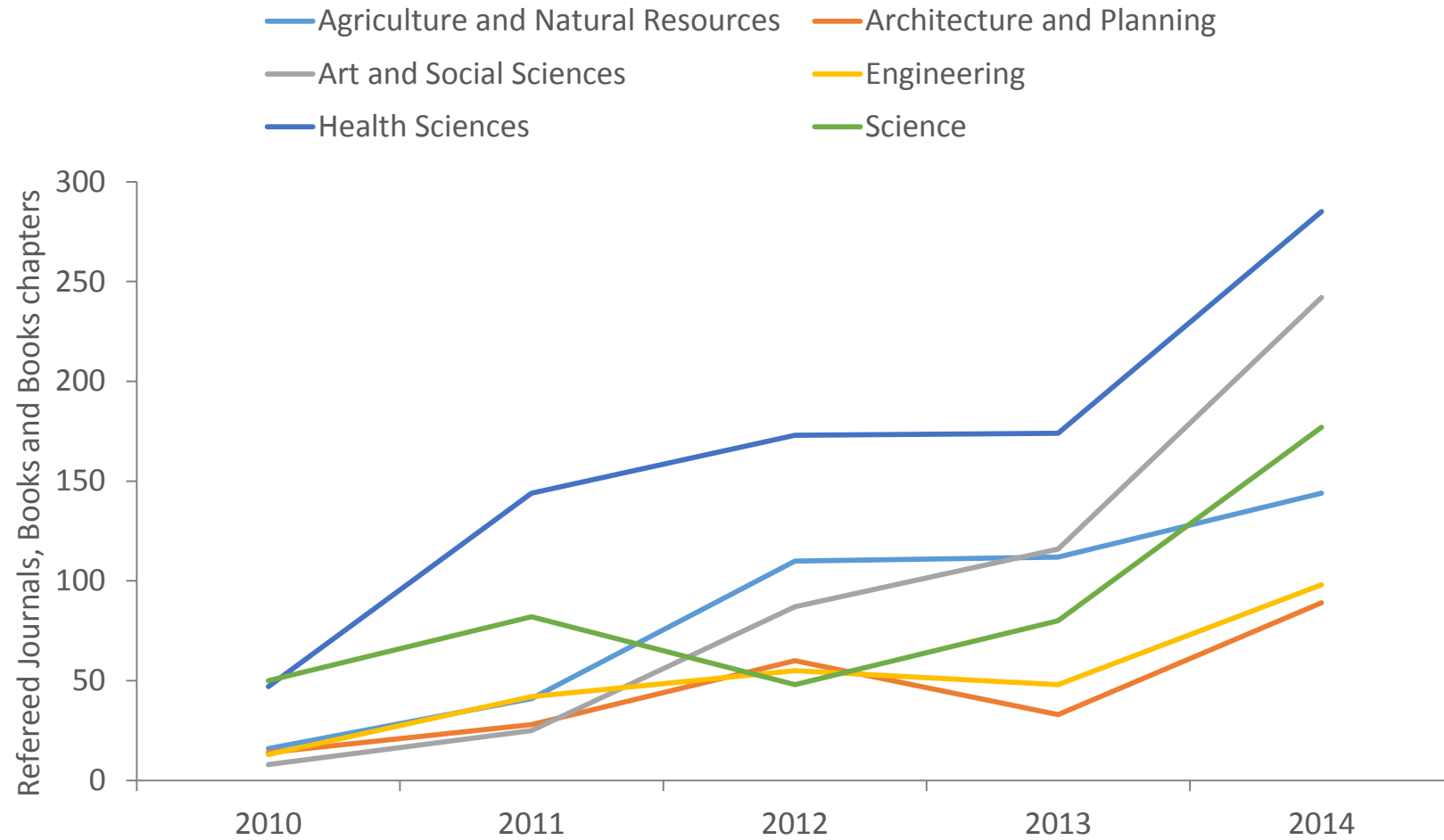


Need to increase the pool of highly confident and competent supervisors- effective use of local resources

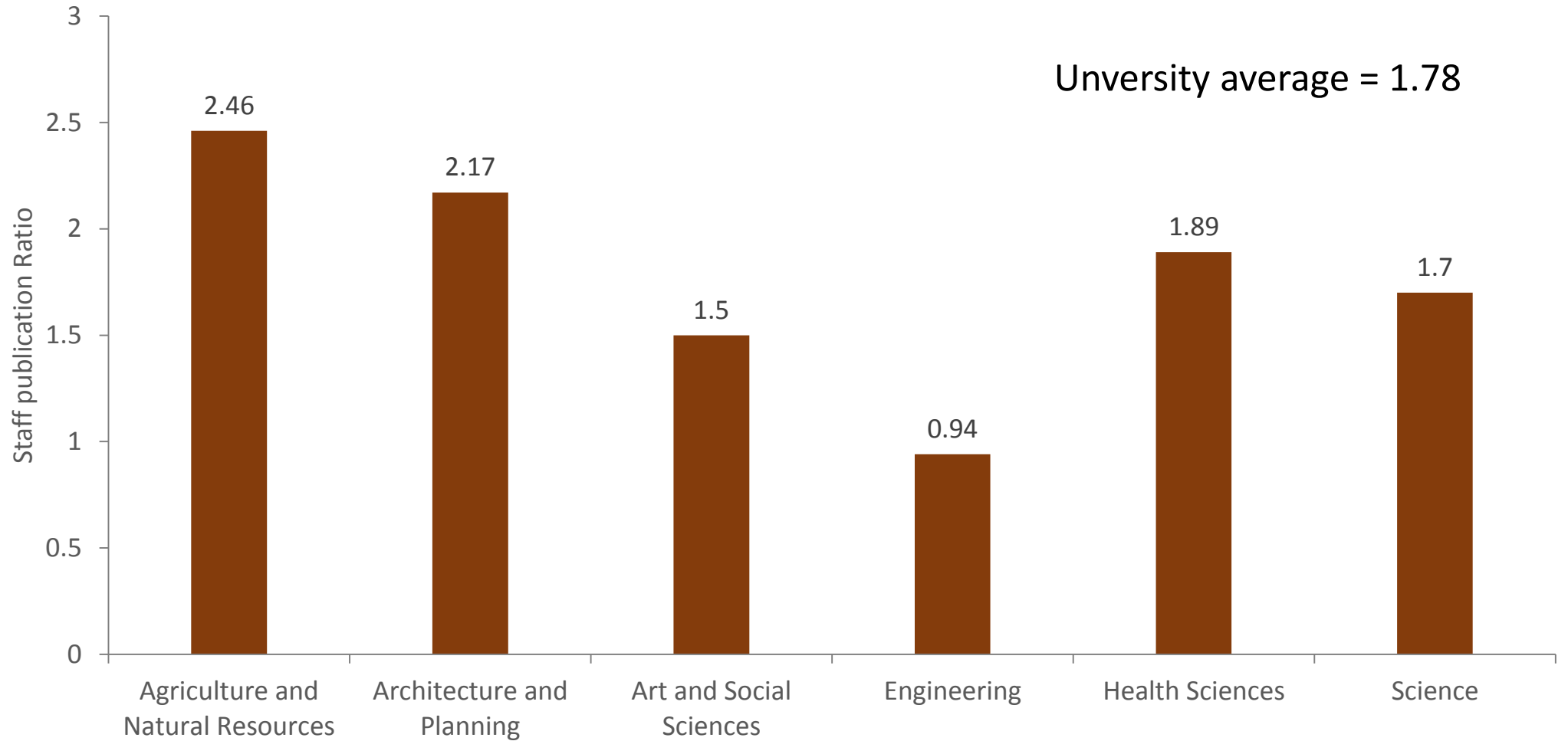
# Need to increase the pool of highly confident and competent supervisors-New Initiatives

- Vice-Chancellor Doctoral Initiatives
  - VC Andam
  - VC Ellis
- Need for review and adoption of new strategies (eg. Increasing the local content)
- Purposeful and targeted
- Expected outcome-increased knowledge generation and publication output

# Refereed Journals, Books and Books chapter



# Staff publication Ratio



# Supervision styles

HIGH

Personal support and resources

PASTORAL

**CONTRACTUAL**

**LAISSER-FAIRE**

DIRECTIONAL

LOW

Research Project Management support

HIGH

Gatfield and Alpert (2002)

# Building the Capacity of the Supervisor

- Provide Resources
  - Access to Databases
  - Funding opportunities
  - Organize workshops and clinics for supervisors
  - Research Methodology
  - Effective Supervision
  - Developing Research Programs
  - Working with Co-supervisors

# Building the Capacity of the Supervisor

- Supervision and Supervisor's Functions
  - Supervisory relationships
  - Address student morales
  - Supervisor roles and responsibilities
- Challenges with Supervision
- Strategies and Solutions
- Publication Opportunities



# Develop supervisor assessment procedures

- Regular and thorough evaluations of supervision and mentorship practices
- Supervision outputs (programme completions, publications, etc)
- Important indicators to consider for promotion and advancement of staff

Contractual arrangement between University and the student

# Updating our handbook to serve as a contractual document

- General guidelines and procedure
- Roles of School of Graduate Studies
- Responsibilities of students
- Roles and responsibilities of Supervisor
- Expanding access to information and mentorship
- Settlement of Disputes
- Establish statutory College Graduate Committees (filtering and effective coordination)

# Incentives/Motivation for Quality Supervision and Research

- PhD/MPhil thesis should be publishable
  - Highlighting KNUST's previous research findings (IR access and use)
  - Departments must identify 10 high quality journals
  - Reward faculty who publish thesis in these high quality journals
  - Assign thesis to faculty who demonstrate excellence in research
  - Balance teaching and supervision assignments
- 
- Develop Research groups

Improving access and use of IRs

# Institutional Repository and Graduate Education

- Institutional repositories serve as meaningful indicators of an institutions academic quality Crow (2002:6).
- IR provides an avenue of concentrating the intellectual product created by a university's researchers, making it easier to demonstrate its scientific, social and financial value.
- Much of the intellectual output and value of an institution's intellectual property is diffused through thousands of scholarly journals.

- Limited options for graduate students to publish and share their work.
- The student-centric KNUSTSpace has been developed to support graduate research.

- This student-centric approach provides evidence of high-impact educational practices on campus, which can be used in many ways
- Going forward, include a better connection to university administration, accreditation, and assessment.
- Graduate students must be encouraged to use and cite the research works in the repository
- Departments to submit all the digital copies of students thesis to the School of Graduate Studies for the library to upload into the IR



# Other benefits

- Control the duplication/recycling of research work
- Check Plagiarism
- As a source of data for student/researchers to build on existing research
- To showcase the research activities of the university – (Institutional prestige in the world)
- Build research collaboration

Creating opportunities for effective  
future planning through research

# Researchable and actionable areas

- Impact of postgraduates on the economy and on society
- Robust database on postgraduate education for monitoring and planning purposes
- Rising cost of graduate education (serious consequences for teaching and social work)
- Employability of KNUST Masters and Doctoral graduates
- Establishing completion and attrition patterns for appropriate interventions
- Identifying determinants for enhanced competitiveness

Let us support each other to promote quality graduate education at KNUST

# THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE



JORGE CHAM © 2013

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

# THANK YOU