Towards a Postgraduate History Agenda for the Education portal.

Andrew Foster
Honorary Senior Research Fellow, University of Kent
History PG numbers as of 2019

- **79** University History departments offered PGR opportunities
- **77** University History departments offered PGT opportunities

Across the UK there were:

- **2,610** History postgraduate research students
- **3,870** History taught postgraduate students

(Data from *The Complete University Guide, 2019*)
So how are we doing & what are the challenges?

- Numbers are relatively stable for both HEIs & students, yet distribution of HEIs reveals regional gaps in opportunities for students at this level (e.g. north west and south west)

- Query best practice in development of on-line, distance learning models for provision of taught programmes?

- How varied, challenging & appropriate are assignments/assessment at this level?

- Given problems with cohort sizes & costs (for both students & HEIs), how viable are some of the History taught courses?

- Should we be developing more rapidly the operation of regional Graduate Schools/hubs?
We would welcome contributions on:

- Examples of ‘best practice’
- Reports / blogs
- Problems to share – with solutions!
- Your thoughts on issues noted above & new topics for discussion
- Experiments
- Data on the PG scene around the UK
Topics for the PGT agenda?

• What constitutes a ‘good’ MA in History?:
• What should be in our ubiquitous ‘methods’ courses?
• What do we say about the transition from BA to MA?
• What kind of assignments (and assessment) best aid the development of skills at this level?
• How do we help students move from taught stages to choosing and executing their personal dissertations?
• Other issues?
Topics for the PGR agenda?

- Induction programmes/ transition issues
- ‘Probationer schemes’
- Help with establishing feasibility of topics
- Supervision ‘contracts’
- Expectations and responsibilities
- Changing roles over the life of a project
An example of a PGT issue

Issue: How do we help develop understanding of what is entailed in writing literature reviews?

Solution: Portfolio of exercises included:

1. the writing of a single book review
2. the composition of an annotated bibliography of approximately 10 articles/books
3. draft literature review to accompany thesis proposal

Result: See report of workshop discussion arising out of stage 2 above available on portal