This dissertation documents a range and variation of postgraduate science students' experiences in terms of degree experiences and post-graduation outcomes from a Workplace Learning perspective.

Study one is a narrative study of six Canadian science doctoral students over two and a half years. Narrative analysis of data including logs and interviews identified three case-pairs related to overall affordances/supports received and anticipated career outcomes. They were: positive-professional, positive-academic, and challenging-uncertain. Three affordances of interest were also identified across the cases: research projects, supervision, and colleagues. Variations in affordances and their relationship to the case-pairings were explored.

Study two is a mixed-methods study that examines the experiences of nine Canadian science doctoral students at two institutions over four years. Narrative analysis of data including logs and interviews, resulted in three case-groupings referring to career outcomes/outlooks: positive outcome, positive outlook, and uncertain outlook. Quantitative analysis of the logs identified three metrics which related to these outcomes/outlooks: number of publications per year, percentage of logs reporting research difficulties, and percentage of times supervisory help was received when needed. The relationship between these metrics and the case-groupings were then explored thematically.

Study three is a primarily quantitative study that examines the experiences of thirty-six masters and doctoral students across the UK. The data were comprised of surveys and follow-up interviews. Principal Components Analysis and Spearman correlations were used to analyse the surveys. These resulted in identifying two main project descriptions based on the subject of study: social-case and cognitive-physiological. In turn, each related to a pattern of research practices (e.g., quantitative, qualitative) and affordances (teamwork, supervision, mentorship) described for the social sciences and the sciences, respectively, as opposed to one broad set of practices and affordances across the discipline as has been more commonly described. Interviews were used to contextualise these findings.