

BSG Windsor Workshop PhD Training 2024

The BSG Windsor Workshop PhD Training event was held at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park on 2-5 December 2024.

There were 20 attendees who were all within the first year of their PhD, who had joined us from four different countries across Europe and 16 different institutions. There were two further who had registered but had to withdraw the week of the event. This year we were again supported by the International Association of Geomorphologists who provided funding to support attendance for three non-UK students from Europe.

The registration fee for the event was heavily subsidised by the BSG at £175 per person, which covered accommodation, food and educational venue hire. Additionally, the BSG provided financial assistance for one fee waiver.

The workshop was run by Lucy Clarke (Nottingham Trent University), John Wainwright (Durham University), Emma Shuttleworth (University of Manchester) and Joanne Old (Environment Agency). External speakers also included Annie Ockleford (BSG Chair), Jayesh Mukerjee (BSG PGR Forum Chair), Eleanore Miles (Atkins Realis) and Stuart Lane (Editor ESPL). Sessions covered the principles of a PhD, philosophy of research, project planning and time management, publications, careers and an introduction to coding to support research, as well as a session provided by the venue on Ethics and two opportunities for the students to present their PhD work to the group.

Feedback has been received from 15 (75%) of the attendees. All respondents rated the event and the venue / location as very good-excellent (Figure 1a and b). 100% of attendees that responded rated the organisation as excellent, the staff running the workshop as helpful and knowledgeable, and felt that the external speakers added value to the workshop. The majority of respondents also felt that the duration of the workshop was appropriate (Figure 1c).

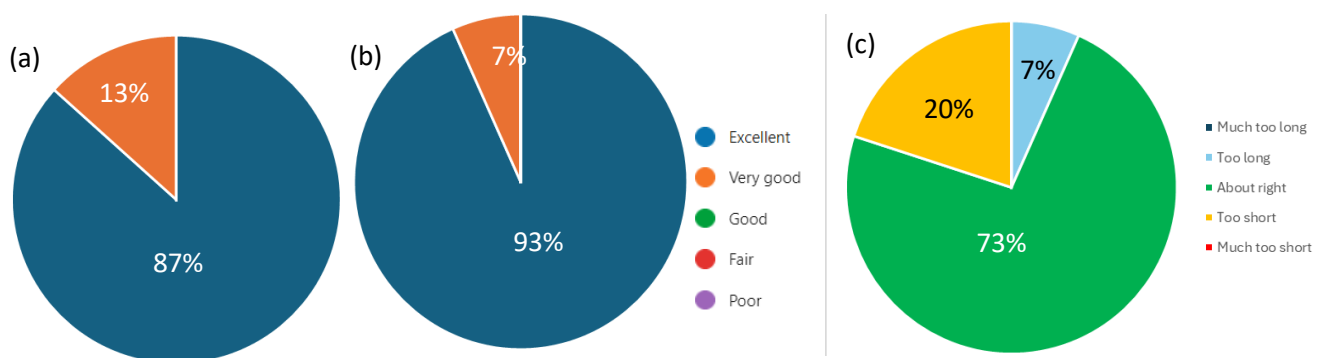


Figure 1: (a) Overall how would you rate this event?, (b) How would you rate the venue and location?, (c) How did you feel about the duration of the event?

Free text comments asked about what worked well at the event, suggested improvements, and any topics that they felt were missing as well as providing the opportunity for general comments. These are provided in the Appendix and the organisers will review these in detail. Overall, we were

delighted with the positive comments in terms of what worked well, and will review the suggested improvements and potential new topic ideas as a coordinator team in advance of the next workshop.

The venue has been booked for the BSG Windsor Workshop 2025 on Mon 01 – Thu 04 December 2025, with 24 student places confirmed and an additional 6 on reserve. Expression of interest for places will open in September/October 2025 to capture the autumn cohort of new PhD students.

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BSG Windsor Workshop Co-ordinator

Appendix: Detailed comments from BSG Windsor Workshop 2024 attendee evaluations

Id	Overall how would you rate this event?	How would you rate the venue and location?	How well organised do you feel the event was?	What worked well at the event?	Are there any improvements that could be made to the running of the event?	Are there any topics that you would have liked covered during the event?	How helpful/knowledgeable were the staff running the	How did you feel about the external speakers that contributed to the	How did you feel about the duration of the event?	Is there anything else that you would like to share about the event?
1	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	A mix of sessions that were interesting and interactive, specifically aimed relevant for first-year geomorph PhD students. Having the external speakers for the careers was interesting, and also the publishing sessions were really valuable. Such great food and location too	The event ran really well and smoothly!	A project brainstorming session which is more of a discussion than the questions after our long presentations maybe grouping us by project type a little to share ideas, as much as we discussed our projects, setting a specific time to talk through ideas or data might have been helpful. Also within it discussing skills and identifying peoples strong suits, who has good coding experience, fieldwork, GIS, which may be helpful to share tips and	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	The coding sessions could have been a little more interactive, with writing some code. Overall though it was a great week, especially to meet other people in the same position as you and a great introduction to academic events making conferences feel less daunting! Thank you for running it!
2	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	The number of participants, I was able to connect with all	Everything was perfect	Supervisor - Student Relationship	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	Too short	
3	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	Having 1 minute presentations meant we quickly could know peoples topics. I found this very helpful as had a lot of overlap with people. The ability to socialise with other geomorphologists was also amazing. The talks were very interesting. Ethics and all the talks on publishing I found very useful. Mentions of different conferences was also very useful as I didn't know	I would have liked to be able to have watched the presentations of projects that were in a similar area as mine. However the smaller group was nice, so also partly a positive.	No	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	
4	Very good	Excellent	Extremely well	The organisation was great right from the beginning to the end (including pre and post workshop). Timings, aims of sessions, number and length of breaks was all very good.	No, everything was good in my opinion!	I really liked the philosophy of science lecture, and would have liked to learn more about this for more geomorphology specific problems (maybe through some small group discussions?). I also think something on Machine Learning and Geomorphology would be interesting (it seems to be getting more popular and would interested about learning the (dis)advantages of such methods, I'm not likely to use ML in my PhD but would help understanding papers that do use this)	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	Really enjoyed the guest speakers, the careers panel was interesting and enjoyed learning about the publishing process and industry. The mini presentations were also great to get some practice speaking and to learn from each other. The project planning component was a bit long in my opinion, but we did quite a lot of that already at my Uni. The R and Python sessions could also be a bit more concise or interactive (although I do appreciate that its hard to make a one-size-fits all session when
5	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	The idea of having career talk	Nope it was wonderful	Ummm noo	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	I really love 5 min presentation
6	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	Comfortable stay and brilliant hosts	No	All topics covered were excellent and very much relevant	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	
7	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	The event provided an excellent opportunity to learn new methodologies and tools relevant to my research. The interactive sessions and networking with experts from diverse fields were particularly	I was very happy of all event	No, everything was perfect	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	
8	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	Everything	I think it would be nice to have some more ice breaker activities in the beginning to start getting to know each other	No	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	Too short	Thanks for organizing! I had a great time and learnt a lot!
9	Very good	Very good	Extremely well	Workshops were well organised. Talks were informative.	Free time on the first day to get to know people. Didn't find the Python/R workshops that helpful.		Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	Too long	

10	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	Very useful insight on academic world, great food and accommodation, all staffs are friendly and resourceful.	Coding sessions can be more emphasised on principle of modelling and data management without the coding (or can be separated section). It might help to focus more as people have to diverge attention to follow the coding.	Fieldwork planning, conducting research abroad.	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	
11	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	The entire experience!	I wish it was longer!	More on python please!	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	Too short	Nothing else! I had such a great experience! Thank you so much to the
12	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	The range of topics covered was really useful. E.g. it was good to cover some technical and presentation skills and also have speakers in to see the types of careers in geomorphology and related fields.	For the R and Python classes: Splitting the tables up into groups of absolute beginners, moderate and advanced. And having a worksheet for each group rather than one presentation because as soon as you got lost in the presentation, you couldn't catch up. The advanced table could then also help the beginners and	No, I think the range of things was excellent.	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	The duration was fine however it was back to back and very full on and hard to take everything in. If we left on the Friday morning instead we could have had a bit more time for some sessions and time to digest some of the information. But that isn't essential by any means.
13	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	It was a fantastic opportunity to build connections and make friends. The lectures were very useful for first year PhD students. The accommodation and catering were amazing!	All good.		Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	
14	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	PhD planning session was particularly good and worked well.		The content seemed like a good balance.	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	Thank you to all involved for organising!
15	Excellent	Excellent	Extremely well	The pacing of the days, the interactivity with other PhD students, the food, interesting content	Make resources easier to locate after the event	Data handling / storage, how to check against plagiarism	Very helpful/knowledgeable	Added value	About right	