**Doctoral Students' Voices**

Communities of learning have emerged to support the exchange of knowledge and experience through the internet for international students undergoing doctoral trajectories (Van de Laar et al 2017, 8). It is often unclear to the prospective PhD student what kind of education they are beginning and the challenges they will encounter. A significant proportion of PhD students worldwide do not complete their PhD. Research skills development and topic knowledge are two of the areas found from a needs assessment of sub-Saharan African PhD students to improve scholarly development. Researchers highlight the importance of the academic learning environment in shaping the student learning experience, identity construction and socialisation into academic culture (Hemmati et al, 2020). It is against this context that overseas PhD students studying in the UK provided a ‘template’ of recommendations that articulated their advice and insights into what they would tell others thinking about embarking on a PhD journey. The contribution of this Lightening Talk falls within this subject-matter. Prominent among the discourses of ‘advice’ highlighted in the personalised learning journeys of these final year doctoral students are the following elements: psychological and practical preparation, know about different teaching methods, capacity to cope with solitude, caring for wellbeing.