

## Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

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# A Research Design to understand the Transformation of Students in Higher Professional Education

Didi Griffioen, Indira Day, & Jason nak

## Introduction

Students in higher education are being prepared for professional practice. In order to later be able to become a professional, students interact with different types of professional knowledge and action in their education programmes. Presumably, these interactions facilitate the transformation from student to professional, yet alone they are not enough. In a university setting, Ashwin, Abbas, & McClean (2014) showed that additionally, students needed to be aware of the need to and willing to transform in order to be successful in this regard.

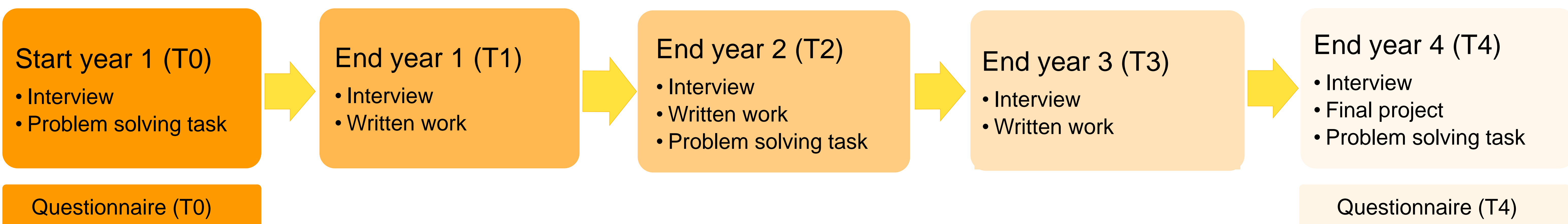
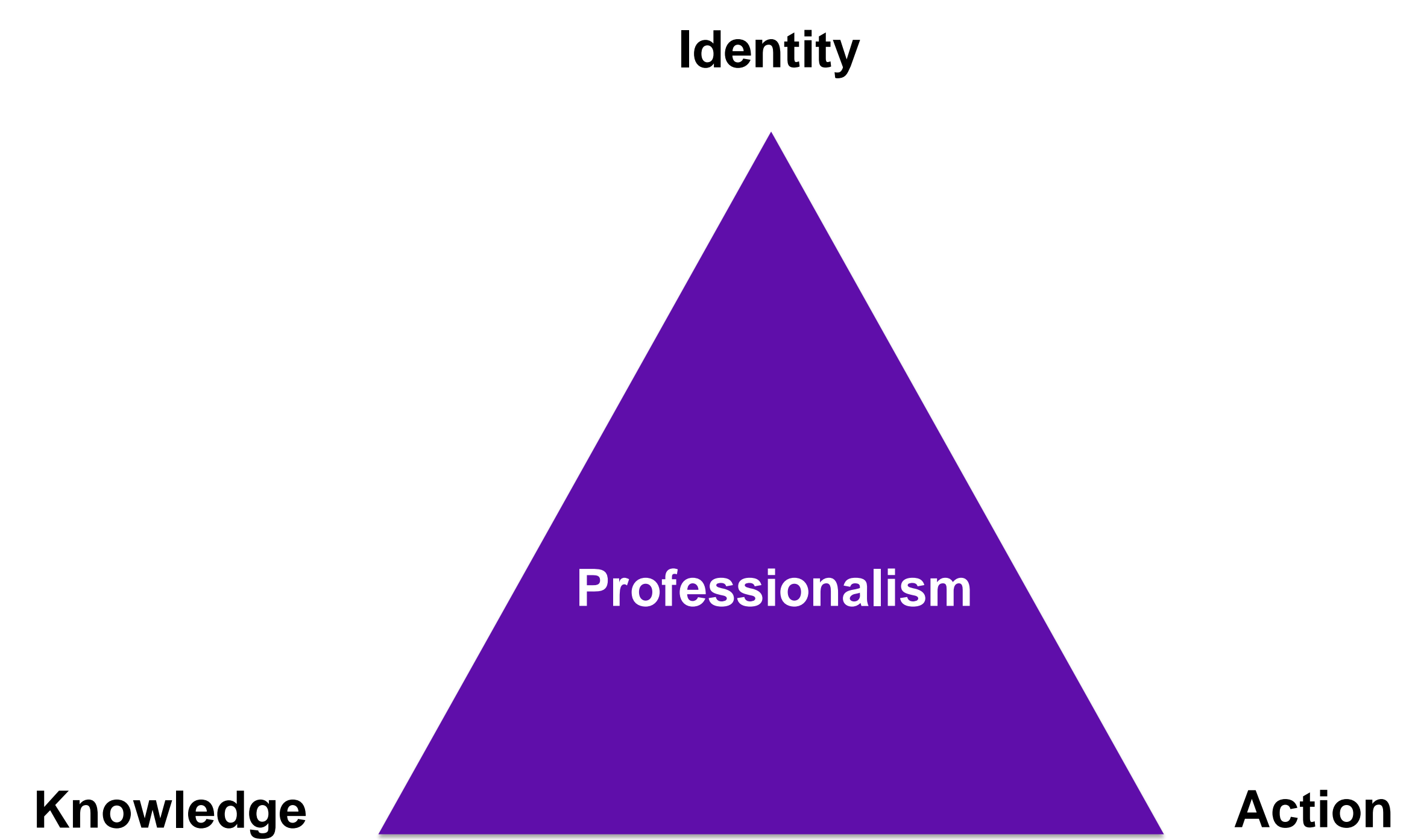
Dutch higher professional education, however, has a different role than the university does as it focusses more on professional practice and knowledge than the university does. Therefore we can only guess how the interaction with action and knowledge in these institutions facilitate students' transformation, as well as whether the same prerogatives are in place.

Moreover, different disciplines have different knowledge bases. This could imply that students interact with different knowledge over the course of their programmes. Therefore an additional point of interest would be to investigate students in different disciplines.

This study aims to investigate how students in higher professional education transform as a result of interactions with knowledge and action. We investigate this transformation on three aspects of the professional: Identity, knowledge and action.

## Research Questions

1. What forms of knowledge do undergraduate students have access to through their curricula?
2. How are students' identities transformed by engaging with this knowledge?
3. How are students' problem solving strategies in professional tasks transformed by engaging with this knowledge?
4. What are the disciplinary differences in these processes and outcomes?



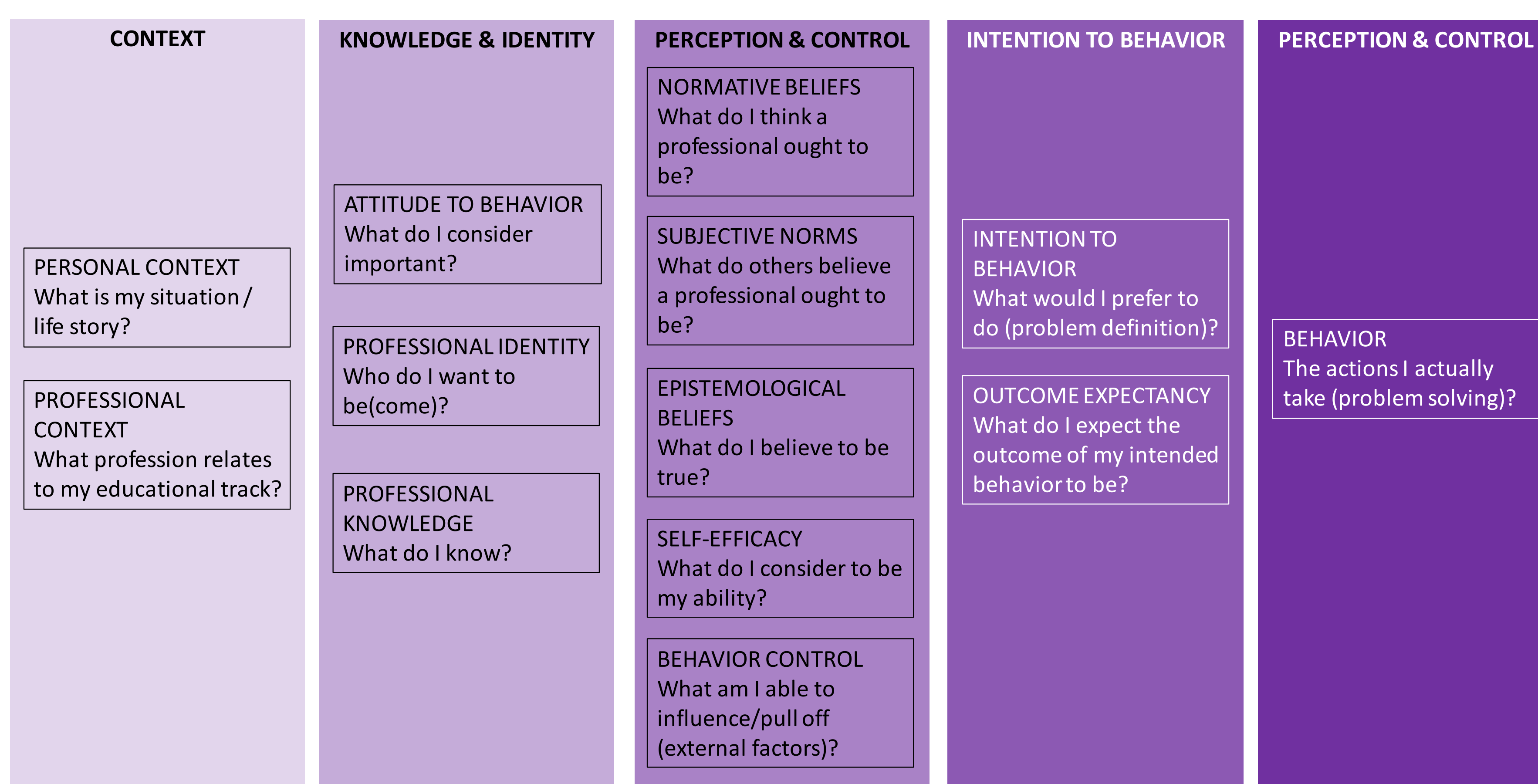
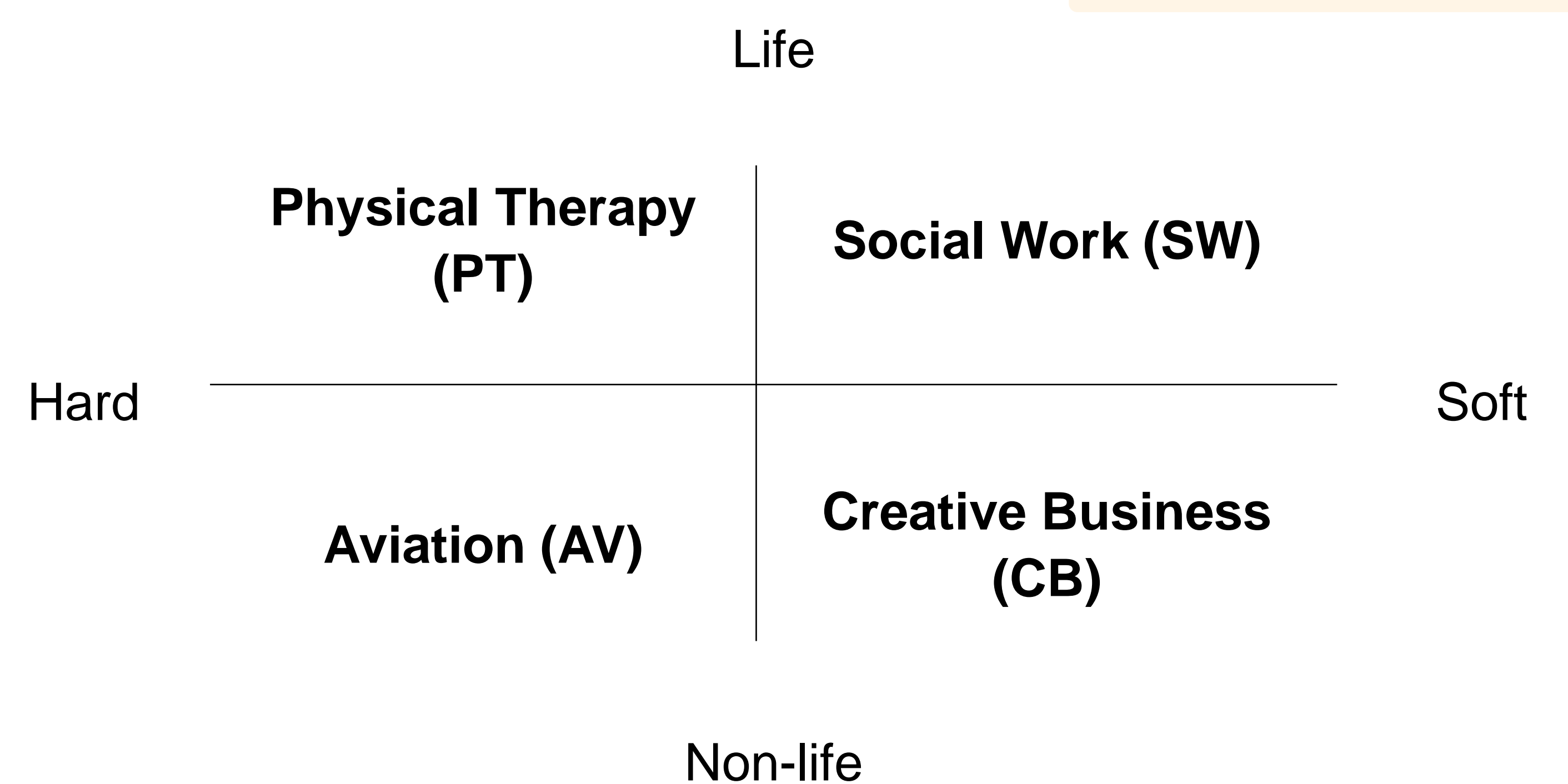
## Data gathering

100 students divided over 4 different programmes are included to represent different knowledge bases, based on Biglan, 1973.

### All participants:

- Are interviewed annually in order to assess their professional identity
- Perform three ill-structured problem solving tasks (Jonassen, 2010) from within their discipline in order to assess their professional knowledge
- Annually provide us with a sample of their work from the last year to assess their professional action

All **students** in the cohort fill out a questionnaire at the start and end of their programme to assess generalizability.



## Data Analysis

Data reduction will be based on an adapted version of Fishbein and Ajzen's (2010) Theory of Reasoned Action. The data gathered in the different instances will be coded accordingly.

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