

Lorand Bodo**Job title:** Senior Researcher | Ridgeway Information**Graduation date:** 2016**Degree:** MRes Security Science**Tell us about your current role and organisation.**

I currently work at Ridgeway Information, which was formerly known as the International Centre for Security Analysis (ICSA) at King's College London. Ridgeway is a King's College London spin-out company and specialises in Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) consultancy, research and training.

In my current role, as a Senior Researcher, I conduct research on open source intelligence to support national and international security. For example, I'm currently testing and evaluating various commercial and open source tools that can be used to analyse multimedia data, as part of a big research project. Aside from this, I also look into how (violent) extremist groups are using the Internet for various purposes as well as deliver our OSINT training courses.

What motivated you to go into this sector?

I realised when I was in the military that my interests lie in international politics and security, especially terrorism and counter-terrorism. This is why I did a BA in Political Science and Oriental Studies and later on two other MA degrees in International Politics with a specific focus on violent radicalisation. My last MA degree was in Security Science at UCL, where I did lots of quantitative stuff.

I always tell people to follow their passions and interests. This is precisely what I did, and this is what motivates me every day. Why should I work at a company that does something I'm not interested in?

What do you think helped to set you apart from other candidates?

What set me apart from other candidates was my work experience and especially my knowledge of OSINT that I've acquired through training courses. Work experience and additional skills, such as programming, data analytics, etc. will definitely set you apart. Having all these skills and experiences also demonstrates that you "went the extra mile" and you are really passionate about something.

A university degree from a top university, such as UCL, may open some doors for an initial phone call or interview, but it does not guarantee you the job. What helps you land the job are additional skills that you are learning and working on in your own time.

What does a normal workday look like for you?

Three to four cups of coffee and lots of reading and writing.

What things frustrate you the most?

I'm quite a relaxed guy so it takes a lot to frustrate me.

If you were to quit, why would that be?

Tough one! I love my job, it's what I've always wanted to do but if I won the lottery, I'd retire and head to a beach somewhere.

What advice would you pass on to a student interested in this type of work?

Be proactive. If you don't do anything, you will not get far. Nowadays, you can quickly learn all sorts of things freely online. From *how to write a literature review* to *Machine Learning* – pick courses that are relevant to your interests and could add more value to your existing skill set. These are the kind of things that will set you apart from other candidates.

Gaining practical skills is also very important. Reach out to companies that could benefit from your skills and just ask them for an internship – paid/unpaid and/or even remotely. Keep your CV up to date and also make use of UCLCareers. They have experts who will read through your application and provide handy advice! I did the exact same thing.

Lastly, establish a professional, online presence on LinkedIn and/or Twitter. Talk about the things you're interested in, follow the experts in your area and ask others (you admire) for career-related advice. Don't be shy, a lot of people are more than happy to share their success stories.