

G. PhD Social and Historical Sciences, 2009

Current role:

- Architectural Investigator
- Historian

Previous role:

- Research Assistant

Sector:

- Arts & Cultural Heritage

G. is an Architectural Investigator with English Heritage, currently on secondment as a Historian with the Survey of London. G. explains that her role involves conducting fabric analysis on a wide range of historic buildings, including primary and secondary research, providing expert research for planning and designation cases and producing written analysis in a number of forms for a variety of audiences. Prior to working at English Heritage, G. was a Research Assistant at Trinity College in Dublin. G.'s career choices have been motivated by a desire to seek 'intellectual satisfaction, personal and professional development [and] job stability.'

G.'s PhD examined 17th century English architecture, which has been essential to her work today as it provides credibility with her peers in the heritage sector and opportunities for career progression.

G.'s role requires transferable skills in self-motivation, time management, project management, collaborative working and synthesising large amounts of information. G.'s PhD helped her to develop all of these transferable skills, with collaborative working being the exception. G. explains that this was due to the fact that she worked in an isolated environment, and it was as a result of the projects she conducted alongside her PhD that she developed group working skills.

On entering the academic job market after completing her PhD, G. felt challenged by funding reductions across academia and historical conservation, which in turn led to fewer jobs in both sectors. She found her current position by searching online job advertisements.

For those nearing the end of their PhD and wishing to stay in academia, G. recommends volunteering for activities with relevant bodies in their sector which do not have to be 'specifically connected with your PhD.'

For those considering completing a PhD, G. feels it is important to gain skills and expertise that are both subject-specific and transferable. Adding, 'Choose a clearly defined subject that you can make a name for yourself in [and] store up primary research you undertake during your PhD to fuel research projects after your PhD.'

Tags:

■ Social & Historical Sciences, Arts & Cultural Heritage, Researcher, Non-Academic