

K. PhD Historical and Philosophical Sciences, 2009

Current role:

▣ Lecturer

Previous role:

▣ Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Sector:

▣ Higher Education

K. is a Lecturer in History in a research-led UK university. Prior to her current position she was a postdoctoral research fellow at Cambridge University, and before that, K. was a Teaching Fellow in the UCL Department of History. K. has been motivated by the intrinsic benefits of her job, which she explains is 'the chance to do scholarly research in history [and] no real desire to do anything else.'

K.'s PhD in international history has been essential to her career as she could not do her job without it.

As part of being a Lecturer, K. is required to publish in research publications - a feature which she explains was an outcome of her PhD research and training. However, her other transferable skills in meeting deadlines, designing research projects, teamwork and communication skills were directly developed through her PhD and she continues to use these skills.

Upon entering the employment market after completing her PhD, K. faced huge competition for jobs, a difficult transition from a PhD to postdoctoral work, and a very precarious financial situation due to a lack of entry-level academic jobs that paid enough to live on. K. did successfully find positions through advertisements on online job websites and personal contacts.

While completing her PhD, K. took part in Careers Adviser led skills training and career events open to all students. K. feels that the benefits of these Careers Service activities on her subsequent career are harder to measure in comparison to the valuable support from academic mentors. K. also took part in Graduate School training including Academic Writing, Coping with Stress and History-Department-led training, which she found to be of some use.

For those entering academia after completing their PhD, K. states, 'Be prepared for a tough one to two transitional years if you really want to give academia a go.'

Reflecting on her academic career, K. has the following words of advice for those considering the same path: 'Only do [a PhD] if you think you'll enjoy it - I never regretted doing the PhD, even if I had not managed to secure a job in academia afterwards.'

Tags:

■ Social & Historical Sciences, Researcher, Higher Education, Academic