

A. PhD Social and Historical Sciences, 2010

Current Role:

■ Peripheral Co-ordinator

Sector:

■ Higher Education

A. currently holds an administrative position as Peripheral Co-ordinator at the Hellenic Open University. Her career choices have been motivated by financial stability, seeking a role that was not entirely unrelated to her studies and by navigating a challenging job market. A's PhD research focused on gender and sexuality.

A. PhD expertise has not been essential or desirable for her current role. In A.'s opinion, having a PhD has no particular advantage for securing or progressing in her role. Due to the nature of her work, she believes supervisors and colleagues often consider her 'too academic' and 'overqualified' for her role. However A.'s PhD did develop other transferable skills which she uses as a Peripheral Co-ordinator, such as project management, meeting deadlines and decision making. In particular, the process of writing and the discipline required in completing her PhD enhanced her ability to work methodically and with intensity.

When entering employment after her PhD, A. faced some significant challenges, which included high levels of unemployment, the reduction in prestige of holding an academic title and stiff competition for jobs. A. used a variety of job hunting methods to secure her roles after her PhD graduation, such as finding job adverts in publications, using social media, attending formal networking events and recruitment fairs, sending speculative applications and tapping into her network of personal contacts.

At UCL, A. took part in Careers Service activities through mock interview practice and a career event open to all students. While she was a PhD student at UCL she engaged in several Graduate School training activities, like those focused on academic writing, publishing your work and stress management.

As part of her advice to current PhDs who are about to enter the jobs market, she suggests that patience and flexibility are key, and she also suggests being realistic. For those considering doing a PhD, A. encourages you to thoroughly consider why you want to do a PhD. She says that for reasons of passion or love of the subject, doing a PhD would be appropriate. If money or status were the primary aims then A. advises you to think again.

■ Tags: Social and Historical Sciences, Higher Education, Administration, Academic