



CAREERS GUIDE FOR DOCTORAL SUPERVISORS

Support from the Careers Service

The Bath Careers Service provides impartial support, advice and guidance to students in defining and developing their careers during and beyond their degree. We do this through confidential individual guidance, information provision, skills training, and activities encouraging engagement with prospective employers and others who can provide insight into careers.

We work with doctoral researchers at all stages in their programme to encourage a proactive approach to career and professional development, facilitate self-reflection, raise awareness of possible career opportunities both inside and outside of academia and assist with effective self-presentation in applications and interviews.

Specifically we provide:

- **One-to-one advice and guidance**
 - **Careers appointments** - A 20 minute appointment useful for discussing first steps in career planning and job-search strategies. Appointments are available daily in the Careers Service in the Virgil Building. 20 minute careers appointments specifically for doctoral students are offered on campus twice a week. Appointments on campus can also be used for feedback on job applications. Careers appointments can be booked by students via MyFuture <https://myfuture.bath.ac.uk>.

Doctoral researchers can contact the Careers Service enquiries desk on 01225 386009 or Anne Cameron a.i.cameron@bath.ac.uk, the Researcher Career Development Adviser, directly for:

- **45-minute careers guidance appointments** - these are useful for doctoral researchers who feel they need more in-depth help with career planning and job-hunting. Guidance appointments are available on campus on three days a week, and every day in the Virgil Building.
- **Practice interviews** – for students who have a confirmed interview coming up.
- **Guidance appointments and practice interviews can be offered via telephone or Skype for doctoral students based off campus.**

We also provide specialist support within the Careers Adviser team for students with disabilities and long-term health conditions, and also for international students.

- **Career Management workshops and skills training**

Within the Doctoral Skills programme we deliver tailored career management sessions for doctoral students, on topics including career options, interview preparation and CVs. In addition doctoral researchers can participate in our careers adviser- and employer-led skills programme which is open to all students. See www.bath.ac.uk/guides/careers-service-events-and-fairs.

- Access to employers and professional networks**

The Careers Service organises a number of careers fairs and hosts presentations from employers representing a wide range of sectors. Throughout the academic year all students have the opportunity to meet a wide range of employers on campus when they give presentations. Students can also access Bath Connection www.bath.ac.uk/alumni/help/engage/bath-connection, a database of Bath alumni contacts, including doctoral graduates, who can offer insights into their experiences of working in various roles, sectors and organisations. In addition we encourage doctoral students to develop professional networks through involvement in conferences, research seminars and non-academic activities, and particularly through active engagement with relevant Professional Bodies and Learned Societies.
- Specialist Information resources**

The Careers Service website has a specific section for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers which contains extensive information on career options, vacancy sources and self-marketing, and there is information for researchers in specific disciplines. See www.bath.ac.uk/guides/careers-service-support-for-researchers.
- An in-house vacancy database and advice on where to look for jobs**

MyFuture <https://myfuture.bath.ac.uk> is a comprehensive source of vacancies for full-time jobs, internships, and voluntary work opportunities, and there is a specific section 'For PhD Students'. We can also advise on where to look for work in specialist fields.
- Provision for specific groups on request**

We are very happy to provide tailored sessions for Departments, Faculties, Doctoral Training Centres and research groups. Contact Anne Cameron a.i.cameron@bath.ac.uk to arrange this.

What do doctoral researchers do once they've graduated?

Doctoral researchers find work in a wide range of sectors and industries. A limited number of roles will ask for a PhD as an essential requirement; numerous others will consider a PhD as advantageous or desirable, and many roles will make use of the transferable research skills and experience gained through undertaking a PhD. The high level analytical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills developed through doctoral research are highly valued by employers.

The Careers Service supports the collection of data from all students about what they are doing at a specified time period after they have graduated. Overview leaflets summarising the employment destinations of UK and other EU domicile doctoral students between 2008/9-2012/13 from each Department are available on our website www.bath.ac.uk/guides/what-do-bath-doctoral-graduates-do.

National information on the employment destinations of doctoral students is available through the *What do researchers do?* leaflets published on the Vitae website www.vitae.ac.uk/impact-and-evaluation/what-do-researchers-do.

You may also find it helpful to look at the infographics summarising employment data and sample job titles for each discipline www.vitae.ac.uk/impact-and-evaluation/what-do-researchers-do/career-destinations-by-discipline-infographics-1.

How can you support the career development of your doctoral students?

As a doctoral supervisor you may find that you are the first port of call for careers advice from your doctoral students, particularly those considering a research or academic career. Here are some suggestions for ways you can support doctoral researchers with their career development:

- **Be open to having conversations about future career plans**
These could be integrated into training needs analyses or progress review meetings, or take place on a more informal or ad-hoc basis. You may find that these conversations happen more in the latter stages of the PhD, but try to encourage early engagement with career planning. The Careers Service's *Career Planning timeline for doctoral students* includes suggestions of career planning activities doctoral researchers can engage in at every stage of their doctoral programme. See www.bath.ac.uk/publications/career-planning-timeline-for-postgraduate-research-students-careers-helphsheet.
- **Take a supportive, non-directive approach**
Avoid assumptions about what particular individuals may want to do. Be open to discussing career options outside of academia, even if you feel you don't have all the answers; more than 50% of doctoral researchers will move outside of academia six months after graduating. If asked give constructive and honest feedback about an individual's suitability for an academic research/teaching career.
- **Ask open questions and encourage reflection**
Questions could include: 'What are your thoughts about options for after the doctorate?'; 'What skills and experience will you need?'; 'What skills are you developing though doing a doctorate?'; 'Where could you get more information and advice?'
- **Signpost to appropriate sources of advice and support**
Signpost doctoral researchers to the Careers Service if they are interested in options outside of your area of knowledge or would benefit from more in-depth careers support. The Careers Service has extensive web resources for researchers. See www.bath.ac.uk/guides/careers-service-support-for-researchers.
- **Introduce doctoral researchers to your own internal and external networks and collaborators**
You may be able to introduce them to former supervisees, external stakeholders or collaborators who may be additional sources of career advice and information and employment opportunities.
- **Provide support and mentoring on academic career development**
Help with development of a publication strategy; involve doctoral researchers in your own grant writing and encourage them to apply for small pots of money; help facilitate teaching experience and let them observe your own teaching; encourage involvement in conferences; provide feedback on academic CVs and advice on interview preparation; share your own career pathway with them and the highlights and challenges of an academic career.
- **Encourage and facilitate a proactive approach to professional development and involvement in wider departmental and university activities**
This will help to develop non-research networks and to build transferable skills such as team working, organisation and leadership. Encourage involvement in research-related activities such as organising conferences, involvement in departmental committees, student representation or peer support, as well as opportunities to present and

communicate their research to a variety of audiences. Employers outside of academia will value a wide range of experience.

- **Encourage doctoral researchers to record their own progress in research and other activities**

Encourage self-reflection and the recording of progress and achievements. This will help with the preparation of CVs and applications as well as the development of research plans.

Additional Resources

Vitae – www.vitae.ac.uk the national researcher development organisation has a wealth of careers and professional development information and advice, particularly career stories of other researchers www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/researcher-career-stories, CV examples www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/researcher-cv-examples and the *Career-wise researcher* booklet www.vitae.ac.uk/vitae-publications/guides-briefings-and-information/the-career-wise-researcher-vitae-2013.pdf.

Jobs.ac.uk – as well as being one of the main places to look for HE academic and non-academic roles in the UK, jobs.ac.uk also have a blog and articles with careers advice, and a range of free e-books on topics including writing cover letters for research jobs and academic job interviews www.jobs.ac.uk.

Careers Service blog – we write posts on a range of careers-related topics, including many that are of specific interest to doctoral and postdoctoral researchers <http://blogs.bath.ac.uk/careers>.

Nature Jobs blog – lots of careers-related articles for scientists www.nature.com/careers.

Careers Service

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www.bath.ac.uk/guides/list-of-careers-service-publications.

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www.bath.ac.uk/careers