



THE UNIVERSITY
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INSTITUTE FOR
**ACADEMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

Career Conversations

With Dr. Lindsay Randall

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<p>Introduce your research background and previous role(s). What does your current role entail, and what are your responsibilities?</p>	<p>My research background is in social science, specifically a PhD in Anthropology focusing on politics and religion. In my current role, I work on developing supports – including trainings, online courses, workshops, etc. – for academic researchers around research ethics & integrity as well as supports for PhD supervisors in their supervisory roles.</p>
<p>How did you gain the skills, experience and CV that you needed?</p>	<p>I think my path was slightly different than some academics in that I took breaks away from academia between my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. During those breaks, I worked for third sector largely education-focused organisations in the United States, Liberia, and here in Scotland, and it was in many of those roles that I gained skills in project management and staff development. However, much of my experience in academia also transferred to this role as well! During and after my PhD, I tutored on many courses which introduced me to pedagogy – which plays a role in developing supports for staff – and I also worked during my PhD on a passion project around providing more targeted support to PhD students who embark on long-term fieldwork (which included the development of workshops around ethics and wellbeing in the field).</p>
<p>Looking back would you do anything differently?</p>	<p>I think hindsight is always 20/20! Sure, there’s things I wish I had done differently (I still sometimes dream about choosing a career path that would put me outside everyday), but I think so much of where you can go in your future depends on how you frame your experiences. It can be quite easy to pigeonhole yourself as “an academic” or “a researcher” when in reality – during my “researcher time” – I was also a project manager, workshop creator, teacher, educator, and networker. Much of the work we do as academics is multifaceted (as is the work outside of academia) and I think rather than wanting to do things differently, it’s best to look at the skills we’ve gained and the experience we’ve acquired.</p>



What is the main piece of advice that you would give anyone looking to move out of an academic research role?

That it's not "failing." I really struggled with this – and I still do sometimes – but moving outside of academia doesn't make you less accomplished or less capable and can in fact provide you with a very fulfilling and fruitful professional life where you still get to do some of the things you like most about being an academic. I still get to learn new things every day, and in this role I am actually exposed to a much more diverse and broad range of information within and about the university, which is quite exciting.

Also, don't be afraid to try something new – you acquire so many useful skills as an academic or as a researcher and you have a lot to bring to the table in other arenas.

This short text-based case study is part of the IAD's Careers provision. Video based 'Career Conversations' are also available to access, along with other careers resources and support. Visit the Career Management pages for more information.

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