



Careers in Research

Caroline Morin

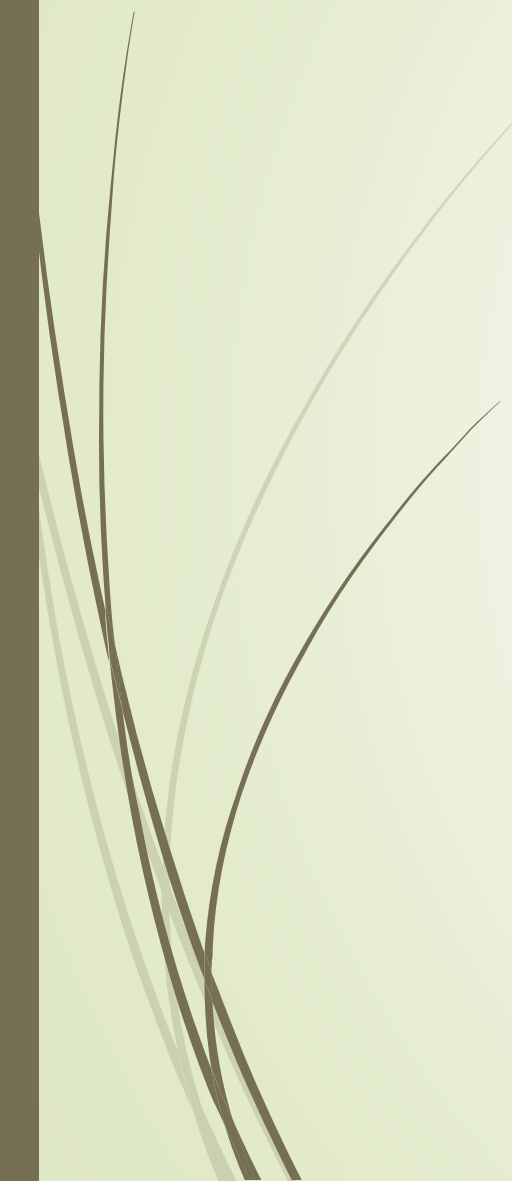
Research Associate

Ofqual

Caroline.morin@Ofqual.gov.uk



Overview

- **My career path**
 - **Current job description and some projects**
 - **Same or different skills?**
 - **How can you prepare for life after the PhD?**
 - **Tips to my younger self**
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My career path

- Undergraduate, Master and PhD at Laval University, Canada
- Research Associate at Warwick University (Psychology Department)
- ESRC grant for 3 years – Warwick University (Psychology Department)
- Cranfield University
- Redundancy
- Ofqual (Stats team)
- Ofqual (Research team)



Current job description

Key Accountabilities:

- Performing research in the field of educational assessment and qualifications.
- Working independently to manage the on-going delivery of research projects.
- Working with other teams across Ofqual to provide methodological, research and evidence based support, as required.
- Performing research on projects in collaboration with external organisations (including academic departments).
- Providing statistical and analytical support to the research team and across the Directorate (including Standards and Comparability), as required.
- Providing research input to and collaborating with members of the relevant technical advisory groups and committees.
- Critically reviewing reports produced by peers, academics and other agencies
- Contribute to the publication of reports, articles and data.
- Keeping abreast of findings from relevant research in the United Kingdom and internationally, making this available to other Directorates and groups.
- Line managing research staff and other team members, as required.
- Respond to internal and external queries about research.
- Performing any other reasonable duties as directed by line management.



Example of recent projects

- ▶ Online standardisation
 - ▶ Observation and interviews of examiners
 - ▶ Questionnaire to examiners (more than 10,000 responses)
- ▶ Alternatives to marking
 - ▶ Study comparing rank ordering and comparative judgement
 - ▶ 42 examiners took part
 - ▶ The aim is to compare the rank order and comparative judgement ranking of candidates with the one obtained when marking is used



Required skills

Similar

- ▶ Communication skills
- ▶ Creative thinking/problem solving
- ▶ Management skills
- ▶ Working independently/with others
- ▶ Data analysis
- ▶ Experiment/study design
- ▶ Critically reviewing reports

Different

- ▶ Line management
- ▶ Influencing
- ▶ Stakeholder management




Other differences

- Choice of projects and collaborators
- Deadlines/faster pace
- Impact of your work – research used to inform decisions
- More focus on research and less on administration
- Meetings
- Representing the organisation
- Work 9-5, slightly less flexible but more regular – can work from home
- Permanent (compared to contract) – with decent pension
- Different pressures



How can you prepare?

- ▶ Internship
 - ▶ Practice explaining difficult concepts/presenting in different contexts
 - ▶ Get involved in committees
 - ▶ Supervise students if you can
 - ▶ Networking/people skills
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- ▶ Make a list of your transferable skills
 - ▶ Have a look on jobs websites and look at jobs that ask for these skills
 - ▶ Any skills that you don't have that you would need to develop?
 - ▶ Have a go at putting together a non-academic cv
 - ▶ Could contact recruitment agency



Tips to my younger self

- ▶ Leaving academia is not equal to failure!
- ▶ The skills you have are wanted by employers
- ▶ Non-academic jobs can be extremely rewarding and interesting
- ▶ Non-academic jobs require very similar skills
- ▶ Learn to present your skills to people outside academia (vocabulary)
- ▶ Work is important but life outside of work is also important – Work/Life balance



Questions?