

How to Become a University Lecturer in the United Kingdom

Being a lecturer at a university in the United Kingdom means that you have a tenure-track position and are working towards a professorship. While some countries use the terms 'assistant professor' and 'associate professor' for these...

Part 1 of 4:

Completing Your Education

1.



Complete an undergraduate degree. Before completing a PhD program you will need to get into college and complete a bachelor's degree. Having a high grade point average and graduating from a highly ranked school will help your chances of getting into a PhD program, and thus getting a lecturer position.^[2]

1. If you want to go on to a graduate program after your undergrad, you should focus on being a good student and getting good grades while you are completing your bachelor's degree.

2.



Apply to a PhD program. In order to become a university lecturer in the UK, you first need to get into a PhD program. Most lecturing posts in good universities in academic subjects (including the arts, humanities, and sciences) require a PhD as a minimum requirement. To get into most PhD programs, you will need to fill out an application, write a cover letter, and supply a sample of your writing or research. In some cases you will also need to complete some sort of graduate school entrance testing, although this varies.

1. Go to the most highly rated PhD program that you can. This will vastly improve the likelihood that you get a lecturer position after graduate school.
2. Two of the key entrance exams used for PhD admission are the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). The Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) is used for a wide variety of graduate programs. The Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) is used for PhD programs in business and management.
3. Taking graduate school entrance exams is much more common in the United States, but it may be required for specific schools or specific programs elsewhere. Check with the school you are applying to to see if it is required for admission.

3.



Complete your PhD program coursework. You will likely need to dedicate at least ten years of your life to academic study. Part of your time in a PhD program is used to complete coursework, meaning classes you take with professors.^[3]

1. The number of classes of coursework you need to take for your PhD program will be determined by your specific program.

4.



Complete a dissertation or original research. A PhD program typically includes the completion of a dissertation, especially if you are working in the Humanities or Social Sciences. This project will need to demonstrate not only that you are familiar with the entire field associated with your project, but must also make a new contribution to existing knowledge in the area.

1. You do not have to develop a new drug or make a new discovery about Shakespeare, but you do have to research an original topic, come up with a new framework for thinking about your chosen area, or put together existing materials in fresh and exciting ways.

Enhancing Your Marketability



Get teaching experience. Throughout your PhD program you should try to do some teaching in addition to your course work and your own research. This could include giving guest lectures for classes in your department or getting a position as a teaching fellow or fixed-term faculty. The more of this experience you can get, the better.^[4]

1. Teaching during your graduate work will allow you to develop that skill, in addition to your skills as a researcher and a thinker.
2. If you have not gotten any teaching experience in your graduate program thus far, talk to your advisor about your desire to get that kind of experience. It may take you being proactive in order to get teaching experience, especially in graduate programs that do not emphasize teaching.

2.



Go to and present at conferences. In order to build your name and credentials in your field, it is important to start going to conferences and presenting at them. These meetings will help you build contacts and find out about new and interesting aspects of your field. Important opportunities do come out of these meetings.

1. Your academic advisor should encourage you to attend academic conferences and give papers at these conferences. In some cases, you may even be able to work with your advisor and present that work at a conference with your advisor. However, if your advisor is well-known or a big name in their field, they are less likely to have the time to do this type of collaborative work.^[5]

3.



Get your academic research published. It is becoming increasingly necessary that a PhD student applying for a job already have publications accepted or published. In most cases, this will be an article or a review in an academic journal. Having publications before you complete your PhD makes you more competitive for the limited number of lecturer positions available.^[6]

1. Having publications before you finish graduate school can be difficult, but it does show potential employers that you are serious about your academic research. It also shows them that you are likely to keep up with the demands of the tenure deadline.



4.

Do university service during your graduate program. In addition to teaching and scholarship, you should work on getting experience with university service while in graduate school. This will show that you will be an attribute to a university department and you understand that service to the institution is a key component of the job of a lecturer.

1. Service to the university can come in a wide variety of forms. A few examples include serving as the graduate student representative on hiring committees and helping organize conferences or speaking engagements at your university.



5.

Consider taking a post-doc position. In order to consolidate your teaching experience, conference experience, and to add to your publications, many PhD's take on temporary contracts as a post-doctoral

researchers or teachers. Many use this time to convert their PhD dissertation into a book or publications. Also, if you did not get teaching experience during your graduate program, you may need to consider a Post-Doc position to get that experience.^[7]

1. Once you have publications and teaching experience, it is much more likely that you will be able to get a job as a university lecturer.

Part 3 of 4:

Applying For a Position



Look for job postings. As with most jobs these days, academic lecturer positions are posted online on university or college websites and the websites of higher education organizations. Search specific university websites, as well as the websites of organizations focusing on higher education jobs in the UK.^[8]

1. There are also specialty websites that post jobs in specific academic disciplines.
2. It may be that you will hear about jobs from colleagues and supervisors as well. For instance, if you are in a PhD program you may hear about an upcoming job from a professor in your department or from other students in your program.
3. You should be willing to go to a variety of locations if you want to be a university lecturer. Limiting your job search by location is not a good idea. With the limited job openings there are, going where the jobs are is important.

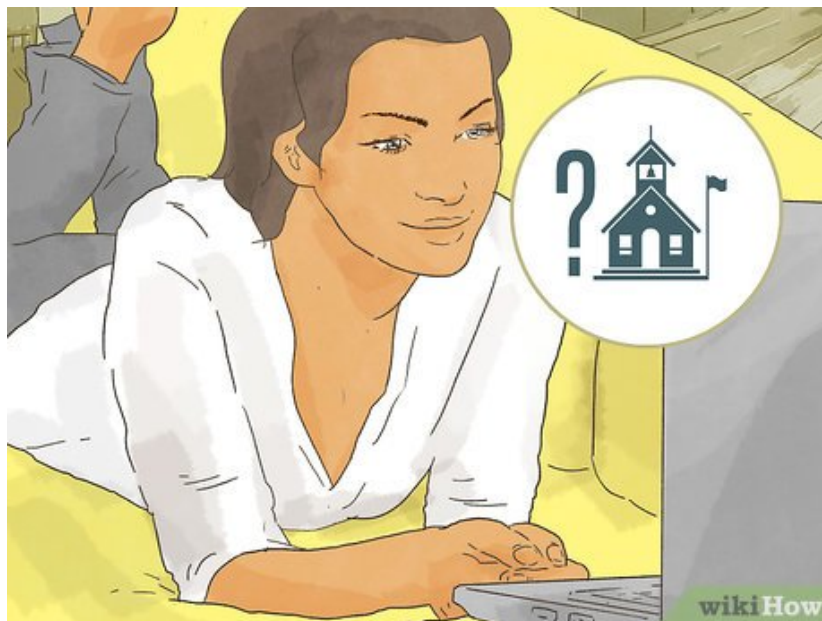
2.



Create a CV. A CV, which is short for "curriculum vitae," is basically an academic resume. It lists all of your experiences in academia and the skills you have developed there. It should be done in a clear and concise format that highlights your experience and unique attributes.^[9]

1. One of the benefits of using a CV is that it doesn't need to be changed for each position you are applying for, since it is a thorough list of all of your work and education.
2. At minimum, your CV should include sections for education, teaching experience, publications, and university service, as well as references.

3.



Do research about the school. You should find out as much as you can about the school you are hoping to teach at. This includes their overall philosophy, their financial situation, and their plans for the future.

1. This information is usually available online.
2. Look for general university or college information, information about the specific department you are hoping to join, and about the faculty already in that department.

4.



Complete and turn in an application. An academic job application will usually include a cover letter, statement of teaching philosophy, one of your publications, and other documents, in addition to your CV. When completing a job application for a lecturer position, you need to make sure to do some research about the university and its courses before you apply. You also need to read the job ad very carefully so you know exactly what they want. With the information you get in your research you can tailor your application to the needs of the institution.

1. Most job applications are done online these days. There is usually a link connected to the job posting where you will turn in all of your application components.
2. When turning in electronic documents for a job application, make sure the documents are in a format that will not allow them to be changed depending on what application is used to view them. ^[10] For instance, a PDF document is in a permanent form that will not be altered by the PDF viewer that is used to view it.

Part 4 of 4:

Getting the Job

1.



Prepare for interviews. For most lecturer positions you will need to go through several rounds of interviews before you are chosen. These may include an initial phone or video interview and then an in-person interview if you are a finalist for the job. Some things you should do while preparing for your interviews include:^[11]

1. Review what is unique about you. While doing an interview it is important to highlight what is unique and important about you. If you can get these points across, the people interviewing you are likely to understand how you could improve the program you are hoping to join.
2. Practice likely questions. While you won't be able to know exactly what your interviewers will ask, there are some common questions you can practice. These include questions about your research, your teaching experience, and your experience with academic service.

2.



Negotiate your contract. Once you have been chosen for a lecturer position, you will need to negotiate your contract. This is the first time in the process that you have some power to control the situation, but

you shouldn't get too greedy. Once the college or university gives you an initial offer, you can choose to negotiate about any part of their offer, asking for more salary, startup money, resources, or other forms of support.

1. Do some research about salaries at the university or college you are hoping to work at and keep your requests in keeping with existing salaries. In many cases, if it is a public institution, this information is public and can be found online.^[12]
2. When you go into negotiations you need to remember that the university or college is likely going to begin with a low offer with the expectation that you will try to negotiate for more. However, with the sheer number of qualified people applying for every lecturer position, remember that you can't ask for too much or they might move on to someone else.



Advance in your career. Once you have a lecturer position, you will need to work hard to keep that position and advance in your university. Most lecturer positions are permanent, however beginning lecturers are in a probationary position until they pass an evaluation after three years. There is room for advancement from lecturer to senior lecturer to full professor for lecturers, but this career advancement requires excellence in teaching, service, and research.^[13]

1. Not all lecturers will advance all the way to full professors during their careers. The position of full professor is reserved for those that have shown particularly excellent work in their scholarship, teaching, and service.
2. Advancements are usually attained when an existing position opens, when department heads nominate a lecturer for advancement, or when a lecturer applies for advancement.

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