

Dr Jenny Hallam

What is your current position?

Lecturer in Psychology, University of Derby

Could you say a bit about your career trajectory so far? How did you get to be where you are today?

I completed my PhD at Staffordshire University in 2008 and then went on to work at the University of Derby as a lecturer in 2009. When working on my PhD I was employed as a research assistant and teaching assistant. These roles gave me valuable experience of working on different types of research projects and areas of Psychology.

A lot of hard work, excellent mentoring and the teaching and research experience I gained as part of my PhD helped me secure an academic position.

When did you decide to be an academic? What was it that prompted this decision?

I really enjoyed the final year of my undergraduate degree and did not want to stop learning. This prompted me to consider postgraduate study and a career in academia. After taking a year out to travel I was lucky enough to enroll on a PhD under the supervision of Dr Helen Lee, a woman who had been instrumental in sparking my interest in critical psychology and pursuing a career in research. Working as an academic interested me as the research side continually presents fresh intellectual challenges and the teaching side allows me to work with people and inspire interest in others. So far I have been able to balance teaching and research and this has given me the opportunity to pursue my own academic interests and bring these interests and key research findings to the students I teach.

What have been the challenges so far in your career in academia?

Since becoming a mother I have found balancing my career and family life challenging. However, good time management skills, a supportive partner, family (and caffeine!) have helped me find the right balance and fulfill my roles as academic and mother.

What advice would/do you give to other female academics?

Work hard, find ways to negotiate challenges and be firm and clear in relation to your goals.

Be a role model to others. Looking back at my experiences I wouldn't be where I am today without the support and mentoring I received from inspirational female academics such as Dr Helen Lee, Professor Harriette Marshall, Dr Angie Burns and Dr Mani Das Gupta. These women demonstrated that I could achieve my goals and offered invaluable support in helping me get there.