

[Dr Louise Ashley](#)

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What attracted you to become an academic in your research field?

My research area is equality and diversity in the workplace, and I predominantly study large, multinational, professional service firms. I worked in one of these for several years as a business development specialist - this was my first career. I noticed that this and other peer group organisations had a real lack of diversity, especially (and most obviously) in terms of gender at senior levels, and ethnicity across the board. My PhD sought to understand this better, and underlined that social class also has an important impact on an individual's ability to gain access to the professions, and their subsequent career progression. I have remained interested in this area ever since, during which it has increasingly joined the government's policy agenda and become a subject of national debate.

What attracted you to work at Royal Holloway?

RHUL provided the opportunity to work with and learn from leading academics producing high quality research, a collegiate atmosphere and enjoyable teaching.

What piece of advice would you give your younger self?

Not sure I would bother - she almost certainly wouldn't have listened!