

THE ACADEMIC JOB MARKET

JUNE 2015
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THE GOOD NEWS

Over the past two years DPIR has placed people in the following jobs / postdocs:

Assistant Prof / Lecturer: LSE, UCL, Royal Holloway, Lancaster, Kings College London, Queens University Belfast, Essex, New School (NY), Swarthmore, Amsterdam, Leiden, Groningen, Hong Kong U, Toronto, Grad Institute Geneva, Universidad Catolica de Chile, UCD

Postdocs: EUI Max Weber, Zurich, Lund, Harvard Belfer, Pompeu Fabra, Tokyo, Brookings Institute, Nuffield PPRF, many Oxford and Cambridge JRFs!

WHAT TO APPLY FOR

Two main routes to academic jobs

1. POSTDOC then on to Lecturer / AP.
2. Straight into LECTURER / AP position

Not only possibilities. Some people work in think tank world and do make it back into academia. BUT requires you to publish academic work

POSTDOCS

More common in Europe than North America.
Ideally, multi-year so you have time to work before applying again.

May include teaching / service requirements. May be attached to large research project (e.g. ERC)

Application timings throughout year. But can start early (Sep / Oct): e.g. Nuffield PPRF, some JRFs, EUI Max Weber

LECTURER / AP

These are usually (potentially) permanent jobs (sometimes called tenure track). May require PhD in hand but not usually.

Will be paid better but also require teaching / service from day one.

Term-limited positions also exist - here we call them Departmental Lecturers. In US - Visiting Assistant Professors. Many positions in Germany are essentially like this.

US MODEL

Job adverts appear in July/August. First applications due as early as Sep 1st. Mad rush of applications due between Sep 15 and Oct 31.

Job talks (flyouts) begin early October and last until... well mostly December but...if a job doesn't fill there may be new flyouts in Jan through March.

Job pool: ABDs, PhDs, early assistants (mostly US)

Advertised positions usually tenure track assistant professorships (later more temporary positions)

Alleged emphasis on 'quality'

EUROPEAN MODEL

Job ads can appear whenever... For all kinds of jobs...

With completely different implications in various countries. No real comparison to 'tenure track'.

Generally look for (a) publication record, (b) completed dissertation, (c) networks (?), (d) relationship to country of application (?)

Examples: UK, Switzerland, Germany, Italy

Alleged emphasis on 'quantity'

IN COMMON

The quality / quantity issue does matter a great deal at the beginning but as careers progress this nets out. Still aim accordingly.

Networks matter for good and / or ill.

Being well prepared ahead of time is crucial.

Make sure to have your advisor / committee focused on you.

BRIEFING PACK

Slightly anal... but this is what I did.

In July I sent all my letter writers the following:

My CV, my draft cover letter, my research statement, my teaching statement, a 'progress report', a list of where I would apply (with dates), and two writing samples (plus a précis of each writing sample).

Why do this? For your sake and for the committee's

WEBSITE

You should also inform the department that you are going on the market so you can be listed as a job market candidate (email Andrew Melling)

You will then appear [here](#)

Make sure your own website is up to date and contains CV and any working papers you are happy having out there!

APPLICATIONS

Your application will likely include most of the things in your briefing pack (save list of where you are applying!)

Key items: COVER LETTER, CV, LETTERS OF REC

May get read (if you make long short list): RESEARCH STATEMENT, WRITING SAMPLES

Probably won't: TEACHING STATEMENT, TEACHING EVALS (but you never know)

SEARCH COMMITTEES

Will receive several hundred applications - 2/3 serious.

Will whittle down RAPIDLY (ten mins per file) to 'long shortlist' of maybe 20 files. These will be discussed (and hence probably read).

From these the search committee will draw up list of 5 to 8 people they are serious about.

And between three and five will be invited to interview

FLYOUTS (TRAIN-OUTS?)

So you are invited for interview, what happens next?

First, PRACTICE A JOB TALK.

Second, learn about the institution and other faculty members.

In US your trip will be over a couple of days on your own. In Europe it may be faster and will be with the OTHER candidates.

JOB TALKS

Can vary between 15 mins and 45 mins - find out what is true in your case.

Prepare slides (except maybe theorists) rule of thumb - #slides = $2/3$ #minutes.

Have a 'hummable tune' - MUST be clear what your argument is from start to end.

Use GENERAL - SPECIFIC - GENERAL framework.

Q&A: be confident but not dismissive. Be concise.

TEACHING PRESENTATIONS

Again these vary in length (and may not even happen).

You may have actual undergraduates / postgrads or faculty pretending to be them.

Be structured, clear, non-polemical, friendly.

Don't talk down to students but don't be jargony.

INTERVIEWS

In USA you will have lots of 'one-on-ones' - go to faculty member X's office and chat.

In Europe you will have formal interview with search committee.

Good opportunity to appear interested in other people's work and to talk about aspects of your research you didn't get to in job talk.

Interviews play 'social vetting' role even if they are not strictly supposed to.