

# Centre for Policing Research and Learning



## Studying Part-time for a PhD

I am sure there are many people out there considering studying for a PhD, but many have asked what it is actually like. I think the *biggy* is time, and how you find time to study and write, let alone attend to the administrative mountain a PhD sends your way! I think the secret is to research a subject you are *really really really* interested in! And to say again, *really* interested in. That is number one on the list. Number two is your academic supervisors, who you need to choose like you are choosing a life partner, no actually a mum and dad, brother or sister, best mate; all of the above. You need supervisors who are accessible too, even if only remotely. And, who will keep you on track, and you will, on occasion, go off track! Number three, how much have you done before? If you haven't done any academic study for 10 years, don't re-enter at PhD, you are bound to be taking an early bath, and several casualties with you. Ease into the learning environment. The OU Post-grad Certs are perfect for this, or do some night school stuff to make sure you really want this. Number four, make sure you can somehow blend your study with your work, even better if your work is your study, or there is an opportunity to make it your study. This is very much the case with me, where after the first year or so I could bring the value of my research into the workplace, making evidence-based changes to practice. This is ideal, and having your full-time employer supporting you is a real bonus. And finally, your family have to understand what you are about to embark on, and be supportive. Otherwise you are also going to struggle, and feel isolated. With all that out of the way, you're on! It is a truly great experience and well worth all of the aforementioned hoop jumping, I really did enjoy the learning, and still do! People involved in academic stuff are nearly all great folk, so you can be assured to gain a great deal from it personally, and at least some new life-pals. One last thing, don't forget to enjoy the journey as well as the destination!

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