

Job: Associate Professor of Microbiology

What do you do?

I work as Associate Professor for the University of Reading. At this level you can earn a good salary, but it does come with a high workload.

The job allows you to travel abroad to conferences and other laboratories. Not only is this exciting but it helps the University make teaching and research links with overseas organisations.

What is your average day like?

I attend lots of meetings with members of my own lab and other researchers in the University. I have my own office and often work alone, but I do meet a variety of different people from across the University. This can include visiting school children, undergraduate and PhD students, as well as other members of staff.

Which part of your job do you most enjoy?

I enjoy getting to travel the world; seeing crops in their natural setting, meeting new people and learning about different cultures and languages.

I met an Icelandic Professor many years ago during a laboratory visit; we now run a joint field trip in the Arctic to study how microorganisms survive in the environment.

Professor Robert Jackson



CV

- Associate Professor of Molecular Microbiology, University of Reading.
- Research Officer, University of Bath.
- Post-doctoral Research Associate, University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol.
- Post-doctoral Research Assistant, University of Oxford.
- BSPP Fellow and Honorary appointment to University of Auckland, New Zealand
- PhD in Plant Pathology, UWE, Bristol.
- BSc Applied Biological Sciences, UWE, Bristol.



When did you become interested in plant pathology?

In my final year at University I did a project on the plant pathogen *Pseudomonas syringae* and decided bacteria were really fun to work on. I stayed on to do a PhD on looking at how *P. syringae* causes disease.

I now lead a group of between 5 - 8 PhD students and other scientists who look at bacterial plant pathogens. They also study helpful bacteria; some of which increase plant growth, while others can be used to kill insect plant pests such as aphids.



What are the future challenges?

We need young people to bring in fresh ideas to fight off current and future pests and diseases.