

Heidi Radke

Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Surgery

I joined the Department of Veterinary Medicine as Clinical Surgeon in 2006, progressing to University Lecturer in 2009 and being promoted to Senior Lecturer in 2014. I am a European Specialist in Small Animal Surgery, recognised by the RCVS as a specialist in Small Animal Orthopaedics; and a Bye-Fellow and Director of Studies in Veterinary Medicine of Girton College.

In my work I enjoy the wide variety my position offers, the combination of running our busy orthopaedic service for dogs and cats, doing clinical research, and teaching. Most of my teaching is very practical: training of vets during all stages of their specialist training and hands-on teaching of final year students during their clinical orthopaedic rotation. Having studied and worked at a variety of universities in different countries myself, I'm very interested in an international outlook of student training and veterinary orthopaedics.

After graduating as a vet from the University of Munich, I was keen to broaden my horizons; I completed a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine in Zurich, moved to France, and enthusiastically worked with large and small animals, birds, small mammals and reptiles. But when I got a job in a small animal practice back in Switzerland with two excellent surgeons keen to teach, I knew I wanted to specialise in small animal orthopaedics. I profited enormously from spending a year in the United States as visiting research fellow at the University of Georgia and clinical fellow at the Universities of Florida and Texas, before completing a three-year residency training at the University of Bern.

Having met inspiring mentors along my way has definitely helped me to define my individual career goals and shape my personal approach to many aspects of my work. Here in Cambridge, I found the Vet School mentoring scheme for new academic staff beneficial for my progress, and I received very valuable advice via the senior academic promotions CV mentoring scheme.

My working hours are often long, but I love not having a 9 to 5 job and cherish the degree of autonomy the academic life gives me. To reload my batteries I like to learn new things and see new places, be surprised by contemporary art or enthuse over midcentury modernism. My family and friends are mandatory for maintaining the right balance.

When I needed time to care for a dependent the Head of the Department was very supportive providing compassionate leave, which helped me getting through these challenging times. Now, after a few very service orientated years, I'm keen to intensify my research activities and I'm confident that my Department will fully support me in this, too.