BIOS BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

Contact careers@orthoptics.org.uk
www.orthoptics.org.uk

Orthoptic Careers Case Study

Meet Fiona

Professor Fiona Rowe

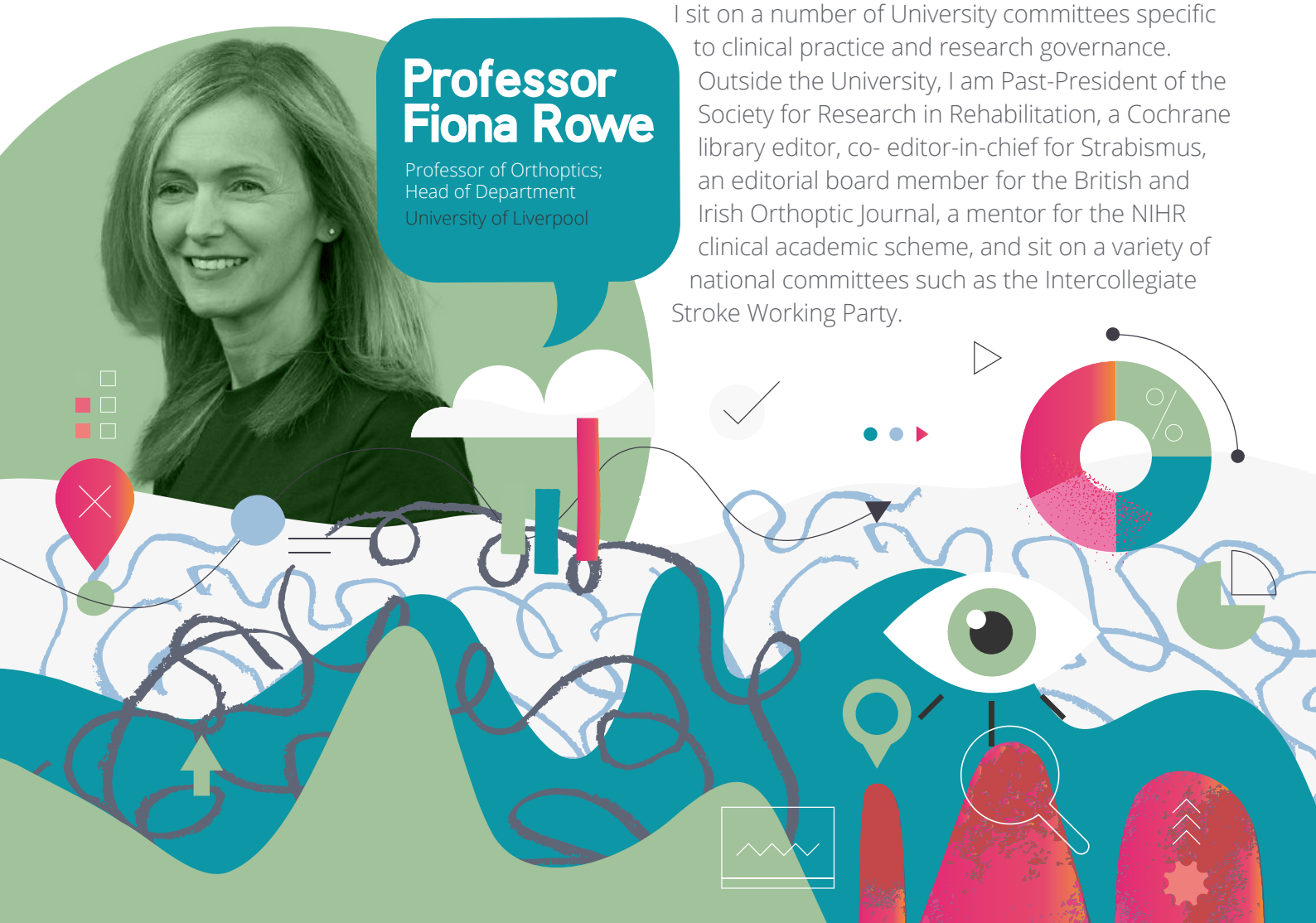
Professor of Orthoptics;
Head of Department
University of Liverpool

Why did you choose orthoptics?

I trained at Moorfields Eye Hospital where research was part of the culture and embedded within clinical practice. My first paper was written and published as a student. In every hospital I worked at after training, research and education were also important. Eventually it led me to taking up a Lecturer post at the University of Liverpool and working my way up through the system there.
I now have moved further into Leadership and Management, and I am Head of Department for Primary Care & Mental Health within our Institute of Population Health.

What is a typical day like in your current role?

There is no such thing as a typical day or week, and no set working hours. I may start the day very early with a conference call to Australia or India or finish late on a conference call to Canada or USA. If there is a deadline, that may involve 12-14 hour days for a short period. Before the pandemic, I travelled extensively within the UK as well as globally. Within the University I run a research unit, but also supervise a number of PhD projects, teach on the orthoptic and medical student programmes. I am Head of Department with overall management oversight for about 90 staff, 35 postgraduate research students and 90 clinical doctorate trainees. I sit on a number of University committees specific to clinical practice and research governance.
Outside the University, I am Past-President of the Society for Research in Rehabilitation, a Cochrane library editor, co- editor-in-chief for Strabismus, an editorial board member for the British and Irish Orthoptic Journal, a mentor for the NIHR clinical academic scheme, and sit on a variety of national committees such as the Intercollegiate Stroke Working Party.



> ***In every hospital I worked at after training, research and education were also important. Eventually it led me to taking up a Lecturer post at the University of Liverpool and working my way up through the system there.***

Define your role in 3 words?

- Complex
- Challenging
- Rewarding

What do you love the most about your role?

Seeing the success achieved through solid, supportive team work.

What is the most challenging part of your role?

Managing disengaged individuals.

What skills do you find essential for your job?

I did my teacher training in my second year after qualifying and started my PhD 3 years after qualification. I also have had formal management training and leadership training. Over the years I've had training in statistical analysis, research design, clinical trials methodology, qualitative methodology, and systematic reviews, amongst other courses. It is important to target training to the job/project at hand.

Any advice you'd like to give?

For any career, perseverance is important. Taking responsibility for your own learning and mistakes is also important. There are a lot of set-backs in a research career. However, the rewards are good, with a great sense of achievement when a project is finished, published and implemented within clinical practice.

BIOS | BRITISH AND IRISH ORTHOPTIC SOCIETY

Contact **careers@orthoptics.org.uk**
www.orthoptics.org.uk