



SULSA's Graduate Employability Masterclasses

Student Development Through GEM

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I have attended the Concept to Consumer Graduate Employability Masterclasses since my last year in high school and continue to attend them now in my third year at the University of Edinburgh where I'm studying biomedical sciences. Through attending these masterclasses, I have gained a lot of experience and an amazing insight into many different fields of work in industry, giving me a clearer idea of my goals and aspirations for a future career in the pharmaceutical field.

I got the chance to speak to employees from well-established pharmaceutical companies to learn more about their experience in the industry, as well as getting advice on how to prepare and what to expect in the workplace. All masterclasses were different and extremely engaging having practical and interactive aspects to them, often giving participants the chance to present their thoughts and findings at the end. I found that I gained different skills and knowledge from each workshop, whether it be confidence in presenting or improving my analytical skills. I have thoroughly enjoyed attending these sessions throughout the years as I have seen myself grow more as a scientist, inputting more and therefore gaining more in recent sessions. From attending the sessions, I have found contacts from companies which has enabled me to experience some amazing opportunities.

I spent time shadowing in GSK (Irvine) where I got to experience working alongside various employees, ranging from microbiologists to chemical engineers. It was amazing to see the workings across such a wide scale and also to see the importance of everyone's role within the company. As well as seeing this, I was able to learn more about GSK's significant impact to the healthcare worldwide.

I also gained experience shadowing at TC Biopharm Ltd (Motherwell) after learning about them from the graduate employability masterclasses. It was interesting to experience working in a smaller company compared to one as big as GSK. It was a completely different experience which I loved. It was interesting to see how differently each company operated as well as their different focuses and the roles undertaken by employees.

On completion of my second year at university, I was offered a summer internship working for Charles River Laboratories which again I heard about through the masterclasses. During my 12-week internship working in the Pharmacokinetics (PK) team for Charles River I gained a huge amount of experience preparing me for a future job in the industry. I was trained alongside graduates in PK as well as being taught more about the company and its many different roles. I worked alongside members of the PK team as well as being given independent roles once I was confident in completing

specific tasks. I was given the opportunity to work on site gaining insight beyond PK, working with colleagues from bioanalysis as well as study directors and more, witnessing all the roles required to put forth major studies, and seeing their huge impact in healthcare advances. It felt amazing to be a part of this process.

Now in my third year at university, I have recently started back working part-time for Charles River laboratories continuing the roles that I became trained in when doing my summer internship, enhancing this with further training and learning along the way. My experience has hugely benefited me, by exposing me to the workings of the industry and benefitting my studies at university where I can now see the real-life impacts of what I'm studying. This motivates me every day and has also influenced my course choices when moving to honours years as I found a strong passion for PK that I didn't know I had prior to this and therefore looked for courses in line with this field.

In short, the Concept to Consumer Graduate Employability Masterclasses enabled and inspired me to gain these amazing experiences in industry. I have gained confidence and lifelong skills through attending the past workshops and I will continue to attend them in the future to be further inspired and widen my horizons in the coming years.

Resources

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