

# Career in Toxicology:

## How I got here and why I love it

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I completed the Pharmacology undergraduate programme at UoL in 2018, before moving onto, and completing the MRes programme the following year.

After my studies I moved into the consumer goods industry as a toxicologist. My first job was with a large high street chain, which owns several popular cosmetic and personal care brands. Recently, I have moved jobs to work for one of the world's largest consumer goods companies whose products are used by >2.5 billion people per day!

#### What does my job entail?

Essentially, my role involves performing a risk assessment to answer a question such as "can we safely use ingredient x at y% of product z?".

To answer this question, I have to consider a number of different questions which include:

- 1) Does ingredient x have the potential to cause toxicity such as allergy and reproductive toxicity? If so, at what concentration?
- 2) When a consumer uses product z containing ingredient x at y%, what is the predicted dose that the consumer is exposed to?
- 3) Is the dose the consumer is exposed to higher or lower than the amount needed to cause toxicity? If it is lower, then how much lower? Do I have enough certainty to say that this difference is acceptable?

#### Why do I enjoy my job?

I enjoy that I get to use many of the skills I developed at university (both the in depth pharmacology knowledge as well as the more general skills like data interpretation and presentation skills).

I also love my job because if the assessment concludes that ingredient x is safe at y% in product z, it is immensely satisfying to see those products safely and successfully introduced onto the market.

But mostly I enjoy it because I get to make a difference in the toxicological community. Traditionally, in order for a chemical to have a full package of safety data i.e. we know its potential to cause allergy, reproductive toxicity (and many other types of toxicity) this requires thousands



of animal lives, costs potentially millions of pounds and can take several years. However, there has been significant investment in the development of non-animal approaches, and I am now part of a team at the forefront of improving the development, communication and legislative uptake of these approaches, which I am very proud to be a part of.

If the above sounds exciting, then a career in toxicology may be your cup of tea (or maybe your laundry powder or shampoo!). ■