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Job Title: Senior Development Analyst
Company: Lonza
Hometown: Edinburgh



I work for Lonza and have been with them for just over 2 years. At school I wanted to be a Vet but didn't quite achieve the results required to get into University. I took some time out from education and worked in retail for a few years before deciding at 23 that I was still interested in furthering my development and career. I was always interested in science at school, so I decided to apply for a chemistry degree at The University of St. Andrews.

Whilst at university, I found that I still had an interest in the medical side of Chemistry and so I started to look at routes into the pharmaceutical industry. I was able to focus my studies on Medicinal Chemistry and found the way medicines interact with the body fascinating. I took this forward into my first couple of roles in the industry where I worked in labs, ensuring the quality and safety of medicines. During my time I have worked for the NHS as well as both small and large pharmaceutical companies, all of which have led me to my current research & development role. In my current position I can apply all my learnings from education and previous employment into the job. It is very rewarding.

My day to day role generally involves planning my workload, performing experiments in the lab and analysing the results. Working in a highly regulated industry means that I must maintain a high standard of quality in my work because all the work I do may end up helping someone who is unwell in the future. Maintaining a high level of quality in your work is an essential part of working in pharma. In my opinion, the three most important skills for working in this industry are having great attention to detail, great problem-solving skills and being an effective communicator.

It is quite scary being considered a keyworker during this time. My working patterns have changed significantly, and I am acutely aware that what I do is important to people who are unwell. The world is very focused on Covid-19 right now but there are still people unwell from diseases and illnesses that were around before that and the job I do each day helps support those that are unwell from a variety of other things.

I am proud to be considered a Keyworker because it shows that the job I do makes a difference. My team and I are integral to helping maintain medicine supplies as well as researching new ways to combat disease.

My advice for school leavers looking to start an apprenticeship is that hard work, determination, and drive will go a long way. If you have an idea about what you want to do or achieve then applying yourself now will go a long way in the future. An apprenticeship is a fantastic way to learn the technical skills as well as the theoretical skills required to succeed in this industry.

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