

Case Study Profile

Placements, Internships & Volunteering

Thank you for agreeing to share your experience with us. The Careers and Employability Service invites you to answer the following questions. Please return your completed document with a professional photograph (if included) to Louisa Lawrie (louisa.lawrie1@abdn.ac.uk).

Please indicate if you would prefer us to anonymise your name or the name of the organisation for the case study (underline yes or no): YES (anonymise) / NO (not required)

About you:	
Name	Tatiana Dovgan
Degree programme	MSci Genetics with Immunology
Current year of study (e.g. third year)	5 th
Email address	t.a.dovgan@abdn.ac.uk

About your internship/placement/volunteering work	
What was your role and the name of the organisation?	Cell Line Development/ Protein Purification Scientist
Please briefly describe your employer (e.g. size of the organisation, the area you worked in and the location)	AstraZeneca – is one of the largest biopharmaceutical companies in the world. I was based in its biologics arm in Cambridge that stood at the forefront of discovering monoclonal antibody therapies using phage display, for which Sir Gregory Winter got awarded the Nobel prize in 2018. He was also the co-founder of Cambridge Antibody Technologies that eventually got incorporated into AstraZeneca, however many key people at the site where I worked were still from CAT. It was amazing to learn from those who first started making mAb therapies that went on to become “blockbuster” drugs.
How did you find out about your internship, placement or volunteering opportunity?	The placement was advertised through “Working Out” course, and I could also judge the level of projects offered by AZ by attending a poster session delivered by the previous cohort of placement students. I got some invaluable advice from the former student on what the company is looking for in its applicants, which helped me to write a “winning” covering letter.
Describe your main duties, tasks and responsibilities.	I was given a cross-functional project and worked in Cell Line Development and Protein Purification Sciences departments. The aim of the project was to use cell engineering approaches to eliminate some protein purification issues. I received a lot of training in molecular biology, cell culture, protein work and was also given a lot of freedom to feel fully in charge of my own project.
What was the highlight of your experience? Why?	Apart from the excellent training which ranged from Nature master-classes, to conferences and educational trips to Sweden, the working culture at the company exceeded all my expectations. There is that contagious feeling of lifting one another up, of teamwork, collaboration, sharing of knowledge and delivering the best science with the aim to help more patients.
What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about completing an internship, placement or volunteering in this area?	Just do it – regardless of whether you are considering an academic career or a career in the industry – an industrial placement will help you see the practical outcomes of scientific work without the stress of grades or writing up papers. You can still publish if you discover something interesting, but you will see that science is so much more than that!
Is there anything you wish you knew about before completing your internship, placement or volunteering?	All labs are different with regard to facilities, training, funding, working culture etc. I was lucky to get one of the best placements offered to science students. So do speak to the students who are just back from placements, compare the stories, choose wisely.

Additional comments	I am a mature student and have ventured to Cambridge with 2 primary school age kids who also had a fantastic year. If you wish to speak more about this aspects – I am happy to do so. From my point of view it is quite important to promote that such opportunities are not out of bounds for women with children.

CONSENT FORM: CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

The University of Aberdeen may wish to use the information you provide and photograph(s) (if provided). This information may be made publicly available in any University media including publications, University website (www.abdn.ac.uk) and social media pages. I understand that the text supplied, or extracts from it, may be edited according to house style.

We would be grateful if you could sign below to confirm that you consent to the above use:

Your name (print): _____ Tatiana Dovgan _____

Signed: _____  _____

Date: _____ 27.01.2020 _____