

# Successful Applications - Top Tips

SCI Careers Day

27 March 2018

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*“By failing to prepare you’re preparing to fail”*

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# Career Pathways

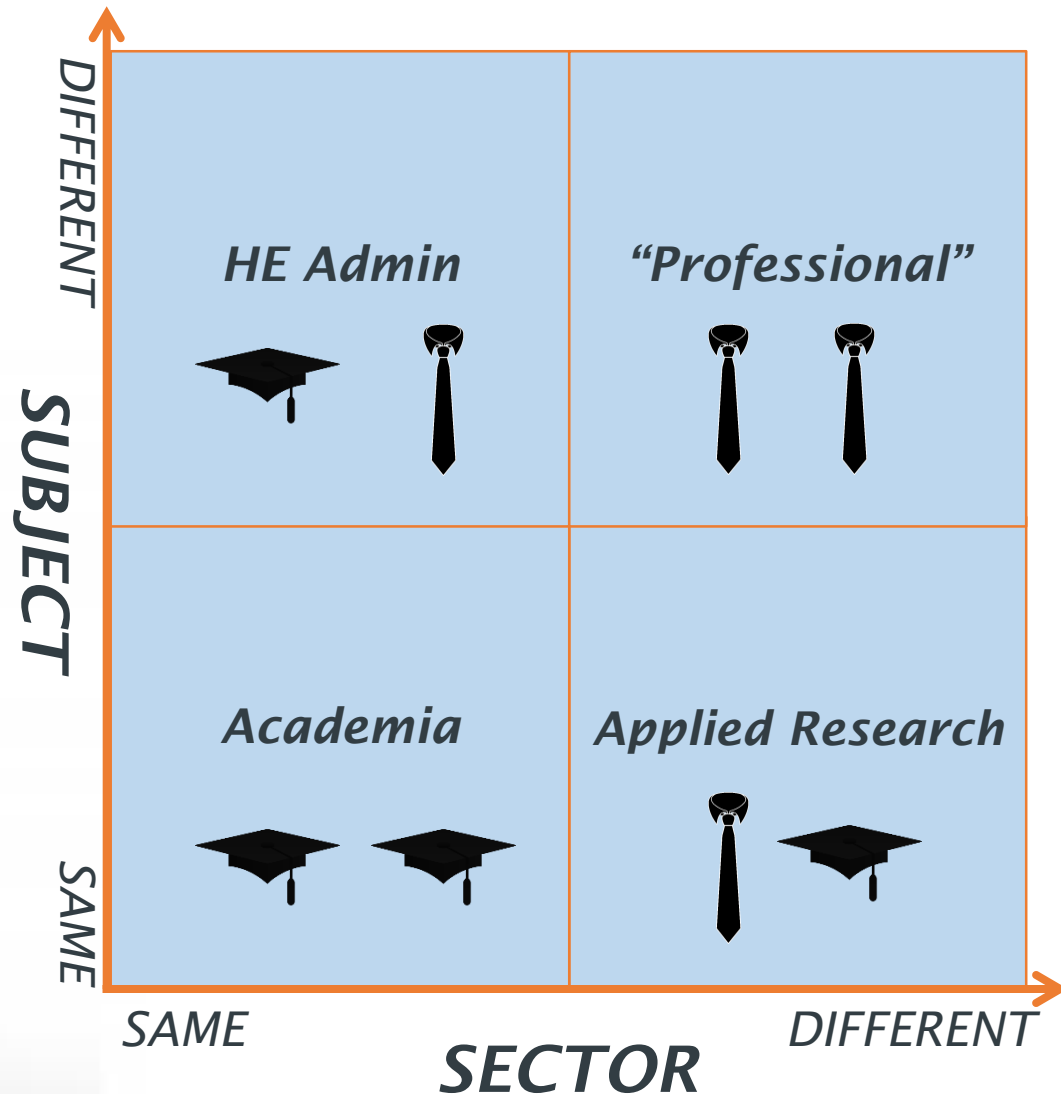
*Destinations of Leavers  
from Higher Education*

*The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education is published each summer  
and usually made available to the public via University Career Services.*

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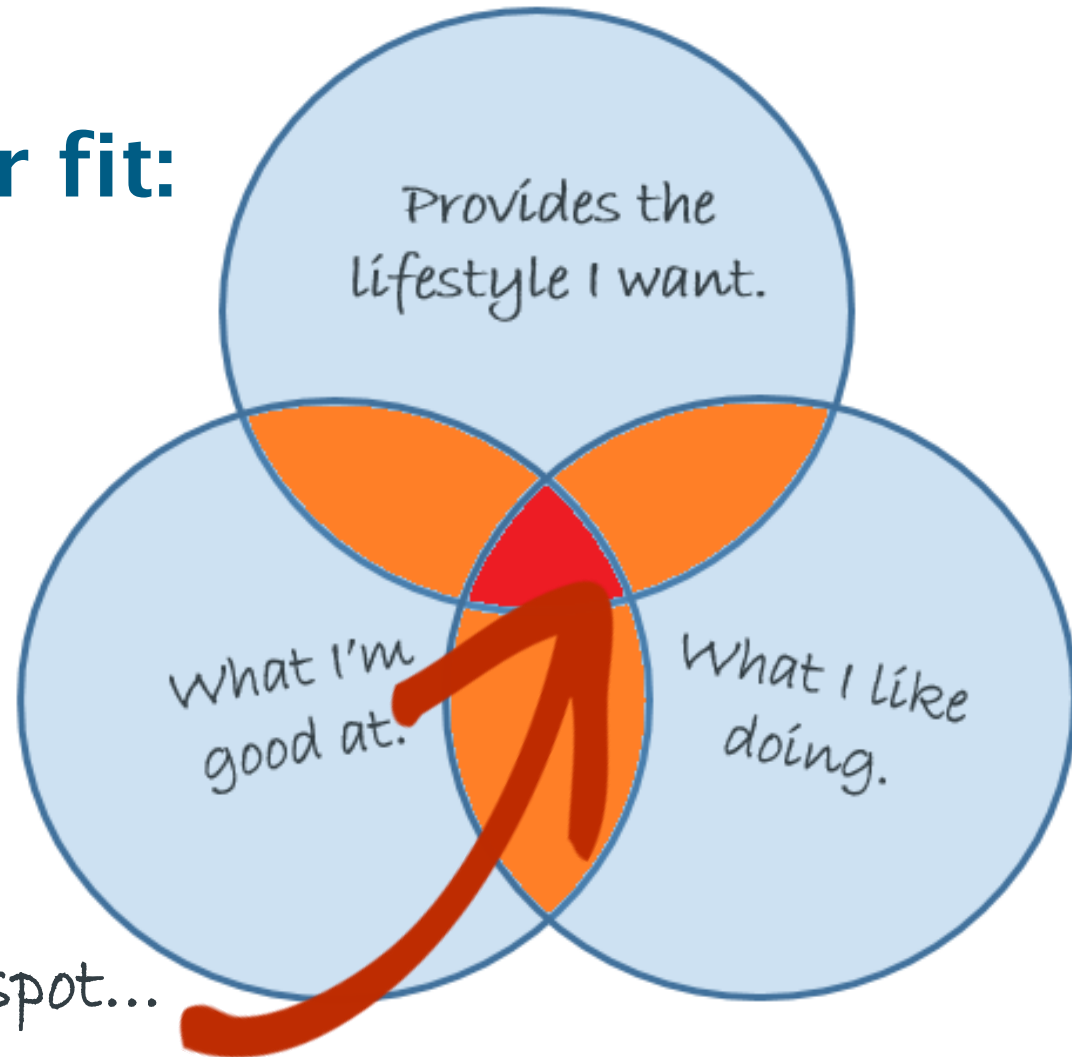
# The Known & Unknown:



# Career Planning



# Finding your fit:



Dream Job!  
The career sweet spot...



# Skills Audit:

Activity	Evidence	Skill(s)
MSci Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effectively explained, supported and defended ideas and opinions in seminars and tutorials.</li><li>• Developed good report writing skills through group and individual assignments</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verbal Communication</li><li>• Written Communication</li><li>• Group Work</li></ul>



Activity e.g. course, club/society, voluntary work etc.	Evidence Description of circumstances in which skill was demonstrated	Skill
MSci Chemistry:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Effectively explained, supported and defended ideas and opinions in seminars and tutorials.</li><li>Developed good report writing skills through group and individual assignments.</li><li>Application of various methodologies through laboratory work.</li><li>Enhanced project management and scientific communication skills through production of an independent research project.</li></ul>	Verbal Communication  Written Communication / Group Work  Research Methodologies  Project Management / Written Communication
MSci Chemistry: - Year In Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Adapted to working within an industrial team at GSK and agreed the tasks required to successfully complete experiments.</li><li>Communicated effectively using appropriate terminology within a business environment.</li><li>Evaluated risks within practical work and identified measures to control and mitigate these to acceptable tolerances.</li><li>Took on the role of sub-team co-ordinator to ensure deadlines were met and negotiated resolutions when difficulties arose with team members.</li><li>Developed presentational skills delivering monthly updates to the team.</li></ul>	Teamwork / Negotiation / Commercial Awareness  Communication Skills / Business Acumen  Analytical Appraisal / Risk Assessment  Organisation / Leadership Problem Solving  Verbal Communication
MSci Chemistry -Dissertation/ Project Module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Structured a research thesis/project.</li><li>Used MATLAB, JAVA and ChemDraw to analyse and present data.</li><li>Resolved conflicts in access to specialist equipment and resources.</li><li>Defended my thesis in an oral viva examination.</li></ul>	Planning / Organisation  Computer Literacy  Problem Solving  Verbal Communication
Gap Year volunteer project and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Planned a 4 month volunteering expedition to SE Asia.</li><li>Managed fund-raising events prior to departure.</li></ul>	Planning / Confidence  Finance
University Tennis team member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attend all training sessions alongside studies and have been included in the team for several matches.</li><li>Work out regularly to maintain my fitness levels.</li></ul>	Time Management / Teamwork  Motivation / Commitment





## Skills Audit:

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>+ve</i>	<i>-ve</i>	<i>%+ve</i>
Verbal Communication	22	16	6	73%
Written Communication	18	15	3	83%
Finance / Budgeting	6	4	2	67%
Team / Group Work	15	11	4	74%
Leadership	12	9	3	75%
Negotiation	10	7	3	70%
Project Management	16	14	2	88%



# Skills Audit:

- Communication
- Team Working
- Integrity
- Intellectual Ability
- Confidence
- Character/Personality
- Planning & Organisation
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Analysis & Decision Making
- Leadership
- Negotiation
- Time Management
- Project Management
- Problem Solving
- Computer Literacy
- Commercial Awareness
- Handling Pressure
- Creativity / Innovation
- Resilience



# Vacancy Research





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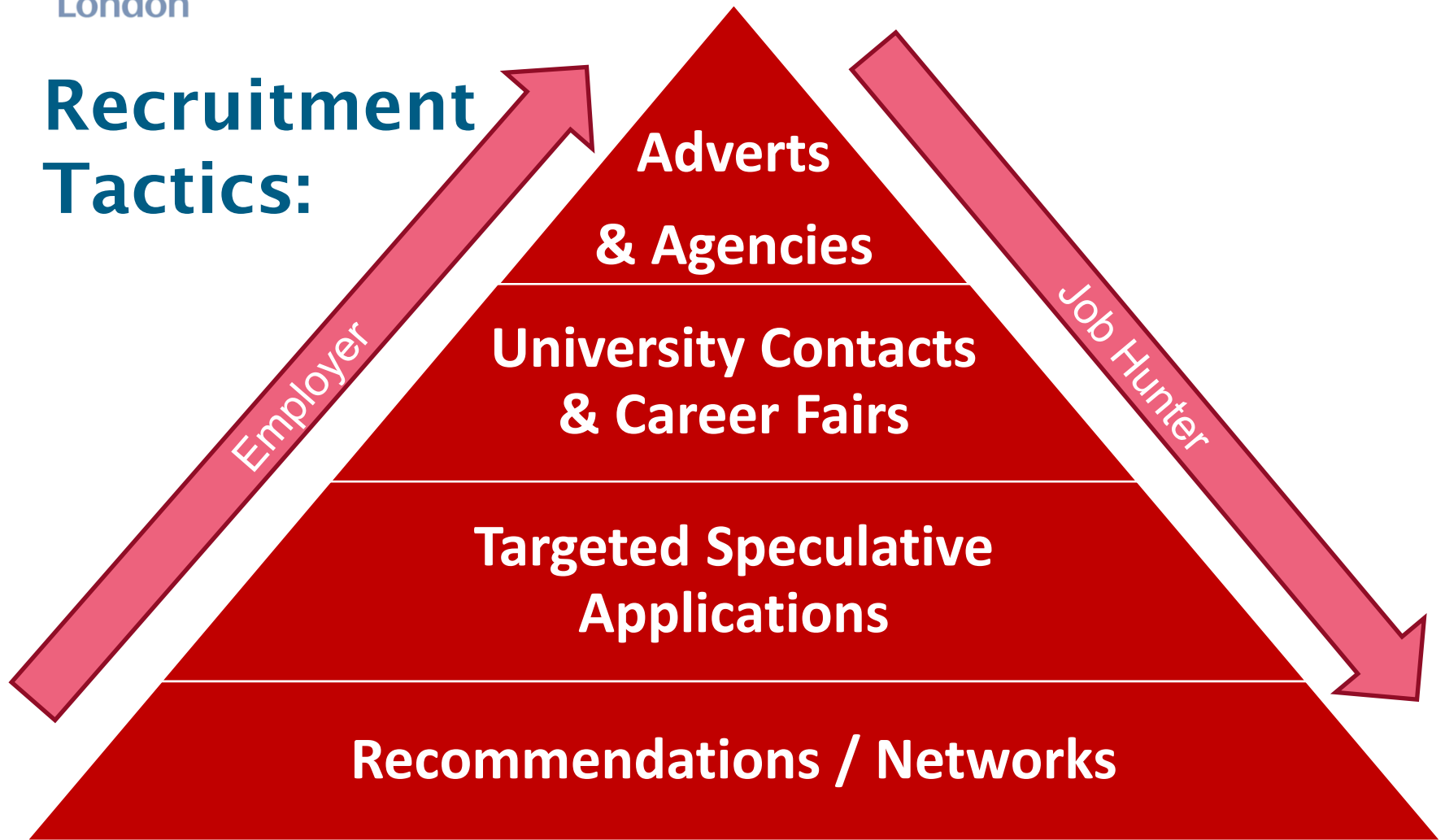
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[www.imperial.ac.uk/careers](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers)



## Recruitment Tactics:





#### R&D PhD Analytical Scientist

P&G serves nearly 5 billion people around the world with its brands. The P&G community includes operations in approximately 70 countries worldwide and has one of the strongest portfolios of trusted, quality, leadership brands, including Pampers®, Ariel®, Always®, Whisper®, Pantene®, Mach3®, Bounty®, Fairy®, Oral-B®, Olay®, Head & Shoulders®, Gillette®, Febreze® and Vicks®.

Seeking PhD level Chemist (Analytical, Physical or Organic) with experience in separation science/liquid chromatography. The individual will work in an innovative, interactive, problem solving, R&D environment developing new Fabric and Home Care products. Desire strong background in project management and analytical science with polymer separation/characterization experience a plus.

#### Job Responsibilities:

- Interface/Partner with Product Development colleagues to drive new product innovations and provide fundamental problem solving through analytical measurements
- Be responsible for their own project(s) as part of a project team including senior management
- Lead the separation science lab and build critical liquid separations capability within R&D for Fabric and Home Care
- Provide mechanistic understanding of key technologies and formulations that deliver consumer delight in Fabric & Home
- Care and develop methods/models to connect mechanistic understanding to product performance.
- Collaborate with internal/external partners to develop/validate analytical methods to ensure compliance, quality and readiness of product initiatives

#### Job Requirements:

- Experienced problem solver with a solid science background
- A leader who is able to create vision and strategy
- Strong collaborative skills and the ability to work harmoniously with diverse internal and external work groups
- Ability to communicate complex data to non-experts, write reports and produce/deliver oral presentations.

To apply please include your resume and covering letter with your application pack.





# Dissect the Job Description:

## Job Responsibilities:



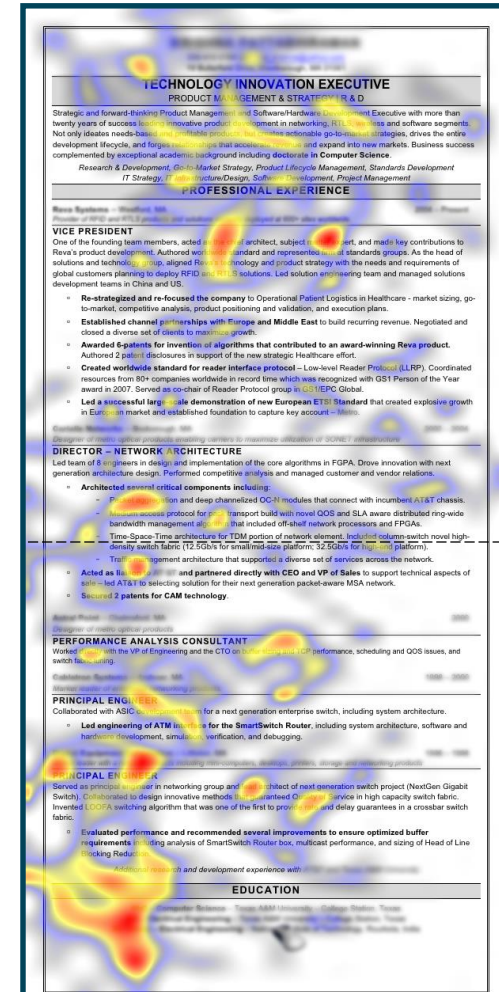
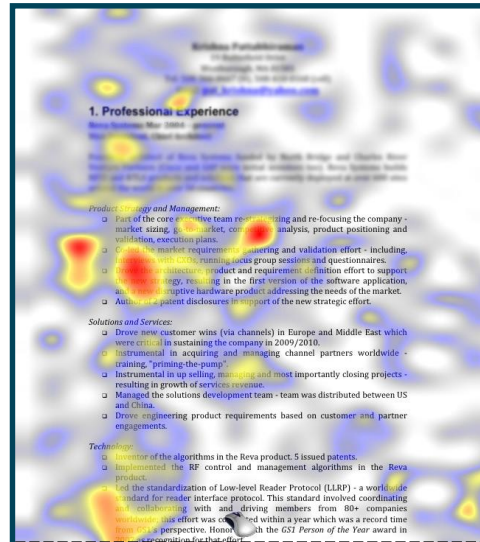


# CVs & Cover Letters





# Eye Tracking Technology:



## Personal Details

### Personal Profile (optional)

2-3 lines that sell your skills and career objectives.

### Education

Higher Education and Secondary Education. More detail should be given about your most recent studies (modules, skills developed, dissertation etc.)

Less information is required about A-Levels and GCSEs.

### Work Experience

Clearly lay out your paid/unpaid work experience.

Give details of dates, job roles and say something about the different experiences e.g. range of duties and skills acquired etc.

### Work Experience Cont.

Clearly lay out your paid/unpaid work experience.

Give details of dates, job roles and say something about the different experiences e.g. range of duties and skills acquired etc.

### Interests and Achievements

Present a total picture of yourself through the activities you have done. Have you played sports, held positions of responsibility, travelled, completed Duke of Edinburgh Award etc. Again, what skills have you gained etc.

### Relevant Additional Skills

IT? Foreign Languages? Driving Licence etc.?

### Referees

Provide 2 referees (check with them first) or state "available on request".

### Alex Student

58 Tennyson Road, London, NW9 2XB  
[Alex.Student@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:Alex.Student@imperial.ac.uk)  
+44 (0)123 456 7891

A final year MSci Chemistry student with proven project management abilities developed in both academic and extracurricular activities. Seeking a laboratory based graduate training opportunity within the chemical industries.

### Education:

2014 - 2018 **MSci Chemistry, Imperial College London**  
Current average: 67%

- Course modules covered the full range of physical, organic and inorganic chemistry, including the handling of air/moisture-sensitive compounds. Examples include:
  - Atomic Structure
  - Measurement Science
  - Molecular Architecture
  - Bio-organic Chemistry
  - Photochemistry
  - Molecular Imaging

### Technical Skills:

- Completed two data handling modules and have good practical experience in using specialist software to capture, analyse and report on numerical data.
- Competent in the use of UV-Vis, IR and NMR spectroscopies, TLC, flash chromatography, and other standard techniques.
- Experienced in both organic and inorganic synthetic chemistry, including the handling of air/moisture-sensitive compounds.
- Excellent laboratory safety and experience of completing relevant documentation.

### Group Projects:

- Regularly worked in small groups to plan and conduct over 20 laboratory experiments. These covered a wide range of areas requiring precision, when recording and reporting, as well as strict time management and substantial independent research.
- Third Year group project involved using NMR and UV absorption spectroscopies for the study of mismatched DNA. Good teamwork helped to attain the highest mark in the year (86%) for a presentation to a panel of lecturers and industry professionals.

2007 - 2014 **Passmore College, Bournemouth**  

- A Levels: Chemistry (A), Maths (A), Physics (B), Biology (B)
- GCSEs: 10 A\* - C

### Research Experience:

July-August 2017 **Research Intern - (Imperial College London)**

- Synthesised previous literature in the field of enzyme behaviour in pasteurisation.
- Prepared compounds for catalysis experiments, categorised 25 organic molecules to expand a pharmacophore library and presented research at departmental meetings.
- Developed confidence with chromatography, spectroscopy and spectrometry techniques.

### Other Employment:

- Dec 2015 - Present **John Lewis, Oxford Street, Team Leader**
- Promoted from Customer Assistant to Team Leader during summer 2016 with responsibility for training new starters in process and procedures.
  - Demonstrate strong customer service skills and attention to detail in a fast paced retail environment at the flagship store.
  - Develop an in-depth knowledge of various products.
  - Ensure excellent communication between all team members while working across several teams.

### Volunteering:

- Feb 2015 - Present **RAG, Imperial College London, Volunteer**
- Assist in organising fundraising activities of the Students' Union charitable department at Imperial College London.
  - Supported the collection of £91,527.19 for good causes during the academic year 2015/2016.
  - Responsible for securing collection permits from local authorities.
  - Arrange transport for up to 50 volunteers.

- June 2013 - June 2014 **Befriend a Child, Bournemouth, Volunteer**
- Provided friendship and support to two boys aged 9 and 11 who came from very difficult family backgrounds.
  - Assisted with homework, providing around 2-3 hours contact time each week.
  - Arranged outings to football matches and trips to the beach etc.

### Additional Skills:

- Proficient use of Microsoft Office plus experience with several programming macros.
- Familiar with ChemDraw, MySQL, MATLAB, R and Python.
- Clean driving licence.

### Interests:

- Imperial College Boat Club 1<sup>st</sup> eight. Organise five training session per week and take responsibility for the welfare and technical training of novice rowers.
- Active member of the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Imperial College Chemistry Society (ChemSoc).

References available on request.

[www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/application-process/cv](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/careers/application-process/cv)



**Alex Student**

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+44 (0)123 456 7891

**Education:**

**2014 – 2018** MSci Chemistry, Imperial College London

**Current average: 67%**

- Regularly worked in small groups to plan and conduct over 20 laboratory experiments requiring precision, when recording and reporting, as well as strict time management and substantial independent research.
- Completed two data handling modules and have good practical experience in using specialist software to capture, analyse and report on numerical data.
- Attained the highest mark in the year (86%) for a presentation made to panel of lecturers and industry professionals.

**2007 – 2014** Passmore College, Bournemouth

- A Levels: Chemistry (A), Maths (A), Physics (B), Biology (B)
- GCSEs: 10 A\* - C

**Employment:**

**Summer 2017** Research Intern (Imperial College London)

- Completed an 8 week research project within a laboratory.
- Presented research updates at regular departmental meetings.

**Dec 2015 - Present** John Lewis, Oxford Street, Team Leader

- Promoted from Customer Assistant during summer 2016.
- Demonstrate strong customer service in a fast paced retail environment.
- Develop an in-depth knowledge of products and train new staff.
- Ensure excellent communication while working across several teams.

**Volunteering:**

**Feb 2015 - Present** RAG, Imperial College London, Volunteer

- Responsible for securing street collection permits from local authorities and arranging transport for up to 50 volunteers.

**June 2013 - June 2014** Befriend a Child, Bournemouth, Volunteer

- Assisted with homework and arranged activities for two boys aged 9 and 11.

**Additional Skills:**

- Proficient use of Microsoft Office plus experience with several programming macros.

**Interests:**

- Imperial College Boat Club 1<sup>st</sup> eight. Organise five training session per week and take responsibility for the welfare and technical training of novice rowers.
- Active member of the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Imperial College Chemistry Society (ChemSoc).

**References available on request.**

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## Direct & Positive Language:

“Carried out a variety of experiments using NMR spectroscopies as part of a research project.”

“**Devised** and **conducted** a series of experiments using NMR spectroscopies as part of an independent lab research project.”



## CV Success:

1. Easy to read & navigate
2. Avoid large blocks of unbroken text
3. Make it relevant and give evidence
4. Avoid clichéd phrases
5. Use professional language/tone
6. Right length (one or two pages)
7. Proof read!

# Cover Letters:

Salutations:

Dear Sir/Madam,  
Yours faithfully,

Dear Joe Smith,  
Yours sincerely,

Signature:

Alex Student

MSci Chemistry (2014-2018)  
Imperial College London

<b>Their address</b>	<b>Your address</b>
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Dear ...</b>	
<b>Opening</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who are you, what are you applying for.</li></ul>	
<b>Why them and this opportunity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give reasons for your interest</li><li>• Highlight any particular aspects/areas of interest to you.</li><li>• Demonstrate your research and understanding of the role.</li></ul>	
<b>Why you.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give reasons why you should be considered.</li><li>• Evidence relevant skills, knowledge and experience.</li><li>• Present a positive picture and reflect the skills they seek.</li><li>• Develop themes within your CV, don't just repeat it but expand on the most relevant information found within it.</li></ul>	
<b>Thanks and closing remarks.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarise your suitability and look toward the interview.</li></ul>	
<b>Signature</b>	





# Top Tips for Cover Letters:

1. Typically no more than one page
2. Showcase relevant skills
3. Talk about the company
4. Provide evidence of experience/skills
5. Use examples and quantifiable data
6. Reflect your personality/values
7. Attention to detail is key





# Application Questions:

## Motivational:

“Why have you applied for this opportunity?”

## Competency:

“Describe a time when you were working under pressure with competing deadlines.”

## The Blank Space:

“Use this space to outline your suitability”

# Tell a Story:

- Situation

- *Set the scene. Be specific.*

20%

- Task

- *Explain the objectives/task.*

- Action

- *What did you actually do?*

60%

- Results

- *What were the results? What did you learn?*

20%



## When have you led a team? *(150 words)*

I was nominated to lead a team of 4 during our participation in the Royal Society of Chemistry Laboratory Competition in April 2017. We had 5 days to perform a variety of experiments and submit a technical report and deliver a 20 minute presentation.

I identified the strengths of individuals within the team and assigned a series of tasks that best suited each person. I set in place a series of meetings to enable team members to report back on progress and therefore allow reallocation of resources should anyone fall behind with their work. Before we commenced I ensured we had completed a variety of risk assessments and that all members of the team were clear on best practice and safe procedures.

We completed the assignment on time and were award a high 2:1 grade overall. This experience taught me the value of clear communication in meeting project deadlines.



# Application Success:

1. Read/understand the question asked and then answer it
2. Be clear and concise but give appropriate/relevant details
3. Evidence your skills/qualities
4. Showcase your research in to the job
5. Use professional language/tone
6. Proof read!





# Applying for a job...



**It's a marathon, not a sprint.**

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Imperial College  
London

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South Kensington Campus  
London SW7 2AZ

**Monday - Friday**

10:00 – 17:15

+44 (0)20 7594 8024

[careers@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:careers@imperial.ac.uk)



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