Kirsty Wood

Kirsty Wood, a Structural Biology PhD student, undertook an 8 week Summer internship at Deallus Consulting, a life science consultancy during the summer of 2017. She describes her experience below.

- **What were your aims and expectations of the internship before it began?**

  My aims were to gain experience in a consulting skill set and in particular, increase my business acumen. I also wanted to become accustomed to a more corporate environment and pace.

- **What did your role involve?**

  - Secondary research (online databases and resources)
  - Constructing records and reports on findings required by clients
  - Collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative data
  - Preparing and editing slides for client deliverables
  - Attending workshops for personal/professional development (goal setting, forecasting activity, etc.)

- **How did you find working for an SME?**

  I found the environment highly stimulating and enjoyable. The structure was very flat and I had interactions with people at all levels, all of whom were very welcoming and friendly. It was also a very sociable office and I was quickly put at ease.

  The support from my manager and everyone I encountered at Deallus was fantastic: colleagues were incredibly supportive of my learning and development. Great care was taken to ensure that I had interesting and varied tasks that were in line with my goals, especially with regards to my future. Great concern was also taken to ensure I had a good work-life balance.

- **How did the internship impact your professional and personal development?**

  I gained significant experience in the skills required for consulting but it was also a great opportunity to see the kinds of projects and tasks that arise in the job, which was most enlightening. Carrying out research in a consulting context and preparing documents to a professional level was very valuable experience, not only in preparation for my future career, but also for perspectives that helped me in writing my PhD. Business acumen in particular is something that I found useful for my career, and being efficient and streamlined in my research and writing was most valuable to writing my thesis.

  I already had a consultancy job with another company beginning the following Autumn that I happened to be offered around the time I accepted this internship, so it hasn’t happened to influence my future career plans although it has confirmed that this is a career I greatly enjoy.