

S. PhD Life Sciences, 2010

Current Roles:

- Clinical Senior Lecturer
- Honorary Consultant

Previous Role:

- Medical Doctor

Sectors:

- Health
- Higher Education

S. is a Clinical Senior Lecturer and an Honorary Consultant in Oral Medicine at Queen Mary University of London. S's time is split between clinical work at the Medical and Dental School, and translational research work with scientists at the university. These are S's first positions after completing his medical training and PhD. S's decision to pursue this career path is part of his long-term career goal of becoming a clinical academic. The route he took involved qualifying in dentistry, then medicine and he undertook a PhD in order to secure an academic post. His PhD was funded by Cancer Research UK.

While S's PhD was essential for gaining a position as Senior Lecturer, he has also been required to gain further Royal College medical and dental postgraduate qualifications. In his current role S. uses the technical skills and subject knowledge of his PhD. He also uses non-technical skills, including IT literacy, and others which his PhD helped to develop. These include methodological competencies, which S. now applies in a 'broader context, in a clinical setting and as a supervisor for PhD, master's and undergraduate students.'

When asked about the challenges he has faced since entering employment after graduation, S. tells us that he is becoming familiar with how to gain funding resources, and that he is making sure he continues in his post 'while being held to stringent assessment.' He acknowledges that it is important to 'link in and get established' before the pressure rises too far. S. recalls that his post was advertised but adds that he was approached, 'as my interest in medicine and dentistry is quite niche.'

As a student at UCL, S. took part in a range of courses for PhD students, which focused on communicating science with the public, health and safety in the lab and IT skills. Overall S. found his experience of the skills training at UCL useful.

S.'s tips for PhD students, soon to enter the jobs market, is to 'make sure you finish your thesis, speak to lots of different people before you take up (your next role) and have a back-up plan.' Reflecting on his decision to do a PhD and his subsequent career path, S. believes that it is 'definitely worth doing (a PhD).' For those who are considering the decision, S. adds that the experience has the potential for developing a range of valuable skills, but encourages you to bear in mind that there is a considerable financial commitment to make. In S.'s view, if you are motivated and enjoy your subject, it is good idea to plan ahead in terms of a year, five years and ten years ahead. 'Make sure there is scope for expansion; pick the right topic for the knowledge area and the geographical area.'

Tags:

■ Life Sciences, Health, Higher Education, Lecturer, Researcher, Medical Doctor, Academic, Non-Academic