

Look at me now

Name: Sammy Science

Age: 26

Job title: Pathologist (a doctor who diagnoses, treats and prevents diseases)

Company employed by: Local hospital

Favourite subjects at school: Biology and Chemistry

Influential toys during childhood: Science kit, Rainbow lab, Frightful first experiments



When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A scientist

Role model when growing up / who or what inspired you to become a research scientist?

My local GP – he was a very kind and caring medical professional who always took the time to get to know his patients so that he could make an accurate diagnosis.

Reason for career choice:

Such an important area of work that is having a real impact on the prevalence of disease.

Career pathway to date:

Biology, Chemistry and Maths A-levels. Degree in Medicine. Foundation training for 2 years where I specialised in pathology.

If you could have any job what would it be and how does that differ to your current role?

I am very interested in forensic pathology, after watching too many crime dramas on TV, so I may one day try a different specialist area of pathology, but a medical pathway was always for me. I love to help people but for me I don't necessarily need the patient contact – just knowing that I am helping someone, even in a small way, gives me immense job satisfaction.

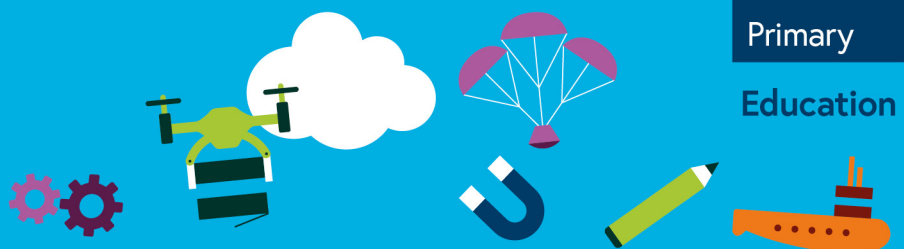
Tell us a little bit about your role. What does your typical day involve?

I work closely with healthcare scientists in the medical laboratory as well as attending clinical meetings with a range of doctors, nurses and other multi-professional staff.

What do you love about your job and what would you change?

I love the variety of my job. One morning I can be examining and talking to a range of patients, using diagnostic skills to determine what tests need to be carried out, whilst in the afternoon I can be interpreting test results and looking into a case for further investigations.

I can work long hours, including evenings and weekends so if anything, that's what I would change, but I worked hard to get here, and I love my job.



What qualifications did you take at school/college?

11 GCSEs. Biology, Chemistry and Maths A-levels.

What gives you the most job satisfaction?

Being able to diagnose a clinical condition that a consultant on the ward may have missed. The sooner we can diagnose the sooner we can treat, so it really is about saving lives.

What's the most unexpected thing about your job?

The number of different healthcare professionals who can be involved in the overall care of one patient. There are so many people working behind the scenes in hospitals that may never meet individual patients, even when they've had a small part in treating their condition.

If you could give one piece of advice to a young person who is considering a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering or maths), what would it be?

Do it! It is hugely rewarding. One day you could be sitting in the lab or analysing test results, and the next you are talking to the family of a small child who you have just managed to successfully diagnose and is now well on the road to recovery.

What are the biggest implications your work will/could have in the future?

Cancer is currently among the leading causes of death worldwide. As a pathologist, I have a key role to play in cancer management – grading and staging tumours. Hopefully we will get better at treating cancer and detecting it earlier to save lives on a global scale.

What excites you most about STEM?

STEM is everywhere, in everything and all around us! We all use it every day, even though we may be unaware of it.

