

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Consumer Healthcare

Information Interview with Global Regulatory Affairs, Regulatory Systems & Metrics Associate:

Personal Work Experience: BA Political Science; 3 years working in pharmaceutical industry; MSc in Public Health – General Stream. Beginning a career in pharmaceutical industry was almost entirely accidental; healthcare sector was not at all on radar prior to joining Novartis. Received a call from a recruiter interested in public policy and legal background, and was invited to join Novartis Consumer Health in 2013, finding a niche in Global Regulatory Affairs. Working in part with the FDA and European Medicines Agency, the field of public health and access to medications peaked interest in Global Health, resulting in pursuing an MSc at LSHTM. Upon graduating, returned to GSK to work in Regulatory Affairs with diverse international team.

Average day in the job: *“Rewarding and stimulating”* – Work is in developing a reporting and business analytics system to assess regulatory compliance of the over-the-counter division. Office in French-speaking Switzerland is mixed between Regulatory, Drug Safety, Preclinical and Clinical Pharmacology; many colleagues have 10+ years’ experience in pharmaceutical industry and have completed an MSc or short course at LSHTM. Currently heading project focused on business analytics in a “grey zone”. Hovering between quantitative and qualitative information, data outputs of regulatory affairs can help shape a global strategy towards drug submission on a per-country basis, shorten critical drug manufacturing times, assess compliance and maintain conformity with laws and regulations. Evaluates regulatory challenges faced by each country to effectively and appropriately report data to meet these demands. Result is a reporting and KPI tool which quantifies data and assists GSK in maintaining a high level of legal compliance in a highly-regulated environment. Also, spends time working with Governmental Affairs department on public health policy activities related to the role of pharma in the context of global health management.

General pieces of advice: Most valuable thing from time at LSHTM was honing skills in hard sciences and vastly widening knowledge base. Principles learned in statistics are regularly used in analysing quantitative outcomes in projects and reporting on results.

1. *“Be reasonable with your personal expectations and open to flexibility.”* Nobody leaves an MSc and immediately gets a job in the exact field or discipline they want to. Interests change, other opportunities arise and trends in global health create new and exciting opportunities. Don’t stick yourself in a box and decide that you’re never considering anything else.

2. *“Global health is not a competition.”* It’s a career, and no matter what you’re doing, you’re probably going to be contributing to reducing morbidity and mortality in some way. Fieldwork is not the be-all and end-all of global health, as there are hundreds of other ways to impact population health.

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“We want to help people do more, feel better, live longer. Today there are still millions of people without access to basic healthcare, thousands of diseases without adequate treatments and millions more people who suffer from everyday ailments. At GSK we want to change this.”

Skills considered most valuable in current role are qualitative and quantitative analytical skills, many of which LSHTM directly and indirectly helped develop. In any working environment, it is highly valuable to be able to approach a problem creatively, proposing a variety of solutions and recognising the drawbacks of each individually. Understanding how to approach these problems with an analytical mind-set removes half the problem, as solutions often present themselves once a problem is broken into parts. IT skills are also extremely important; having a strong handle on a wide variety of IT systems is critical to automating work and returning outputs.

Operating under a 70/20/10 model of 70% on-the-job experience, 20% developing relationships and 10% formal training, GSK invests in long-term development. GSK has a great graduate training program which allows recent Masters grads to do a rotation in the UK and abroad – it’s a great way to launch a career in the pharmaceutical industry.

Global headquarters in UK with significant presence in USA.

Website: <http://www.gsk.com/en-gb/careers/search-jobs-and-apply/>