

A SCIENTIST JUST LIKE ME



Jessica Kan
Trainee Healthcare Scientist
in Bioinformatics



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Hi there! I am Jessica Kan – a trainee healthcare scientist in bioinformatics



Where do I work?

I work at the NHS in the Genetics Department which carries out genetic testing for rare diseases and cancers.

What did I like doing when I was at school?

I loved maths and science as those were the subjects I was good at. I found biology interesting, particularly human biology.

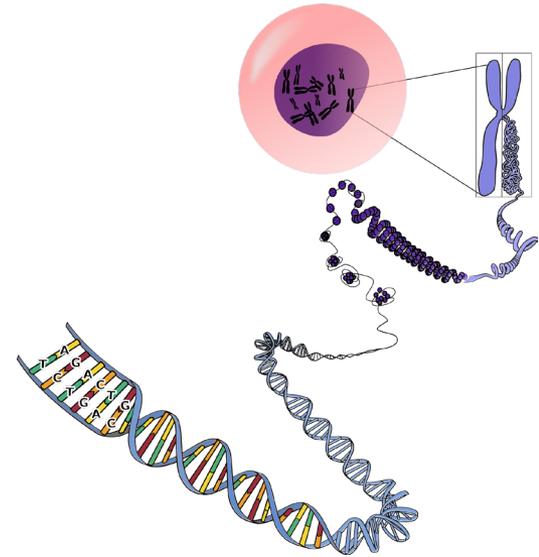
What do I like doing in my spare time?

I like cycling, doing Park Runs, singing in the work choir, volunteering at the local community fringe, doing Murdle puzzles and watching Taskmaster.

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What do I do as healthcare scientist in bioinformatics?

I collect DNA sequencing data using computers. DNA is the genetic material inside us that codes for proteins. If there is a change in our DNA, this can stop proteins being made or change how they work inside us. This can lead to diseases like cystic fibrosis.



How does what I do make the world a better place?

My job helps to develop tests for diseases caused by DNA. This means that patients can find out if they might have a genetic condition or not, and what type of genetic condition they have. Then the doctor knows what treatment to give the patient.

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What I like about my job

I like the variety of my work and the problem solving. I do a lot of computer coding for different analysis and web apps. I also have meetings and seminars and go to conferences where I can present and learn from other people.

Challenges I have faced

It's difficult to know what to do when you are young. I studied natural sciences at university but when I did a placement year in a lab I decided I didn't enjoy it. So, I switched to bioinformatics – the science of looking at complex data such as genetic codes.



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If you want to be a healthcare scientist in bioinformatics, you need:

- ✦ **to be able to solve problems** so that you can build new codes and apps, and fix any errors along the way
- ✦ **to care about patients** in the NHS
- ✦ **to be organised** as you will need to balance clinic work with university work
- ✦ **to enjoy coding** as you will need to write lots of code



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Discussion time

- ✦ Would you like to be a healthcare scientist in bioinformatics like Jessica Kan?

Why? Why not?

- ✦ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become a healthcare scientist in bioinformatics?
- ✦ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?



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Jesica Kan is a STEM ambassador. Click [here](#) to access free STEM Ambassador support and resources.

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