

Deakin University

Full name: Jessica Biesieklerski
Year graduated from Deakin: 2007
Course name: Bachelor Applied Science (Food Science & Nutrition)
(Honours)
Campus: Burwood

What is your current job and what does it entail?

I have just completed my first year of my PhD (Medicine) with the Department of Gastroenterology, Monash University, Box Hill Hospital. My research program is investigating the effects of gluten and other dietary carbohydrates as inducers of gastrointestinal symptoms in adults. Day-to-day, my research involves a variety of activities including preparing and analysing food in the laboratory, researching literature and evidence, or conducting dietary trials with volunteers.

What are the things you enjoy most about your job?

Completing a PhD is challenging, rewarding and personally satisfying. I am making a difference to scientific and medical research. I get to travel interstate and overseas whilst learning, presenting, networking and making connections with people worldwide. Other things I enjoy are being able to gain qualities of a top scientist and attributes sought after in any job description (people skills, management, media, finance, admin responsibilities, involvement with wider community etc), flexibility in my hours and being able to publish my findings.

What have been your career highlights to date?

Recently I was awarded the 2009 Australian Gastroenterology (Douglas Piper Clinical) Young Investigator Award. I have been able to present the results of my first research project interstate and overseas.

What do you intend to do in the future?

My dream is to successfully finish my PhD and then to continue this research area and compete my post-doc overseas.

How do you feel your Deakin course has helped your career - both in obtaining your current position, and in the future development of your career?

Doing my Honours initiated my passion for research, without which, I would not be doing what I am doing at the moment! I have also been fortunate enough to have also had industry experience (employed prior to beginning my PhD). Deakin set me up with the skills and knowledge required to work in a variety of positions. I was employed as a Food Technologist with SPC Ardmona in the Department Technology & Innovation, acting as a Quality Officer, Food Microbiologist, Research Officer and Nutritionist. I have also been employed by Deakin University as a Research Assistant in the School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, where I assisted with research focussing on gut mucosa and health, learning the skills of data collection and laboratory analysis.