

Joanna Pikula

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EDUCATION

BSc Biochemistry (Hons), University of Edinburgh; 2021 – 2025

- Expected First class
- Average from Years 1 – 3: 83.5%
- Dissertation: *'The role of perineuronal nets during prion disease neuropathogenesis.'*
- Relevant modules: Biomedical Sciences 2 (81, A2).
- Relevant projects: prepared and delivered a poster presentation on the structure and kinetics of A β 40 fibrils in familial Alzheimer's disease.

Year abroad exchange, University of Sydney; 2023 – 2024

- Non-compulsory third-year abroad exchange on a pass/fail basis at the University of Edinburgh
- Relevant modules: Neuroscience (86, High Distinction); Biochemistry of Human Disease (75, Distinction).

York College, York; 2018 – 2020

- A levels: Chemistry (A), Biology (A), Physics (B), Maths (B)

All Saints RC School, York; 2016 – 2018

- GCSEs: 9 GCSEs 9-4 (A*-C) including English language and English literature.
- Achieved within two years of moving to the UK with little understanding of English, demonstrating resilience, adaptability, and determination in overcoming a significant language barrier.

EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

Costa Coffee, Barista (part-time); Jul 2022 – Jul 2023

- Delivered high-quality customer service in a fast-paced shopping centre environment
- Demonstrated strong work ethic by working full-time during holiday vacations

University of Edinburgh School of Biological Sciences, Programme Student Representative; Sep 2021 – Jun 2022

- Gathered student feedback and advocated for improvements in the student experience in regular meetings with faculty
- Earned the Edinburgh Award for Leadership in Student Opportunities, developing skills in reflection, communication, time management and leadership

Hotel du Vin, Waitress (part-time); Jul 2019 – Jul 2021

- Delivered professional and courteous service across breakfast, lunch, and dinner shifts in a 90-cover bistro and through room service
- Trained new staff, coordinated with the kitchen, and supported the organisation of functions in a high-pressure environment

York College, Open Day Student Ambassador; Sep 2019 – Jun 2020

- Advised prospective students and parents on A-level programs and student life at York College
- Guided visitors around campus, answering questions and providing directions

University of York + York College + York Archeological Trust, YourDig 'Melting Pot' project participant; Nov 2018

- Conducted experiments replicating Viking cooking methods to analyze residue and fat absorption in replica pottery
- Applied A-level chemistry knowledge to investigate residue patterns and compare findings with archaeological samples

- Explored interdisciplinary applications of chemistry in archaeology, engaging in hands-on investigative archaeology and analytical science

Bar Convent, Volunteer; Mar 2017 – Jun 2019

- Assisted customers with purchases, ticket sales, and exhibition information
- Supported store operations by maintaining displays and managing inventory
- Handled cash register operations and gathered customer feedback for service and exhibition improvements

Coca-Cola Enterprises Real Business Challenge; Jan 2017

- Represented All Saints RC School in the regional finals of the Coca-Cola Enterprises' award-winning community education programme.
- Developed teamwork, leadership, communication, problem-solving, and budget management skills while collaborating on a community-focused project.

WOŚP, Social Volunteer; Jan 2016

- Collected donations to fund medical equipment and healthcare programs as part of Poland's largest charitable initiative.

Caritas Polska DWP, Social Volunteer; Sep 2014 – Jun 2016

- Supported meal preparation for a community centre serving homeless individuals in Warsaw, providing assistance to kitchen staff and ensuring efficient meal distribution
- Engaged with residents at a local care home, spending time with elderly individuals to provide companionship and support
- Contributed to a team-focused environment, collaborating with classmates to create a positive social impact

RESEARCH SKILLS

- Application of scientific theory to qualitative data
- Use of computational tools such as PyMOL for protein structure visualisation, BLAST and sequence alignment tools, and basic bioinformatics pipelines.
- Statistical analysis using GraphPad Prism, R, or Excel.
- Preparing technical reports and research presentations.
- Designing and optimising experiments and troubleshooting protocols.
- Maintaining accurate lab records, preparing reagents, and ensuring adherence to lab safety protocols.
- Protein purification and assessment of protein function using biochemical methods e.g. hybrid systems, enzyme assays
- Tissue Culture techniques including aseptic techniques, cell line maintenance and cell counting.
- Use of light microscopy and spectrophotometry (UV/Vis).
- Molecular biology techniques including DNA/RNA extraction, PCR, gel electrophoresis, Western blotting and basic genetic engineering (e.g., restriction digestion, ligation, transformation).

AWARDS

- Access Edinburgh Scholarship 2021 -
2025
- Biological Chemistry 1A Class Certificate
2022
- Edinburgh Award (Students' Association: Leadership in Student Opportunities)
2022
- All Saints RC School Commitment to Work and Effort in Year 11
2018

- All Saints RC School Departmental Award Key Stage 4 for Business Studies
2018

SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Languages: Bilingual Polish and English

IT: Knowledge in PyMol, Python, R, Excel

Volunteering: University of Edinburgh (Student Representative), York College (Open Day Student Ambassador), Bar Convent, WOŚP (social volunteer), Caritas Polska DWP (social volunteer)

Interests: Gymnastics (since 2010), Trampolining (since 2021), Solo travelling (since 2023),

Societies: University of Edinburgh Neurological Society, 93% Club, Women in STEM, Gymnastics Club, Trampolining Club