

Interview Prep Workbook

Uses example of : Dudley Dursley — Junior Chemist application (fictional)

1. The role — research notes

- Company: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) — global pharmaceutical company working on medicines and vaccines.
- The job: Junior Chemist, analytical team (Edinburgh). Hands-on lab work, quality control, method validation.
- What excites me: making medicines more accessible, and learning proper QC workflows in a supportive team.

2. Your pitch (30-second intro)

I'm Dudley Dursley, a recent Chemistry graduate from the University of Midshire. I've done a final-year project validating a method for detecting impurities in water — I cut analysis time by about 30% — and a summer in a food-testing lab logging results and preparing samples. I'm methodical, pick up procedures quickly, and I'm looking for a junior chemist role where I can keep building my analytical skills.

3. Competency questions (STAR)

Question	Situation	Task	Action	Result
Tell me about a time you worked in a team.	Final-year project meant sharing limited lab equipment with two other students.	Make sure everyone had fair access and the project stayed on schedule.	Set up a shared equipment calendar; communicated clearly; helped a teammate troubleshoot their calibration.	Project finished on time; my own analysis step ended up 30% faster.
Describe a problem you solved.	My water-impurity method kept giving inconsistent results.	Find and fix the cause.	Worked independently, tested variables, found calibration drift, re-validated the method.	Analysis time down ~30% and results became reliable.
Tell me about a time you had to learn something quickly.	Summer placement required using HPLC with no prior experience.	Get competent fast enough to support routine analyses.	Asked senior analysts, read the SOPs, practised the setups.	Within two weeks I was supporting sample prep and shadowing runs.

4. Strength-based

- What am I naturally good at? Staying organised and accurate with data.
- When do I do my best work? In a structured lab environment with clear methods to follow.
- One-line strength: "I'm at my best when there's a clear method and accuracy really matters."

5. Questions to ask them

- What does success look like in this role in the first six months?
- How is the analytical team structured, and who would I work with day to day?
- What training and development is available for someone just starting out?
- How does the team handle method validation and quality control?

6. Interview log (also see <http://gradirl.com/resources/job-tracker>)

Company	Date	What went well	What to improve
GSK	[planned]	[notes]	[notes]