

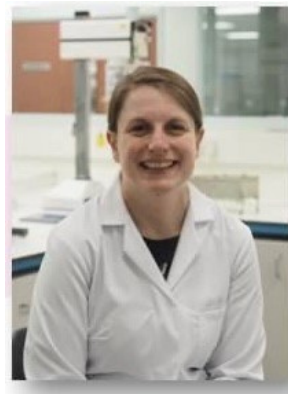
Emma Catchpole, Head of Formulation

What did you study and where?

Medical Biochemistry at the University of Leicester

Did you always love science?

I suppose I did, but without realising it. I always had an interest in understanding why and how things worked and a few of my close family either taught or had studied science, so I learnt a lot from them. Once I got to secondary school, Science and Maths were the subjects that came most naturally to me and the more I learnt, the more I developed a love for the subject. I also loved how interactive the lessons were – being able to put the theory in to practice during experiments. By the time I needed to choose A levels and a degree, science subjects (and Maths) were the only thing I considered. There is always so much to learn in science and always a new discovery to read about.



Did you ever feel adversity getting into science because of your gender?

Fortunately, not. I was lucky throughout school and university that it never appeared to be an issue, and it definitely isn't an issue in No7 Beauty Company.

How did you get into your role today? Did you always want to apply science to beauty?

To be honest, until I saw the job advert for a Formulation Technician at Boots (it was 2003, so prior to WBA and No7 Beauty Company) a career in Beauty was not something I had strongly considered. I originally thought I would work in Pharmaceutical drug development or Biomedical science, as that was more closely related to my degree. I did work in a Pathology lab for 3 months, but it was a bit repetitive for me and the world of lipsticks was a lot more appealing and glamorous. When I joined the company I started working in the colour cosmetics formulation team. I remained on that team, whilst the remit expanded, and worked in different roles in that team until 2018 before moving to skincare. I am now leading the formulation team, continuing to learn every day. I remember the very first cosmetic product I made in the lab – a pearl dipped lipstick for a No7 Christmas limited edition. I was so excited to see the finished article and from then on, I knew it was the right career choice for me. Cosmetic Science degrees are more publicised and popular than when I went to university and there is great work being done in schools to help students learn more about this career. I really wish that had been available to me when I was younger.

Why did you want to work for No7 Beauty Company?

I loved the thought of being able to apply science, whilst working in a consumer focussed organisation – being able to see our products launch in store and receiving customer feedback first hand. Turning our knowledge and discoveries in to products that consumers love is such an amazing feeling. I feel so fortunate to be able to work in such a multi-functional team and build my understanding of not just the science behind our products, but also of the No7 Beauty Company organisation and WBA.

How do you apply science to your job?

Science is applied in my job in lots of different ways. When looking at formulations, Chemistry is used to understand the interaction of raw materials and the benefits they add to a product and then we use Biology to understand the benefits that those products have on the skin. You also learn a lot about problem solving and experimental design in our roles, which are used whenever we encounter a challenge in the development process or when looking at new formulations.

What is your favourite part of your current role?

Aside from my passion for supporting the team's development, my favourite parts of the formulation role are resolving an ongoing issue and seeing new products launch. There is nothing more satisfying than finding a solution to a factory issue.

What is your favourite No7 Beauty Company product, and why?

There are lots of No7 Beauty Company products I love but my must have product is the No7 Radiance + Vitamin C Daily Brightening moisturiser. It has an amazing texture and gives my skin a real glow.

Finally, do you have any advice for girls or women who would like to get into science?

Don't let your or other's perception of science careers put you off. Half way through my degree many of my tutors would make assumptions that we would all work in research labs similar to those in university – working on one academic research project for a number of years and working in one lab space. This is an amazing career for many, but not something I could imagine myself doing. I then realised that science can be applied in so many different ways – all of my friends from university are now in such different roles to one another. There is a career to suit whichever aspects of science you most enjoy.