

# Uthpala Amarasekara

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## Personal Statement

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Specialized in Medical Molecular Genetics, and also holds a MBA. At present working as a Lecturer in Biology at the private medical faculty of Sri Lanka. Also committed for assisting clinical coordination. Having the ability to communicate effectively and successfully meet deadlines. Experience in DNA typing (forensic and non-forensic), molecular disease diagnosis of genetic disorders, infectious diseases, cell culture and cell viability testing. Able to demonstrate diverse range of laboratory, research and analytical skills. Hard working, reliable and equally proficient working as part of a team or on my own initiative.

## Education

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### **M.Sc. in Medical Molecular Genetics**

**2008 - 2009**

University of Aberdeen, UK

Commendation

Included Elements -

- Medical genetics, human population genetics
- Genetic basis of common diseases
- Immunogenetics
- Genetic techniques, data analysis and statistics
- Clinical and biochemical genetics

### **Master of Business Administration (MBA)**

**2013 - 2014**

University of Bedfordshire, UK

Commendation

Main Units-

- Strategic Management
- Executive Development
- Employee engagement
- Human Resource Development
- Comparative Human Resource Management
- Accounting for Managers
- Managing Operations
- Marketing
- Leading People in Organizations

**B.Sc. (Genetics, Microbiology, Biochemistry)****2004-2007**

Bangalore University,  
India First class

**1<sup>st</sup> year subjects included**

Mendelian Genetics and  
Biometry Cell Biology  
Cytogenetics  
Microbial Physiology and genetics  
Inorganic and organic chemistry

**2<sup>nd</sup> year**

Molecular Biology  
Genetic  
engineering  
Fundamentals of Biophysics  
Agricultural and environmental  
Microbiology Food and Dairy Microbiology  
Biomolecules  
Bioenergetics and  
metabolism Nutrition

**3<sup>rd</sup> year**

Human Genetics and Applied  
Genetics Medical Microbiology  
Immunology  
Industrial Microbiology and Microbial Technologies and Analytical Biochemistry

**Secondary Education****1990-2003**

St. Bridget's Convent  
Colombo - 07  
Sri Lanka

## Employment

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**Lecturer in Biology and Assistant Coordinator  
South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine  
October 2014 – Present**

Delivering lectures for first year medical students in small group discussions. Also responsible for organizing learning material, tutorials and coursework. Actively leads class discussions and curriculum development activities. Involved in the setup of assessments, in-class tests, control examinations and marking of results. Also provides support and guidance for students in their relevant academic work.

**Research Assistant (Voluntary)  
University of Aberdeen -UK  
April 2010 – August 2010**

I was involved in genotyping of ARMS241 gene polymorphisms. This aided me in applying my theoretical and practical knowledge and kept me up to date in the relevant field. This involved commitment, Co-ordination and accuracy.

**Research Assistant**  
**Genetech Research Institute – Sri Lanka**  
**July 2007 – July 2008**

I joined as a research intern at the Molecular Diagnostics and the School of Gene Technology (Sri Lanka). There, I was involved in molecular disease diagnosis and DNA based human identification. I have worked in different areas of genetic diagnostics. Later, I have worked with their scientists who are involved with forensic and non-forensic DNA typing. This helped me to build up a firm foundation of practical knowledge, application of scientific techniques as well as analytical skills.

## Experience in Research and Diagnostics

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- I have worked in different areas of genetic diagnostics, namely diagnosis of genetic disorders, infectious diseases and DNA typing.
- Under the supervision of Dr. Neil Fernandopulle, Genetech Institute (Sri Lanka), I was given a Short term project on canine parentage testing. Here, I developed PCR primers to amplify 12 canine STR loci and was in the process of developing allelic ladders for these STR loci. Then I obtained samples of blood and saliva from several dogs and optimised the DNA extraction protocol to ensure low-cost parentage testing could be done.
- In my course of study, I have done individual projects and practical lab reports that were based on DNA cloning, PCR, RFLP analysis, cell culture and cell viability testing. My enthusiasm for cancer genetics led me to undertake my master's research project with relevance to cancer that involved the study of drug resistance in breast cancer. In this three months research project, I tested, whether the increased proteasome activity has an impact on the resistance conferred by the breast cancer cells to the particular anti-cancer drugs, taxanes (Paclitaxel and Docetaxel). A proteasome inhibitor, Lactacystin was used to inhibit the proteasome activity in the MDA- MB-231 resistant breast cancer cell line to analyse, whether it reduces the resistance to the taxanes.

## Experience in Business and Administration

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- Presently working as an assistant clinical coordinator. It involves preparation of clinical rotations in accordance with the study plans and arrangement of payments. I act as a mediator in arranging appointments between students and clinicians in different areas of expertise, which require good communication and administrative skills. As I am working in two different fields I have the ability to work on tight schedules and manage time effectively.
- During the MBA, I was involved in a consultancy project, where, I was required to provide business solutions for an organization. During this event, I was a member of one of the winning teams that was able to demonstrate consultancy, research and business administration skills.
- I participated in projects that involved team work, entrepreneurial flair, and personal development. These enable me to develop team work skills, confidence and different ways to think and handle situations.
- After the MBA, I was selected by the Professors in the Management Practice to take part in their 2014 business consultancy project. In this three months consultancy project, I was a member of the student team of consultants, where we advised a national engineering product distributor (Anti Friction Components Ltd, Bristol, UK) on its future expansion plans. This activity exposed me to analyze business problems in real and to make solutions according to the industry level and business expectations. It also helped me to understand, how to approach situations and bring theory into practice.

## Skills

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### Laboratory Skills

- DNA extraction (chelex method, DNA extraction with promega wizard DNA purification Kit)
- RNA extraction.
- Protein extraction and purification
- Well versed in genetic techniques Polymerase chain reaction (PCR), Preparation of gels (Agarose, Polyacrylamide), Agarose Gel electrophoresis, SDS- PAGE ,RFLP analysis and DNA cloning
- Tissue culture, enzyme assays and spectrophotometry.
- Microscopy, isolation and cultivation of bacteria and fungi, and aseptic techniques.

### Communication and Problem Solving Skills

I have good command of written and spoken English. My written skills were developed by writing essays, projects, assignments and doing presentations. Communicating with colleagues and customers helped me to gain good verbal skills. Problem solving and attention to detail were developed through my academic studies and part-time work.

### IT Skills

Proficiency in Microsoft Office tools  
General IT skills

### Team Work and Organization Skills

This was an integral part throughout my school and university life, while undertaking team projects and also working part time in sales and retail industry. These have taught me perseverance, self- discipline, patience and to respect the views of others. This attributed to build up my personality.

## Conferences and Symposia

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International Symposium on Frontiers in Genetics & Biotechnology by Osmania University, Hyderabad.

## Other Interests

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I have a passion for culinary art and related activities.

## References

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### **Mr. Alstair Cumming**

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### **Dr. Iain Brown**

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### **Dr. Neil Fernandopulle**

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### **William Naylor**

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