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Chief Editor, *Nature Chemistry* at Nature Publishing Group
BSc in Chemistry and Bioorganic Chemistry, 1996
MPhil in Chemistry, 1997

> Work hard and play hard. It is a cliché, but university years will be some of the best of your life. It may not seem like it at the time, but you will never be so free of routine everyday-life commitments as you are at university.

I started my PhD degree in Chemistry at the University of Birmingham in 1996, but then my supervisor relocated his research group (including myself) to the University of California, Los Angeles in 1997, where I completed my PhD in 2001. From 2001 to 2003 I held a position as a postdoctoral researcher at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. After this I returned to UCLA where from 2003 to 2005 I was a lecturer in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and also an assistant editor for the American Chemical Society journal Organic Letters. I returned to the UK at the end of 2005 and started as an Associate Editor at the journal Nature Nanotechnology in 2006, and became a Senior Editor on the same journal in 2007. In 2008, I became the Chief Editor of Nature Chemistry and have been there ever since.

What is the best thing about what you are doing now?

I get to interact with world-leading scientists, either via e-mail or in person when I visit departments at universities or attend scientific conferences.

What was the best thing about your time as a student here?

I met people who will be close friends for life — including my wife. The curry (especially at the Sundarbon) is probably a close second.

In what way did living and studying in Birmingham live up to your expectations?

Birmingham not only provided a first-class education, but also offered all of the amenities that you would expect of one of the country's largest cities.

How did you grow as a person by coming to University? Did it change your life in any way?

Going to university made me a more confident and more out-going person. It also made me more socially aware and tolerant too.

What advice would you give to current students studying on your degree programme?

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