Food and Nutritional Sciences

Graduates in all Food Sciences and Nutrition courses are to be found within a number of sectors, mostly within the commercial, Scientific and technical, but also sometimes within the Public Sector with government departments and agencies. The majority of graduates will be found in Manufacturing, and the related areas of distribution, Sales and Marketing. Some others will work in the Environment and Agricultural sectors. Whilst others might also be found within the Health Care industry. The links below show how the sectors break down, the main graduate recruiters, the characteristics of working in the sector, and key current issues; as well as lists of job roles available in the sector.

Roles

Each job title links through to a broad job description, salary and conditions, entry requirements, typical recruiters and links to further, pre-assessed useful information.

- Food Technologist
- Food Nutritionist
- Production and Process Scientist
- Quality Manager
- Production Manager
- Higher Education Lecturer/Researcher
- Dietitian
- Health Promotion Specialist
- Environmental Health Inspector
- Marketing Account Manager
- Sales Executive
- Nutritional Therapist

Finding Opportunities

This sector of the economy has grown in recent years and the variety of products on offer has grown, so employment prospects for graduates to work in this sector are good, although vacancies are competitively sought after. Time spent researching roles and vacancies in detail and preparing suitable applications to market yourself effectively will pay off.

For some of the above roles, depending on the options taken during your degree, you will need to follow a further academic and/or professional training course: for example training as a dietitian or Environmental Health Inspector. For details of postgraduate professional training courses, and higher degrees see the relevant Professional Association’s website (see the Roles and Useful Links Sections), e.g. the Health and Care Practitioners Council’s website, and the postgraduate study section of the Prospects website. The HCPC will also provide valuable information on relevant approved course providers which you can then review for entry requirements.

Depending on the subjects taken in your course, the degree is recognised by the Association for Nutrition for registration as a professional nutritionist, and/or by the Institute of Food Sciences and Technology.

As with most occupations work experience, internships, voluntary work and work shadowing are crucial in helping you to decide not only on the work area that suits you, but also in finding employment. Should you have completed a year in industry this experience will be highly beneficial to you in both providing insights but also contacts, and will make you a competitive candidate. Looking at My Jobs Online may be useful as advertising nationally can be expensive for employers. See the Careers Centre’s information on Placements and other experience which has advice on how to go about this activity, and links to many useful vacancy sites. The close links of your department to the industry will also be useful to you, and the web links below will provide details of other opportunities. However many openings aren’t advertised so networking through contacts,
department’s alumni/ae, societies (links at the end of this sheet), LinkedIn and direct approaches to potential employers may also be profitable. Don’t neglect the possibility of approaching small organisations and companies local to your home area. Given that many vacancies and work experience opportunities are not advertised widely, you should adopt a creative job search strategy to access this hidden job market.

For vacancies in all areas of work make use of both the Prospects’ Graduate website and The Careers Centre’s on-line vacancy service, My Jobs Online.

You will find the links listed below helpful to explore opportunities and vacancies:

• New Scientist job pages of this leading science magazine.
• Foodmanjobs useful vacancy website for the food industry.
• YourFoodJob another food industry vacancy website.
• GrocerJobs for vacancies in the FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer goods sector).
• The NHS National Vacancies website The NHS national vacancies website.
• Jobs.ac.uk for opportunities in Higher Education.
• Targetjobs: Science careers pages.
• Targetjobs Searchable site for all graduate jobs.
• Indeed: a comprehensive job agency site.

Further Reading

The following links provide additional sources of information for research and exploration. Some are websites of professional organisations, whilst others include journals that provide additional background to the various areas of work, news and current issues.

• Institute of Food Science and Technology
• The largest learned Society for Nutrition in Europe includes a job site.
• Nutrition2Me - online magazine for professionals in the nutrition industry.
• Health and Care Professions Council
• HM Government’s pages on Public Health
• The Food Standards Agency’s job site.
• The Institute of Food Research with opportunities for research.
• The National Health Service Careers website.
• Professional British Dietetics Association.
• The British Dietetics Association - includes useful Q&A section on the various roles in, and differences between, Nutrition and Dietetics.
• Magazine for Dietitians.
• British Association for Applied Nutrition and Nutritional Therapy.
• The Complementary and Natural Health Council
• The Chartered Institute of Marketing
• The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health.
• The Government’s Health and Safety Executive.