



# Competencies for Food Graduate Careers

## NPD, Development or Process Role

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**Degree Course:** BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Food Science (with Professional Training)

**Place Studied:** University of Reading

**Date Graduated:** July 2022

**First Graduate Job:** NPD Process Technologist, Pilgrim's UK



### When did you first become interested in Food Science?

I've always had a passion for food and nutrition, however I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after finishing my A Levels. I studied Biology, Chemistry and German. I took a gap-year, which provided me with the perfect opportunity to think about what I wanted to do next. It was through looking at different university courses and speaking to people in the food industry that I decided I wanted to pursue a career in food and therefore study Nutrition and Food Science.

### What was Uni Study Like?

What I loved about the course at Reading University is learning how the intrinsic properties of food influence the final behaviours of food products, and how these can be manipulated to create something unique. I also really enjoyed implementing the theory into practice through completing lab work and practicals in the pilot plant. I loved our Farm to Fork module, which covered topics such as the food supply chain, food sustainability and future foods. This module inspired the title of my final year dissertation which was on the topic of environmentally sustainable diets. I also really enjoyed our composition of foods and sensory modules. My favourite assignment was my dissertation. I came up with my own title with the support of my supervisor, so it was rewarding to design the project from scratch and to see the final write up come together. We were also really fortunate at Reading in that we had a close-knit department which made it easier to make friends with our coursemates.

### What are the day-to-day routines in your job?

I don't have a specific day to day routine as my job varies significantly depending on the projects happening. I'm responsible for managing the full NPD process at site, from the feasibility stage right through to the launch. My duties can vary from running factory trials, through to creating factory specifications and to looking at packaging options. I love that my job is varied, as there is always something for me to get stuck into.

### What advice would you give to someone thinking about Food Science as a career?

Try and get some work experience within the food industry. All experience is valuable, even if the role isn't right for you. It will give you an idea of the opportunities out there and it might help you to find something you're passionate about. Don't be afraid to try things out!

This material has been developed with industry involvement to support graduates, employers and degree educators.

<https://www.ifst.org/resources/competencies-food-graduate-careers>.