

CASE

STUDY

Competencies for

Food Graduate Careers

Research or Raw Materials Technician/ Technologist



Name: Lucy Dyer

Degree Course studied: BSc (Hons) Food Science with Industrial Year

Place Studied: University of Nottingham

Date Graduated: August 2022

First Graduate Job: R&D Breakthrough Innovation Technologist, Pepsico

When did you first become interested in Food Science?

When I was 16 I heard through a family friend who worked in the industry that I could study food science at a higher level. This was not a career pathway I was aware of until this point. I did a week of work experience at Nestle both in the head offices in Gatwick and then the KitKat factory in York and I was hooked! I did Maths, Chemistry, Geography A-levels.

What was Uni Study Like?

The different learning approaches Nottingham uses were helpful to grasp different topics. Learning principles of production quality, manufacturing, microbiological testing, and factory layout from a range of Nottingham lecturers and Industry guests. This was a great way to underpin knowledge that I still use every day. I really enjoyed a module called Problem-based learning where we were faced with industry problems to solve. I enjoyed this particularly as I felt it really prepared me to go on my placement year. I was able to collate the information required methodically and come up with solutions. This was done through presentations and practical written reports.

I did a year's placement with PepsiCo in product development working on extrusion and compression popping brands. I then went on to work for PepsiCo after graduation.

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

My days are never the same, some days I may be prototyping samples, running trials, talking to suppliers about new ingredients, or doing various desk-based activities. I really enjoy the variety and the collaborative nature of the role.

My next step? An internal role as an R&D process engineer

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

Go for it! There are so many options for an exciting and diverse career.

Be curious, chat to people in the industry, they love talking about what they do.

This material has been developed with industry involvement to support graduates, employers and degree educators. <https://www.ifst.org/resources/competencies-food-graduate-careers>