



Competencies for Food Graduate Careers

Sensory Technologist



Name: Hannah Stodart

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

Place Studied: University of Nottingham

Date Graduated: July 2023

Graduate Job: Sensory Technician, McCormick & Company

When did you first become interested in Food Science?

I developed an interest in Food Science after visiting Cambridge Weight Plan as part of a Year 9 work experience day. Having spent the afternoon with the product development team, I knew I wanted to work in the food industry & started to investigate how I could get into it.

What was Uni Study Like?

I really enjoyed the variety of modules and breadth of knowledge covered, from food safety and legislation to sensory and flavour science. I was surprised how approachable and supportive the lecturers and other students were; everyone wants you to learn and succeed. Skills I developed whilst studying, such as the application of scientific knowledge, problem-solving and independent laboratory skills, have been invaluable in my early career.

My favourite task was the final year New Product Development project. This gave me the opportunity to explore different areas of the food industry, including business, marketing, designing a factory layout etc.. Having my group selected to enter the UK Ecotrophelia competition was very exciting and helped to build my confidence in presenting ideas. I also undertook a placement as a Sensory Science student at Givaudan, and was responsible for running the sensory panels and analysing data. The opportunity to undertake an independent sensory research project was fantastic. I thoroughly enjoyed my placement year and would recommend it to any student of a food science or a related degree.

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

I enjoy the daily range of activities, including sample preparation, panel training and data analysis. The sensory insights I provide, drive key decision-making processes, across a variety of areas, such as product development, process implementation and packaging. My next career goal is to further develop my skills as a sensory professional within industry and become a sensory scientist.

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

I would recommend Food Science as a career to anyone inquisitive about food. Studying Food Science offers up a wide variety of roles and great career progression in a friendly and passionate industry.

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

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