

# Professional Development

Improve your employability in the food industry!



## 01 Choosing a career that is right for you



IFST and representatives from SMEs, retailers, manufacturers, research and development, higher education institutions developed '[Competencies for Food Graduate Careers](#)' and this document explores what makes a 'great graduate for the food industry'. You can also find your ideal career pathways using the [its on-line interactive tool](#).

Tasty Careers produced a [food and drink careers map](#) and also provided [career information](#) detailing typical tasks, salary you can expect and qualifications required for different roles in the food industry, e.g. buyer, food production engineer, product developer, business analyst, etc...

You can also explore different roles shown in the career maps created by [FDF Scotland](#).

[Chilled Education](#) also provides career information including career path interview with professionals and job description for roles in chilled food industry.

## 02 Improve your skill sets



After you have explored a range of job roles, you may want to develop the key skills for the roles. Relevant work experience is a plus, but it might be difficult to find one! Ask your tutors and do your own research to see what opportunities are available to you in your area. Do not be afraid to ask questions!

Attending IFST webinars, lectures and [events](#) can be a great way to pick up new skills outside of your university work. Bringing together industry experts from a range of backgrounds, tackling a variety of subjects, IFST events and webinars are discounted or free with an IFST student membership.

Volunteering is a good way to develop soft skills, e.g. communication, teamwork, leadership skills...and also to put on your CV as proof of your desire to develop skills. You might want to be one of the IFST Student Group committee or IFST Student Representatives.

If you are interested in food product development, you might want take part in [Ecotrophelia UK](#), a national competition for the creation of eco-innovative food products. The winning UK team goes on to represent the UK at the European final. You don't necessarily need to be studying Food Science/Nutrition to join the competition!

Also check out the other IFST run competitions you can be involved in [here](#).

### 03 Networking



Networking events may sound daunting, but they can open up very exciting opportunities and introduce you to incredibly interesting people. It can be the first step to finding work experience, learning new things or even just meeting friendly peers from the industry.



Building your LinkedIn profile probably is a good start! However, a more active way to network, could be through the local branches of IFST, becoming a Student Representative or even applying to become a member of the Student Group. All these roles will see you interacting with many of the wide range of members and fellows of IFST; the leaders in the food industry.

You might also be interested in networking opportunities provided by IFST. It organises student LaunchPads, workshops and conferences regularly. LaunchPads give you the opportunity to meet with industry leaders, hear about their careers journey and pick their brains about working and finding a career in the food industry. Highlights of these events can be found on the IFST website.

### 04 CVs and Interviews



IFST hosts a lot of guidance on CV writing and interview top tips for the food industry. Part of this advice includes showcasing your knowledge of the food industry news; keeping up to date with the latest challenges and opportunities within the food sector.



You can find food news through Food Manufacture, IFT weekly newsletter, The Grocer, etc..... With an IFST membership, you can access Food Science & Technology magazine, International Journal of Food Science & Technology to learn trending topics as well as novel technology.

### 05 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)



Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the means by which professionals maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities and competencies required in their working lives. Starting to develop your skills while at university is a great start to building a CPD record; attending webinars, courses, work experience etc. all demonstrate your willingness to develop competencies that will help you stand out when you graduate.



After you had some work experiences as a food scientist, your career can be boosted with professional recognition. IFST awards Chartered Scientist and Registered Scientist status under license from the Science Council. You could be eligible for Registered Scientist once graduated, if you have completed a year in industry. These can improve your chances of promotion and show public recognition for your knowledge and experience.

Find out more about CPD, IFST Membership and Science Council registrations and how they can boost your CV [here](#).