



Competencies for Food Graduate Careers

Graduate Scheme

Name: Lucy Wilkins

Degree Course: BSc (Hons) Nutrition with Food Consumer Sciences (with Industrial Placement).

Place Studied: University of Reading

Date Graduated: Summer 2021

First Graduate Job: Commercial Management, Samworth Brothers



When did you first become interested in Food Science?

Growing up, I always had an interest in all things food-related from cooking and baking to documentaries and books but it was studying GCSE Food Technology which really ignited this and opened my eyes to the basics of Food Science. I studied Biology, Psychology and Late History. Although studying Late History may seem irrelevant to Food Science and Nutrition, this A Level taught me the skills and techniques for writing essays and debating which proved invaluable for university assignments.

What was Uni Study Like?

I loved the broad range of modules we covered at Reading University which included everything from Microbiology and Biochemistry, to Farm to Fork and Product Development, to Marketing and Sensory Science. The course also suited my learning style with a range of practical lab sessions, tutorials, and lectures whilst the assessments were a selection of coursework which included essays, online multiple-choice questions, presentations, group work and lab reports as well as exams at the end of each year. The approachability of my lecturers and personal tutor meant I never felt alone during my studies whilst knowing I could always ask for help from those around me and helped me settle in much quicker. I am most proud of our work for the Product Development module during final year which led to our team being entered into the national 2021 UK Ecotrophelia competition, where we were awarded silver, an achievement we were all super proud of!

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

The commercial role includes a variety of jobs, including everything from forecasts and budgets to range recommendations, promotional strategies, and product sell-ins as well as plenty of product sampling! The focus of my role revolves around building relationships, not only with the buying and supply chain teams of the accounts I manage, but also with our bakery teams and internal brand, category, and finance teams to ensure we are all working collaboratively to achieve our strategy.

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

Seek out as many opportunities as you can, whether it's volunteering, internships and work experience, or training and courses. This will all help in developing your understanding of what it is that excites you and ultimately what you want to pursue in your future career.

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

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