



Competencies for Food Graduate Careers

Market Research – Sensory Science



Name: Phoebe Coode

Degree Course: BSc Nutrition with Food Consumer Sciences

Place Studied: University of Reading

Date Graduated: July 2020

First Graduate Job: Recruitment Assistant, Sam-Sensory Dimensions

When did you first become interested in Food Science?

I was interested in Food Science from secondary school when I started food technology. Only at GCSE though did I start thinking about this as a career but wasn't aware at that point as to what a career in food would be, I could only think of being a food tech teacher!. At the point of choosing my A-levels I knew I wanted to study something 'foody' at university, and that I would likely need one, if not two sciences, so I based my A-levels around that. I studied Chemistry, Maths, Business Studies, Biology (AS level).

What was Uni Study Like?

I studied Nutrition with Food Consumer Sciences at Reading University. There was a wide variety of lectures and topics covered, and whilst not all of that is something I use day to day in my job now, having an awareness of how the rest of the food industry works is incredibly useful, no matter what career you end up with. At Reading there are several different food courses (Nutrition, Food Science, Food Tech, etc.), and when working on projects together, everyone has a different skillset and different angle they think of things from, much like when you go into the working world. So, this set me up nicely for working with people in different departments, who might think of things differently to me, because they are looking at it from a different angle. Sensory science and modules around consumer choice were my favourite. I did a placement and would recommend it to anyone!

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

I still work in food market research now, and my day can involve writing questionnaires about milkshakes or analysing data about a new chocolate bar that might be launched. It's always exciting having the insider knowledge about new product launches, and when you get to see them on the shelves after you've helped a client tweak and perfect a product, it's a great feeling!

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

It's such an interesting career path that can take you in so many different directions! You could start out in research and end up in the product development kitchen, so you aren't trapped on one career journey for the rest of your life, there's room to change your mind if you find something more interesting!

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

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