

Professions regulated by the FSA

Information on the professions regulated by the FSA, the applications process needed to join these professions and the other requirements to practice them.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is responsible for regulating professions that ensure food in the UK is safe.

The FSA was established in 2000 (through the [Food Standards Act 1999](#)) following several high-profile outbreaks of foodborne illness and is an independent, non-ministerial department.

Some professions are [co-regulated by the FSA alongside other Government Departments](#) or are regulated by FSA on ministers behalf:

Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC),

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA),

Department of Health (DoH)

Welsh Ministers

| Regulated Profession | Co-Regulator (England) | Co-Regulator (Wales) | Co-Regulator (Northern Ireland) |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Slaughterer in FSA approved slaughterhouses | Defra | Welsh Ministers | DAERA |
| Public Analysts | DHSC | Welsh Ministers | DoH |
| Food Analysts | DHSC | Welsh Ministers | DoH |
| Agricultural Analysts | DHSC | Welsh Ministers | DAERA |
| Food Examiners | DHSC | Welsh Ministers | DoH |

Slaughterer in FSA approved slaughterhouses

[Retained \(EU\) Regulation 1099/2009 \(Article 7\)](#) requires that killing of animals and related operations should only be carried out by individuals with the appropriate level of competence. This means that slaughter operations can only be carried out by a person holding a Certificate of Competence (CoC). [Retained \(EU\) Regulation 1099/2009](#) is still directly applicable in Northern Ireland (NI) under Annex 2 of the [Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland \(NIP\)](#).

The FSA has a legal obligation to appoint Slaughterers in England and Wales and is enabled to issue permanent and temporary Certificates of Competence. These Certificates show the types of animals on which the slaughterer may perform operations, as well as the equipment they are able to use and the types of slaughter operations they may perform.

In Northern Ireland DAERA is the competent authority for the welfare of animals at the time of killing and DAERA vets are responsible for issuing Certificates of Competence in approved slaughterhouses.

Qualifications and application process to become a Slaughterer

To be entitled to practise as a slaughterer and apply for a full Certificate of Competence the candidate must:

- complete training with an approved trainer who is accredited by the [FDQ](#)
- successfully pass the assessment and receive a qualification certificate

For more information on how to become a Slaughterer in England and Wales and how to obtain a CoC, please refer to the FSA webpage on [Slaughter licensing](#). There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications. A £25 fee to apply for a full CoC is payable to the FSA. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as a Slaughterer.

For more information on how to become a Slaughterer in Northern Ireland and how to obtain a CoC, please refer to the [DAERA Manual for Official Controls](#).

According to available information, between September 2021 to August 2022, 1552 individuals applied for the temporary CoC to become entitled to practice as a Slaughterer across England and Wales: 1066 individuals gained full CoC licences and entitlement to practise. Of those 1066 granted recognition, individuals had varying qualifications and experience as no specific experience is required to apply for entitlement to practice.

Slaughterers are not expected to record and maintain their continuous professional development (CPD) or meeting continuous education requirements.

Public Analysts

Section 27 of the [Food Safety Act \(1990\)](#), places statutory requirements on the FSA and DHSC Secretary of State in relation to the appointment of Public Analysts in England, and FSA and Welsh Ministers in Wales. In Northern Ireland, the equivalent is Article 27 of the [Food Safety Northern Ireland Order \(1991\)](#), which places statutory requirements on the FSA and Department of Health (Northern Ireland) in relation to the appointment of Public Analysts in Northern Ireland (NI).

Public Analysts are responsible for performing chemical analyses on food to ensure businesses are complying with food safety law in [England](#), [Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Qualifications needed to become a Public Analyst

To become a qualified Public Analyst in the UK you must have a Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) awarded by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

To apply for the MChemA qualification and be eligible for appointment as a Public Analyst, the candidate needs to:

- be an [Associate](#) of the RSC when they start the MChemA process. The candidate will need to be [Member](#) or [Fellow](#) of the RSC by the time they apply for Part C of the application process
- have carried out examination of food in a Public Analyst's laboratory in the UK, or other laboratory concerned with relevant food, environment, and agricultural analysis

If you do not meet the above criteria, then you are not eligible to obtain an MChemA qualification and will not be able to practise as a Public Analyst in the UK. RSC ensure degrees awarded from overseas are equivalent to UK qualifications through the [ENIC](#) (the UK national agency for international qualifications and skills). There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA.

Candidates applying for MChemA may not have all the experience required to become a Public Analyst. In this case, they may also need formal training. This could be in the form of seminars, courses, or laboratory secondments. The [Association of Public Analysts \(APA\)](#) organises training courses and publishes training guides to support MChemA candidates.

Application process to obtain the MChemA

The application process to obtain the MChemA typically takes around 4 years. Any fees incurred are payable to the RSC. [To apply](#), the candidate requires:

- an up to date CV
- an internal and an external counsellor
- a pass on Part A, Part B and Part C examinations
- a portfolio of evidence

When candidates have successfully completed the application process, the MChemA qualification will be awarded by the MChemA Examinations Board. Following the award of the MChemA and nomination by a local authority, the individual may practice as a Public Analyst. There is no further requirement or licence needed, to lawfully practise as a Public Analyst.

To become a Public Analyst in England and Wales, individuals with the MChemA are required to be [appointed by a local authority](#). To become a Public Analyst in Northern Ireland, individuals with the MChemA are required to be [appointed by a District Council](#) in Northern Ireland.

According to available information, since January 2020, 2 people were nominated to practice as a Public Analyst by a Local Authority. These individuals had an undergraduate degree and held the MChemA.

Public Analysts are expected to record and maintain their continuous professional development (CPD). The RSC offers a [free CPD recording tool](#) for members to keep track of development. Alternatively, if the Public Analyst is a member of the [APA](#), the APA CPD scheme can be used to record professional development.

Food Analysts

Under the [Food Safety Act \(1990\)](#) section 30, the [Food Safety \(Sampling and Qualifications\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) and the [Food Safety \(Sampling and Qualifications\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2013](#), the FSA and DHSC Secretary of State regulates Food Analysts (FAs) for England, and FSA and Welsh Ministers in Wales. In Northern Ireland, the equivalent is [the Food Safety Order \(1991\)](#) Section 30 and the [Food Safety \(Sampling and Qualifications\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2013](#), the FSA and Department of Health (Northern Ireland) regulates FAs in Northern Ireland.

FAs are responsible for examining food as part of official controls to ensure businesses are complying with food safety law in [England](#), [Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Qualifications and application process to become a Food Analyst

To become a qualified Food Analyst in the UK, you must possess a Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) awarded by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

For more information on how to apply for the MChemA qualification and be eligible for appointment as a Food Analyst, please refer to [qualifications and application process needed to become a Public Analyst](#) outlined above. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA.

When candidates have successfully completed the application process, the MChemA qualification will be awarded by the MChemA Examinations Board. Following the award of the MChemA, the individual may practice as a Food Analyst. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as a Food Analyst.

According to available information, since January 2020 no new individuals have been granted recognition to practice as a Food Analyst by the FSA.

Food Analysts are expected to record and maintain their continuous professional development (CPD). The RSC offers a [free CPD recording tool](#) for members to keep track of development. Alternatively, if the Food Analyst is a member of the [APA](#), the APA CPD scheme can be used to record professional development.

Agricultural Analysts

Under Section 67(3) of the [Agriculture Act 1970](#), and Section 14 of [The Animal Feed \(Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement\) Regulations 2015](#) the FSA and DHSC Secretary of State regulates Agricultural Analysts (AAs) for England, and FSA and Welsh Ministers in Wales. Under [the Animal Feed \(Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#) the FSA and Department of Health (Northern Ireland) regulates AAs in Northern Ireland.

Agricultural Analysts are responsible for performing chemical analyses to examine food to ensure businesses are complying with Section 14 of The Animal Feed (Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement) Regulations 2015 in [England](#), [Wales](#), and the [Animal Feed \(Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2016 in Northern Ireland](#). Scotland follows the [Feed \(Sampling and Analysis and Specified Undesirable Substances\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2010](#).

Qualifications and application process to become an Agricultural Analyst

To become a qualified Agricultural Analyst, you must possess:

- a Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) or chartered Chemist status awarded by the RSC
- have practical experience of examination of feed, attested by a practising Agricultural Analyst

Route A: Royal Society of Chemistry, Mastership of Chemical Analysis

To apply for the MChemA qualification and be eligible for appointment as an Agricultural Analyst, please refer to the [qualifications and application process needed to become a Public Analyst](#) outlined above. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA.

When candidates have successfully completed the application process, the MChemA qualification will be awarded by the MChemA Examinations Board. In addition to the MChemA, candidates must have carried out practical examinations of feed, attested by a practicing Agricultural Analyst,

and be nominated by a local authority, before the individual may practice as an Agricultural Analyst. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as an Agricultural Analyst.

Route B: Royal Society of Chemistry, Chartered Chemist status

To apply for [Chartered Chemist status \(CChem\)](#) and be eligible for appointment as an Agricultural Analyst, the candidate needs to:

- be a [Member](#) or [Fellow](#) of the RSC
- possess an RSC accredited master's level degree in chemical sciences or equivalent knowledge through other study and work experience.
- demonstrate advanced skills and knowledge in chemical sciences used in current role
- be committed to continuing professional development

To apply, the candidate requires:

- an up-to-date CV a mentor to help the candidate with career development
- a referee to verify the candidate's evidence as accurate. The referee can be the same person as the mentor

If candidates do not meet the above criteria, then they are not eligible to obtain Chartered Chemist Status and will not be able to practise as an Agricultural Analyst in the UK. This is also the case for individuals with qualifications from overseas. RSC ensure degrees awarded from overseas are equivalent to UK qualifications through the [ENIC](#).

When candidates have successfully completed all aspects of the application process the qualification will be awarded by the RSC. In addition, candidates must have carried out practical examinations of feed, attested by a practising Agricultural Analyst, before they are entitled to practise as an Agricultural Analyst.

According to available information, since January 2020, 1 person was nominated to practice as an Agricultural Analyst by a Local Authority. This individual had an undergraduate degree and were awarded the MChemA.

Agricultural Analysts are expected to record and maintain their continuous professional development (CPD). The RSC offers a [free CPD recording tool](#) for members to keep track of development. Alternatively, Agricultural Analyst is a member of the [APA](#), the APA CPD scheme can be used to record professional development.

Food Examiners

Under the [Food Safety Act \(1990\)](#) section 30 and the [Food Safety \(Sampling and Qualifications\) Regulations 2013](#), the FSA and DHSC Secretary of State regulates Food Examiners (FEs) for England, and FSA and Welsh Ministers in Wales. Under the [Food Safety Order \(1991\)](#) Section 30 and the [Food Safety \(Sampling and Qualifications\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2013](#), the FSA and Department of Health (Northern Ireland) regulates FEs in Northern Ireland.

Food examiners are responsible for performing microbiological analyses to examine food to ensure businesses are complying with food safety law in [England](#), [Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Qualifications and application process to become a Food Examiner

To become a qualified Food Examiner, you must:
have qualified as a food assessor before 5th April 2013, when the Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations 2013 (for [England](#), [Wales](#), and [Northern Ireland](#)) came into effect. If you qualified as a food assessor after 5th April 2013, you must meet the following criteria:
Possess one of the qualifications listed below:

- a first-class degree (with honours) in microbiology
- a degree of Master of Science, provided that
- a Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) awarded by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).
- a Fellowship of the Institute of Biomedical Sciences (IBMS) gained after passing the Higher Specialist Diploma examination in medical microbiology set by the IBMS.
- fellowship or Membership of the Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST)
- Candidates must also have carried out examination of food for at least 3 years in total in an appropriate laboratory as listed Schedule 2 of Food Safety (Sampling and Qualifications) Regulations 2013 (for [England](#) and [Wales](#)). In Northern Ireland, it is Schedule 2 of the [Food Safety \(Sampling and Qualifications\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2013](#). Time spent in a laboratory as an undergraduate does not count towards this requirement.

If you do not meet the above criteria, then you will not be able to practice as a Food Examiner in the UK. This is also the case for individuals with qualifications from overseas.

Route A: Degree in microbiology or Master of Science

To be eligible to practise as a Food Examiner, the candidate must have either:

- a first-class degree (with honours) in microbiology
- a Master of Science, in which at least one examination paper was in microbiology and the degree was awarded following an examination rather than a thesis

Degrees must be awarded by a body empowered to award degrees in the UK (in compliance with Section 214 of Education Reform Act 1988) or a university in a Member State of the European Union (EU).

In addition to the degree, candidates must also have carried out examination of food for at least 3 years in total in an appropriate laboratory before the individual may practice as a Food Examiner. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as a FE.

Route B: Royal Society of Chemistry, Mastership of Chemical Analysis

To apply for the MChemA qualification and be eligible for appointment as an Food Examiner, please refer to the [qualifications and application process needed to become a Public Analyst](#) outlined above. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA.

When candidates have successfully completed the application process, the MChemA qualification will be awarded by the MChemA Examinations Board. In addition to the MChemA, candidates must have carried out practical examination of food in an appropriate laboratory before the individual may practice as a Food Examiner. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as an FE.

Route C: Institute of Biological Science, Fellowship and Higher Specialist Diploma

To be eligible for appointment as a Food examiner through the Fellowship of the IBMS route, the candidate must hold an [IBMS Higher Specialist Diploma \(HSD\)](#) in medical microbiology. Fees incurred for undertaking the HSD are payable to the IBMS.

To be eligible to undertake the HSD, the candidate must be:

- registered to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- possess IBMS membership to Member or Fellow level throughout the application process

Candidates will be assessed in two parts:

Part A

Portfolio of Experiential Learning which includes:

- personal professional profile
- case study and managerial report
- two essays based on [titles published on the IBMS HSD website](#)
- copy of oral PowerPoint presentation, with notes and feedback
- reflective statement

Part B

Written Examinations consisting of 4 examination papers

- generic Essay
- discipline Specific Short Answer Questions
- discipline Specific Essay Questions
- discipline Specific Case Studies

The [IBMS hosts Candidate Preparation events](#) for those considering or undertaking the HSD. Events include presentations on completing the portfolio, examination techniques and workshops with examiners.

When candidates have successfully completed the IBMS HSD application process the qualification will awarded by the Examinations Board. The IBMS HSD holder may then apply for [IBMS Fellowship](#).

Candidates must also have carried out examination of food for at least 3 years in total in an appropriate laboratory before the individual may practice as a Food Examiner. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as a FE.

Route D: Institute of Food Science and Technology, Membership and Fellowship (IFST)

To qualify for [Membership at IFST](#), the candidate must have either:

- post-secondary school qualification such as a foundation degree, undergraduate degree, or postgraduate degree (PhD or MSc) in a relevant subject (for example food science/ technology, or other science, technology, and engineering subjects)
- relevant experience demonstrating the continuous development of knowledge and skills through a wide range of employment within the food science and technology industry

To apply for Membership at IFST, the candidate will need to provide a portfolio of evidence

- application form (if not already an IFST member)
- details of one referee
- current CV copy of highest Qualification, for example degree certificate

Fees incurred for applying as a Member of IFST are payable to the IFST. In addition to IFST Membership, candidates must also have carried out examination of food for at least 3 years in total in an appropriate laboratory.

Candidates must also have carried out examination of food for at least 3 years in total in an appropriate laboratory before the individual may practice as a Food Examiner. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as a FE.

To qualify for [Fellowship at IFST](#), the candidate must

- meet the requirements for Membership at IFST
- have at least 5 years of senior experience
- be able to demonstrate important achievements in relation to food science

To apply for Fellowship, the candidate will need to provide a portfolio of evidence

- fellowship application form
- two referees
- current CV copy of highest qualification, for example degree certificate

Candidates must also have carried out examination of food for at least 3 years in total in an appropriate laboratory before the individual may practice as a Food Examiner. There is no alternative process for those with overseas qualifications and there are no fees payable to the FSA. There is no further requirement or licence needed to lawfully practise as a FE.

According to available information, since January 2020 no individuals have been granted recognition to practice as a FE by the FSA. Previously, individuals have been granted recognition to practice through the Degree in Microbiology or MChemA routes.

Food Examiners are expected to record and maintain their continuous professional development (CPD). The [RSC](#), the [IFST](#) and the [IBMS](#) offers a free CPD recording tool for members to keep track of development.