

PLACEMENT SPECIFICATION

Title Student Placement, Public Health Nutrition (Safety)

Reports to Manager, Public Health Nutrition Safety, Food Science & Standards

Job environment

As Ireland's independent regulator and the central competent authority for the enforcement of food safety legislation, the principal function of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, is to protect consumers' health and interests by building a culture of food safety, improving food safety within a risk analysis framework, leading a robust food safety control system and continuing to drive organisational excellence. We are a statutory, independent and science-based body, dedicated to protecting public health and consumer interests in the area of food safety and hygiene.

Placement details

- This is a 12-month student placement (June 2026 – June 2027) and as such, students applying must be available for the full placement duration.
- The placement is a paid student placement.
- This is a competitive placement and students will be competing against other universities for this placement.
- The Public Health Nutrition Safety (PHNS) is an expert team of nutritionists and dietitians who have responsibility for all nutrition-related food legislation including fortified foods and food supplements, nutrition and health claims, and foods for specific groups (infant formula, baby foods)
- PHNS provides technical expertise to the Department of Health to support policy development; develop training supports for food businesses e.g. guidance notes, e-modules, training courses, provide answers to nutrition-related queries from food businesses, consumers, health professionals, food inspectors, journalists and politicians.
- The placement student becomes a valued member of our team, providing support across all work areas.

Tasks include:

- Completing first-round assessment of product labels, conducting literature reviews to underpin our technical advice, presenting at meetings and journal club, minuting at meetings with stakeholders, managing team mailbox, and drafting responses to technical queries.
- Undertaking a research project which is a priority area for the team e.g. sports foods, pregnancy supplements, products for premature infants.
- Developing a scientific abstract to submit to a national nutrition/dietetic conference and, if selected, will get the opportunity to present their research findings.
- The placement with the FSAI will give a wide range of experience to students interested in the area of public health nutrition including obesity, folic acid and iodine policies, trans fat, vitamins and minerals.



Required knowledge and experience

- Currently studying towards a science degree with specialist qualification in nutrition and/or dietetics
- Computer literate with a proficiency in a full range of general computer software. The standard business software in the FSAI is Microsoft Windows 11 Enterprise and Microsoft Office 365
- Familiarity with SPSS or R Studio would be an advantage.
- The person appointed must have excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to interact with all levels within the organisation and the ability to handle multiple priorities
- Excellent organisational skills are essential as well as ability to maintain high levels of confidentiality
- Candidate must also be able to work independently on his or her own initiative and as a member of a team

REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

Teamwork

- Shows respect for colleagues and co-workers
- Develops and maintains good working relationships with others, sharing information and knowledge, as appropriate
- Offers own ideas and perspectives
- Understands own role in the team, making every effort to play his/her part

Information Management / Processing

- Approaches and delivers all work in a thorough and organised manner
- Follows procedures and protocols, understanding their value and the rationale behind them
- Keeps high quality records that are easy for others to understand
- Draws appropriate conclusions from information
- Suggests new ways of doing things better and more efficiently
- Is comfortable working with different types of information, e.g., written, numerical, charts, and carries out calculations such as arithmetic, percentages etc.

Delivery of Results

- Takes responsibility for work and sees it through to the appropriate next level
- Completes work in a timely manner
- Adapts quickly to new ways of doing things
- Checks all work thoroughly to ensure it is completed to a high standard and learns from mistakes
- Writes with correct grammar and spelling and draws reasonable conclusions from written instructions
- Identifies and appreciates the urgency and importance of different tasks
- Demonstrates initiative and flexibility in ensuring work is delivered
- Is self-reliant and uses judgment on when to ask manager or colleagues for guidance

Customer Service & Communication Skills

- Actively listens to others and tries to understand their perspectives/ requirements/ needs
- Understands the steps or processes that customers must go through and can clearly explain these
- Is respectful, courteous and professional, remaining composed, even in challenging circumstances
- Can be firm when necessary and communicate with confidence and authority
- Communicates clearly and fluently when speaking and in writing

Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development

- Develops and maintains the skills and expertise required to perform in the role effectively, e.g., relevant technologies, IT systems, spreadsheets, Microsoft Office, relevant policies etc.
- Clearly understands the role, objectives, and targets and how they fit into the work of the taskforce.
- Is committed to self-development and continuously seeks to improve personal performance

Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values

- Consistently strives to perform at a high level and deliver a quality service
- Serves the Government and people of Ireland
- Is thorough and conscientious, even if work is routine
- Is enthusiastic and resilient, persevering in the face of challenges and setbacks
- Is personally honest and trustworthy
- At all times, acts with integrity

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

The FSAI is committed to a policy of Equal Opportunities. The FSAI's vision is to be a leader in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) in the Irish public sector. The FSAI and its staff is committed to:

- Treating all people equally and respectfully
- Being equitable and fair by working to attract and develop a diverse workforce and ensuring that individuals feel valued in their workplace.
- Being inclusive and seeking out and learning from multiple perspectives.

FSAI STRATEGY AND VALUES

The FSAI's current strategy sets out our vision, purpose, values, strategic goals and objectives for the period 2025-2029.

Our Vision

Safe and trustworthy food for everyone

Our Purpose

As Ireland's independent regulator and the central competent authority for the enforcement of food safety legislation, we will protect consumers' health and interests by:



- Building a culture of food safety
- Improving food safety within a risk analysis framework
- Leading a robust food safety control system
- Continuing to drive organisational excellence

Our Values

- We develop and inspire people to build a better organisation through **teamwork**
- We act with **integrity** and are honest, open and independent in all we do
- We are **passionate** about protecting consumers
- We act with **respect** and take personal responsibility
- We recognise and value **collaboration** with our partners
- We are **transparent** and open, and we communicate clearly

More information can be found at <https://www.fsai.ie/strategy/>

This job description is subject to change from time to time, in line with the FSAI's work requirements.

Data Protection and the Recruitment Process

Confidentiality

Candidate confidentiality will be respected at all stages of the recruitment process. All personal information provided on the application documents will be stored securely by the FSAI and will be used solely for the purposes of processing your candidature.

Legal compliance

The FSAI is committed to complying with all relevant legislation over the course of this recruitment campaign. This includes, but is not limited to, the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

Protecting personal data

Personal data is collected and processed as part of the recruitment process. This section sets out the relevant information under the following headings:

1. Personal data collected
2. Lawful basis for processing personal data
3. How your information may be shared
4. How long your information may be stored
5. Your data protection rights

1. Personal data collected

The FSAI collects personal data from prospective candidates as part of the recruitment process. In meeting its data protection obligations, the FSAI is committed to being accountable and transparent about how it gathers and processes this information.



The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) defines 'personal data' as meaning any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. It defines types of 'personal data' as being name, address, date of birth, etc. The GDPR also sets out 'special categories of personal data' for more sensitive information which include, for example, data concerning health.

2. Lawful basis for processing personal data

The FSAI processes personal data provided by you in your application documents during the recruitment process on the lawful basis of 'consent'. Your consent is required in order to process any personal data provided in the application for the specific purpose of progressing an application through the recruitment process.

Contractual

In the case of a successful candidate, personal data provided during the recruitment process may form the basis of the contract of employment.

Legal obligation

Personal data of prospective candidates and current employees (full-time, part-time, contract and agency) are processed on the basis that they are required for the FSAI's compliance with legislation (e.g., employment legislation).

3. How your information may be shared

Your information may be shared with other parties as part of the recruitment process. Where this occurs, information is shared by necessity and in confidence.

How long your information may be stored

The FSAI has a Data Retention Policy that it applies to all information it stores. This policy is updated on an ongoing basis to keep pace with all relevant legislative changes.

Unsuccessful candidates

For those individuals who have been unsuccessful in the recruitment process, all information provided to the FSAI will be retained by the FSAI for a period of no more than 12 months. At the end of this period, or if you withdraw your consent, your information will be securely destroyed.

Successful candidates

For those individuals who have been successful in the recruitment process, all information provided to the FSAI will be placed on your employee file. It will be retained during the course of your employment with the organisation and for an appropriate period thereafter. At the end of this period, or if you withdraw your consent, your information will be securely destroyed.

4. Your data protection rights

You have rights in relation to the personal data collected, processed and stored by the FSAI. Further information is available on our website under the heading 'Data Protection and Access Requests.' That section outlines what your data protection rights are and how to make a Data Subject Access Request to the FSAI.

Further information

If you have any questions or would like to make a Data Subject Access Request, you may contact the Data Protection Officer (DPO) at the FSAI. The contact details are as follows:



Údarás Sábháilteachta Bia na hÉireann
Food Safety Authority of Ireland

By post	Data Protection Officer Food Safety Authority of Ireland The Exchange George's Dock IFSC D01 P2V6
By email	DPO@fsai.ie