

# Case Study

**fdf** food & drink  
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## My career in food and drink

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**" Don't pigeonhole yourself, its fine to completely change career – it's all about how you apply your skills in any role"**

**Q: How did you get started in your career in food and drink?**

A: When I graduated from university in 2008, the UK was in the middle of the recession so graduate jobs were scarce. I applied for over

300 jobs before I got a job as an Assistant Manager in a wine shop, my manager was really good at mentoring me in how to run a business. Running wine tasting workshops was a lot of fun!

**Q: What was your route to get to this job and what are the entry qualifications?**

A: It's so important to say that there is no right or wrong route in terms of career. I studied Environmental Science and Geography at university because I'm passionate about the natural environment and I've always looked for jobs that interest and challenge me, whatever the sector. I have worked as a wine buyer, and as a project manager for a charity, a local council and a Scottish Government agency.

My job requires me to have knoweldge and understanding of a very wide range of topics from food and farming to tax to the circular economy.

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**Q: What did you study at school and how relevant were the subjects?**

A: I studied the three sciences, geography, English and French to Higher level. I don't think the subjects I studied at school were particularly relevant, more about the skills – communication, problem solving, report writing etc. These subjects gave me a good grounding and knowledge that could be applied to many key policy areas.

**Q: What does your job involve and what are your main responsibilities?**

A: Food and Drink Federation Scotland is a trade association for food and drink manufacturers. My job is to keep our members informed of government decisions that affect their business and represent the views of members to government, the public and the media.

**Q: What is the best thing and the worst thing about your job?**

A: The best thing is working with people in the food and drink sector – they are so knowledgeable and passionate about what they do.

I don't have anything that I particularly dislike about my job – there can be a LOT of reading

of very detailed government policy or legislation.

**Q: Why were you attracted to a role in food and drink?**

A: food and drink is the common thread that runs through my career to date. I studied Access to Food at university, worked in food and drink retailing and was Food and Drink Project Manager at Zero Waste Scotland – working with the industry to help them to reduce waste and become more environmentally sustainable.

**Q: Would you encourage others to consider a career in food and drink?**

A: Definitely! I get to listen to and work with the hidden heroes in food and drink manufacturing, with every day being different.

Pick a job based on what genuinely interests you and that uses your skills. Don't pigeonhole yourself, it's fine to completely change career – it's all about how you apply your skills in any role.