

Working for us

Current vacancies, our employment structure, the benefits of working for us and the code of conduct our employees must follow.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) works to protect public health and consumers' wider interests in relation to food in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our work protects people's health, reduces the economic burden of foodborne disease and supports the UK economy and trade by ensuring - together with [Food Standards Scotland](#) - that our food has a strong reputation for safety and authenticity in the UK and abroad.

We employ over 1300 staff in a huge variety of roles including (amongst others) scientists, front line inspectors, veterinarians, enforcement experts, policy delivery teams, economists, lawyers, digital experts and administrators. We have just launched a new strategy for 2022-27 and are very excited about the opportunities this will bring.

Working for us brings a range of benefits, with generous leave allowances and a commitment to work-life balance. We have offices in Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, London and York and many staff work remotely.

We believe that diversity should underpin everything we do as an organisation, and are keen for our workforce to reflect the wide range of communities we serve. We offer a number of recruitment schemes to encourage and support applications from diverse candidates from a wide range of backgrounds – including the Disability Confident Scheme and [Great Place to Work for Veterans \(GPTW\)](#) initiative.

We comply with the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles, ensuring appointment to the Civil Service is made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Read more about the [Recruitment Principles](#) and where we may use exceptions to them.

Current vacancies

Vacancies will be advertised on [Civil Service Jobs](#).

Pay and grading structure

We have 6 grades outside the Senior Civil Service:

- Administrative Officer (AO)
- Executive Officer and equivalents (EO)
- Higher Executive Officer and equivalents (HEO)
- Senior Executive Officer and equivalents (SEO)
- Grade 7 (G7)
- Grade 6 (G6)

We have two [pay scales](#), one for staff based in London and a national scale for all other staff. We also have an in-year award scheme for one-off exceptional personal or team achievements.

Our HR policies are inclusive to all

The Food Standards Agency is an inclusive employer. Our HR policies are fully inclusive of all staff regardless of age, working-pattern, disability or long term health conditions, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender identity, expression or reassignment, or relationship status; marriage (including equal/same sex marriage) and civil partnership.

We have numerous staff networks and want everyone's voice to be heard.

Read more about our commitment to [Equality and Diversity](#).

Working arrangements, probation and annual leave

At the FSA we commit to be a workplace where everyone feels that:

- we can be ourselves
- our unique contribution is recognised, respected and valued
- we achieve a healthy work life balance
- we can find meaning in our work
- we belong and there is space for us to grow
- we serve each part of the community in a way that reflect its needs

Our most common working arrangement is 37 hours per week. We offer a flexible working hours scheme in most roles, allowing employees to adjust their working day to suit their individual needs. We also support staff who wish to work from home, part-time or through a job share arrangement, subject to business needs. Other flexible working arrangements can be considered.

We provide all the equipment you will need to work effectively from home, and offer a generous allowance for purchasing office furniture and other eligible equipment to ensure you can work from home safely.

Probation

All staff joining us who are new to the Civil Service, will undertake a probation period of six months. This is a chance for us to support your induction and development, and make sure you have all you need to settle into the Civil Service and be effective in your new role.

Annual leave

We offer a very generous annual leave package, starting at 25 days, plus nine days' public and privilege holidays, rising to 30 days with length of service.

Benefits

Parental leave

We offer maternity, adoption or shared parental leave of up to 26 weeks full pay followed by 13 weeks statutory pay and a further 13 weeks unpaid, and paternity leave of up to 3 weeks full pay.

Learning and development

We are fully committed to the learning and development of our staff, and as part of our team you can look forward to quality training and development opportunities. We believe in helping all our people to make the most of their talents and realise their full potential - that's why we provide everyone with the opportunity to develop.

You will have the opportunity to undertake development to meet the needs of your role and for professional and personal development through formal and informal development opportunities and on-the-job training. Everyone has regular career development conversations, with their Manager and we engage with the Civil Service Professions. We encourage learning to be shared.

Pension

The Civil Service offers the choice of an attractive occupational pension or stakeholder pension, giving flexibility and choice. Details of the pensions available can be found on the [Civil Service website](#).

Additional benefits

As an FSA employee you can access a wide range of financial benefits. For example:

- the FSA employee discount scheme
- eye care scheme
- advances of salary for season tickets
- Cycle to Work salary sacrifice scheme
- Microsoft home user programme
- First Bus travel scheme
- payment of professional subscriptions
- full pay, followed by half pay, up to the maximum allowed by the relevant occupational sick pay scheme

We also offer a number of non-pay benefits, for example:

- five days learning and development per year – including access to the varied learning resources programmes and support offered by Civil Service Learning
- time off to deal with emergencies, unexpected situations and certain other unplanned special circumstances
- paid special leave to participate in non-statutory volunteering activities and public service duties such as an armed forces reservist
- opportunities for flexible working
- an in-year award scheme for one-off exceptional personal or team achievements
- a dedicated Employee Assistance Programme where you can get access to counselling support, general advice and information and debt and financial advice
- the option to join a trade union

In addition, as a civil servant you can also join or get benefits from a number of other organisations such as Civil Service Insurance Society, Charity for Civil Servants, CS healthcare and HASSRA.

Conflicting interests

All staff working for us are required to apply for approval before becoming associated with any kind of private business interest related to the food industry. If you are associated with any private

business of this nature, you are requested to notify your interest in it, and how much time you expect to devote to it. We may then consider whether there would be any conflict with official duties if you are offered and accept the appointment.

This applies to purely financial interests as well as interest where you are involved in managing the business. You should tell us if you have an indirect association of this kind, for example through a partner or family member with whom you are in close contact.

There are also rules about taking up employment for staff who leave the FSA and the Civil Service. These apply generally to the Senior Civil Servants, but also other staff in particular circumstances.

The Civil Service code

All of our employees must adhere to [the Civil Service code](#), which sets the core values and standards of behaviour expected of civil servants.