

MSc in Food Science
For students entering Part 1 in 2011/2

Awarding Institution:	University of Reading
Teaching Institution:	University of Reading
Relevant QAA subject Benchmarking group(s):	
Faculty:	Life Sciences Faculty
Programme length:	1 years
Date of specification:	23/Aug/2011
Programme Director:	Dr Alan Bell
Programme Advisor:	Dr David Jukes
Board of Studies:	MSc Programmes in Food Science Food
Technology Quality Assurance and Nutrition and Food Science	
Accreditation:	

Summary of programme aims

The purpose of the course is to develop an understanding of the chemical behaviour and physical properties of food constituents in the context of their manufacture and storage, particularly from the standpoints of safety and nutritional attributes.

The expected outcomes are that students should acquire and demonstrate:

- an understanding of the science base for the production and preservation of foods;
- an understanding of methods for the assessment and control of food safety;
- an understanding of the science base of diet and health issues as they impinge on the food industry;
- an ability to elaborate methods for the assessment of food quality by means of chemical, microbiological and sensory analysis techniques;
- a capacity to undertake research in food science.

In addition, students will acquire and demonstrate skills in the following areas:

- Food chemistry: Apply and increase knowledge of the chemical and physical behaviour of food constituents with particular reference to their safety and nutritional attributes;
- Laboratory work: Acquire and use practical skills to develop and perform chemical, physical and microbiological laboratory tests for the assessment of food quality and consumer preference;
- Hazard control: Participate in the assessment of a food production process by the use of techniques such as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points so as to ensure the hygienic production of safe and wholesome foods;
- Food processing: Qualitatively evaluate the performance of the principal food processing operations used by industry, and use quantitative techniques to evaluate safety factors;
- Food microbiology: Identify and establish control procedures for all important food pathogens, food spoilage microorganisms and food fermentation microorganisms;
- Human nutrition: Develop an understanding of the science base of diet / health issues that impinge on the food industry;
- Sensory analysis: Acquire and apply knowledge of sensory tests for the assessment of food quality and consumer preference.

Transferable skills

As part of this programme students are expected to gain or enhance their experience and competences in the following skills: IT (word-processing, use of spreadsheets and databases, use of Web resources), scientific writing, oral presentations, team working, problem solving, use of library resources and time management.

Programme content

MSc students will follow the modules given below making 180 credits; PG Diploma students will take 120 credits (normally excluding the Project).

Compulsory modules (170 credits for MSc; 110 credits for PG Diploma)

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Level</i>
FBMF1A	Food Analysis 1	10	7
FBMFCA	Chemistry of Food Components A	10	7
FBMFCA	Chemistry of Food Components B	10	7
FBMFM1	Introductory Food Microbiology	10	7
FBMFM3	Microbial Quality Assurance	10	7

FBMFP1	Food Processing	20	7
FBMFPR	Project	60	7
FBMFS1	Sensory Properties of Foods	10	7
FBMN01	Fundamentals of Human Nutrition	10	7
FBMN06	Nutrition in Health and Disease	10	7
MMM052	Entrepreneurial Management for Food Scientists	10	7

Optional modules (10 credits)

FBMFP3	Economic Manufacture	10	7
FBMN07	Food Choice and Regulation	10	7

Part-time or modular arrangements

The modules may be taken on a part-time basis over a maximum of three years. The taught modules may be taken in any order agreed with the Head of School and will normally be completed before the project module is taken.

Progression requirements

MSc / Diploma students who gain an overall weighted average of at least 50% in the taught modules, who have no module mark below 40, and who have fewer than 60 credits with marks below 50 may proceed to the MSc, at the discretion of the School.

Assessment and classification

The teaching is organised in modules (totalling 180 credits) that involve a combination of lectures, tutorials, workshops, seminars, and practical sessions. Modules taken during the autumn and spring term (120 credits) will be assessed by a mixture of course work and formal examinations. The assessment of the remaining 60 credits, which will be based on a practical project or dissertation, will be based on a written report of the work undertaken.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the MSc students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall (in 180 credits) including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have a combined average of at least 40 in modules FBMFCA and FBMFCB and a mark of at least 40 in module FBMFM1. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall (in 120 credits). In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 40 must not exceed 30 credits and for all modules marked below 50 must not exceed 55 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 40 will be eligible for a Merit.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained a honours degree in a Pure or Applied Science or an equivalent qualification. Applicants whose academic qualifications do not meet these requirements may in the first instant be admitted to a post-experience course; they may then transfer to MSc status if their performance during the first term is satisfactory.

Admissions Tutor: Dr D J Jukes

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support is provided by a wide array of services across the University, including: the University Library, the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre (SEEC), In-sessional English Support Programme, the Study Advice and Mathematics Support Centre teams, IT Services and the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@il) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Personal Tutors, School Senior Tutors, the Students' Union, the Medical Practice and advisers in the Student Services Centre. The Student Services Centre is housed in the Carrington Building and offers advice on accommodation, careers, disability, finance, and wellbeing. Students can get key information and guidance from the team of Helpdesk Advisers, or make an appointment with a specialist adviser; Student Services also offer drop-in sessions and runs workshops and seminars on a range of topics. For more information see www.reading.ac.uk/student

Career prospects

An MSc degree in Food Science provides a strong platform from which to undertake a wide range of careers, particularly relating to food, in industry, government and education. Food Scientists are highly valued for their problem solving skills and their ability to apply their technical knowledge to ensure the safety and quality of food in production, manufacture and distribution. Some students choose to apply their research skills by pursuing a higher degree through research or through research and development in industry.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

Students will be able to undertake the 60 credit project module at an approved institution or an appropriate industrial concern, but this will depend on having the necessary linguistic skills and finding a suitable placement, and appropriate supervisory arrangements being in place.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. The concepts and techniques of the chemistry and microbiology of food and a critical awareness of their application in food quality assurance.
2. The concepts and techniques of human nutrition and food processing and a critical awareness of their application in the manufacture and production of wholesome food.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The knowledge required is provided in formal lectures supported by practical work, seminars and presentations. Feedback on student work is provided by the discussion and return of work in tutorials and seminars. All practical work is marked and returned to the student.

Assessment

Most knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework, including oral presentations, and formal examinations, plus a written report of a practical based project.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills - *able to*:

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

1. Think logically and evaluate critically research and advance scholarship in the discipline
2. Plan and implement tasks at a professional level to solve problems related to the discipline
3. Evaluate methodologies and where appropriate propose new hypotheses
4. Plan, conduct and write a report on an independent practical project.

C. Practical skills - *able to*:

1. Apply, or adapt, practical instructions safely and accurately
2. Carry out a variety of experimental procedures in the laboratory or pilot plant.
3. Interpret quantitatively the results of experiments undertaken by themselves or others
4. Devise experimental methods appropriate for tackling a particular problem

D. Transferable skills - *able to*:

1. Make use of IT (word processing, spreadsheets, web sources)
2. Communicate scientific ideas
3. Give oral presentations
4. Work as part of a team
5. Use library resources
6. Manage time

Logical application of science and the critical appraisal of methodology are essential parts of the role of a Food Scientist in the food industry. These skills will underpin the lectures, practical and project work.

Assessment

1-3 are assessed directly and indirectly in most parts of the course
1-4 are assessed in the final project report.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

A range of detailed or outline practical instructions are used to allow students to develop a range of practical skills.

Staff and postgraduate demonstrators are present during practical sessions to guide and help, to mark their reports and give feedback on their work. Students will work on their project under the guidance of one or more members of staff.

Assessment

1-4 are assessed to different extents by the practical work associated with the various modules undertaken.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The use of IT is embedded throughout the programme, but is particularly addressed in modules FBMFM2, FBMFP1.

Team work is essential in the practical and role play sessions associated with modules FBMN01, FBMFM2, FBMFP2, FBMFC2.

Library resources are addressed in the first term modules and during the project and dissertation work.

Time management is essential for the timely and effective completion of the programme.

Assessment

1-5 contribute to assessed coursework during the first two terms.

Please note - This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module description and in the programme handbook. The University reserves the right to modify this specification in unforeseen circumstances, or where the process of academic development and feedback from students, quality assurance process or external sources, such as professional bodies, requires a change to be made. In such circumstances, a revised specification will be issued.