



Member of the Food Standards Agency

Information pack for applicants

Closing date: Midday on Monday, 11 April 2022

Reference no: VAC-1808



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Section 1 – The Role

1.1 Role description and person specification

Letter from Susan Jebb, Chair of the FSA

Dear Applicant

I am delighted that you are considering applying for a non-executive role with the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

The FSA is a regulatory department, charged by law with protecting public health, and the wider interests of consumers, in relation to food. Our overarching aim is to ensure that the public can trust that their food is safe and authentic. We act on the basis of science and evidence, and we put public health and the consumer interest first in our decision making. We operate with high levels of transparency, including holding our Board meetings in public and inviting questions from the public on our work, to sustain trust and confidence in food standards.

We have an unusual status as a non-Ministerial Government Department, serving England, Wales and Northern Ireland. That gives us a high degree of independence, and we operate free from political direction or control. We handle most of our own Parliamentary business, although legislation and ‘floor of the House’ matters are handled by the relevant Health Minister. The FSA works closely with our sister department in Scotland, Food Standards Scotland. We have a modest budget from the HM Treasury and Devolved Administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland, recover some costs from charging for regulatory services to businesses, and directly employ around 1,200 civil servants.

The Board sets the strategic priorities to fulfil the FSA’s statutory purposes, and reviews progress against agreed outcomes. The Board takes major decisions on public health and regulatory matters and assures the delivery of our programmes and plans. The FSA Board is currently reviewing its strategy for the future in the wake of our expanded role following EU Exit.

The FSA originally set four key principles to guide our preparation for EU Exit, these were to: ensure public health is protected as effectively as it was before leaving the EU; maintain public confidence in the regulatory regime, including protecting the FSA’s reputation for openness and independence; minimise disruption for consumers and industry; and give consumers as unified a regulatory system as possible across the UK. These principles guided the FSA right up to end of the transition period and continue to inform its response to developments since.

Alongside our response to EU Exit, we have been working to transform the regulatory regime for the 600,000+ food businesses we cover. Our plans for reform aim to make more and better use of data and technology, takes greater ownership of standard setting, and enable resources to be better targeted at food businesses and issues that pose the greatest risk to consumers. The next 18 months will see us complete the development of this new model and the implementation of key elements is already underway. We are also working towards modernising the way official controls for meat, dairy and wine are delivered so we can drive

improvements with greater efficiency and resilience. The FSA's ambition is to be regarded as an excellent, accountable, modern regulator.

Our new FSA strategy will be launched in March and will continue to focus on food you can trust, with an emphasis on food safety and authenticity. However we will also extend our work to reflect wider consumer interests by working with others in government towards a healthier and more sustainable food system.

We have a very committed and cohesive Board with members from a range of backgrounds who share their knowledge and expertise in support of this goal. We hold public Board meetings on 4 occasions each year, with two private Board retreats and regular briefings. We are united by a common purpose to uphold and enhance food standards. If you join us, your contribution will have an impact on the health and quality of life of everyone across the country.

In this pack you will find additional information about the FSA and its work, details of the Board role we wish to fill, and how to apply. I look forward to receiving your application.

Professor Susan Jebb
Chair, Food Standards Agency

Role description

The role of non-executive members is:

- To ensure the FSA discharges its statutory duties in line with the requirement to protect public health and consumer interests in relation to food
- To set and to reinforce the FSA's core values through the development and monitoring of strategic objectives, plans and policies
- To represent the FSA and its values in communications with key stakeholders
- To monitor the performance of the Executive in meeting agreed objectives and targets, including: the delivery of services; continuous improvement; financial performance, and risk management
- To assist with the appointment of the Chief Executive
- To play an effective part in Board meetings, discussions and decisions, and work towards shared success
- To participate as a member or Chair of one or more of the Board Committees: Business, and Audit and Risk Assurance
- To act in the public interest at all times, not as a representative of the interests of any particular sector, and without regard to any personal interests

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- To give approximately 20 days per annum to the FSA and to travel to meetings across the country. In addition, Board members are expected to read widely to develop personal skill and ensure effectiveness in the role.

Board members receive advice and support from the Executive in respect of their duties and are provided with background information in order to carry out their responsibilities. There is a dedicated secretariat to support the Board.

Person specification

Ministers are seeking to make three appointments to the board of Food Standards Agency (FSA).

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community.

The boards of public bodies should reflect the population they are there to serve. Boards also benefit from fresh perspectives, and we are always keen to encourage candidates with private sector experience to consider applying for our roles.

Essential Criteria

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment. Applicants must have:

- awareness of consumer interests in relation to food and how the global food system is changing, with a demonstrable commitment to putting the consumer first;
- strong decision-making skills, able to assess complex evidence of different kinds, consider risks and benefits and explain the basis for a decision;
- strong strategic thinker, able to help shape the FSA's strategic direction, and link specific decision making to the strategy and bigger picture;
- understanding of how to achieve significant change, operate across complex networks. Able to translate relevant insight into new situations, and anticipate future challenges and opportunities;
- effective communication and interpersonal skills - able to work as part of a team; champion diversity and difference within the FSA; accept collective responsibility and challenge appropriately; and confidently deal with difficult situations sensitively.

Desirable Criteria

In order to achieve a balanced Board, new members will ideally be able to bring skills and experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Understanding of (or experience in) a Government regulatory body
- Expertise in safety and standards in the food industry

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- Expertise in (or understanding of) innovation which is relevant to food products/processes or delivery routes to the consumer
- Expertise in financial management of publicly funded organisations
- Experience in Local Government
- Insight into public (or environmental) health in relation to food
- A senior scientist working in a field closely related to the FSA's portfolio

Remuneration

- Members are remunerated at the standard rate of £8,000 per annum
- Remuneration is taxable, and subject to National Insurance contributions, both of which will be deducted at source under PAYE before you are paid. Remuneration is not pensionable.
- You may claim travel and subsistence expenses, which are properly and necessarily incurred in carrying out your role and responsibilities as a Member of the FSA, in line with travel and subsistence policy and rates for the FSA. A copy of the policy and rates can be obtained from the FSA.

Time commitment

20 days per year.

Location

London

Meeting Dates

15 June 2022

14 September 2022

7 December 2022

Tenure of office

Ministers will determine the length of the appointment, which will be up to 3 years.

For a discussion about the role

For further information regarding the role of member of the FSA please contact:

Ann Stirling

Tel: 07970 401448

Email: Board.Sec@food.gov.uk

1.2 Food Standards Agency role and responsibilities

Overview

The statutory role of the FSA is to protect the health of the public and the interests of consumers in relation to food. Since it was established in April 2000, it has made its mark as a new kind of public authority – independent, proactive, energetic, open about policy and honest about risks.

The FSA is led by a Board of up to 12 non-executive members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair (in practice, since the creation of Food Standards Scotland in 2014, two of these Board roles which were reserved to appointments by government in Scotland, the Board has been 10 members strong). Collectively, Board members share responsibility for the whole FSA.

The Chair and Deputy Chair are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care acting jointly with the appropriate Ministers in Wales and Northern Ireland. One Board member is appointed by Welsh Ministers, and one member by the Health Minister in Northern Ireland. In Wales and Northern Ireland there are Food Advisory Committees which act as a route through which information and advice relevant to their country's FSA interests is relayed to the Board. A Board member chairs each of these Committees. The remaining FSA Board members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. The appropriate authorities consult each other before appointments are made. There are no specific geographical qualifications for these roles.

The FSA remit covers food and feed safety regulation and policy across the whole food chain (from 'farm to fork'). It works to protect consumers by improving the safety of food and by giving honest, clear information. There is a complex pattern of responsibilities for policy and delivery on food and feed safety and standards, nutrition, and non-safety labelling and composition of food, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This means that it has slightly different remits in each country.

The FSA is also an enforcement authority. Its staff work in meat plants to check that the requirements of the regulations, including animal welfare standards, are being met. It works closely with Local Authority Environmental Health Officers and Trading Standards Officers in 387 local authorities to ensure food from the over 600,000 food premises across England, Wales and Northern Ireland is safe and accurately labelled.

The FSA works closely with a very wide range of stakeholder groups to improve food safety at every step of the food chain. It has won recognition for restoring the trust of UK consumers in the way food safety is regulated.

Further reading: FSA's Annual Report and Consolidated Accounts for 2020/21 are available at: <https://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/reports-and-accounts>

Section 2: The recruitment

2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of Member to the FSA.

The Department of Health and Social Care's Appointments and Honours Unit is managing this recruitment campaign.

To make an application please email your **CV**, a **Supporting letter** and completed **Monitoring form** to appointments.team@dhsc.gov.uk – please quote **ref: VAC-1808** in the subject field.

If you are unable to apply by email, please contact Kully Kanda on 0113 254 6277

Applications must be received by **midday on Monday, 11 April 2022**.

In making an application please note the following:

Disqualification from appointment

There are circumstances in which an individual may not be considered for appointment.

A person is disqualified from appointment as a Member of the FSA if they are:

- A member of the House of Commons
- A member of the Northern Ireland Assembly
- In addition, bankruptcy, current police investigations, unspent criminal convictions or disqualification as a company director may disqualify you from appointment. Please inform us if any of the above apply to you.

For further advice please contact Kully Kanda on 0113 254 6277

Supporting letter

The supporting letter is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. It will benefit the Advisory Assessment Panel if you can be clear which specific evidence you provide relates to which criterion. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice.

We will commission a pre-assessment of candidate applications which will then be provided to the Panel for consideration and to inform the shortlisting process. By applying, you are agreeing to your application being shared with another party for pre-assessment. It is the responsibility of the panel to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview.

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your letter.

Please write all acronyms in full first, limit your letter to two pages and type or write clearly in black ink.

Conflicts of interest

If you or a party related to you have any interests which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your Supporting letter.

Conflicts of interest may include (without limitation), any personal or business interests (including direct and indirect financial interests), positions of employment, other appointments or other positions of authority, that you or any party related to you have and which may influence your judgement in performing your public appointment or may be perceived by a reasonable member of the public as having scope to do so.

A 'party related to you' could include for example (but without limitation) a spouse/partner, a business partner, a close family member or a person living in the same household as you or a close family member.

Failure to declare a potential conflict of interest may become grounds for withdrawing an offer of appointment. If offered the role, you will also be required to make a Declaration of Interests and to keep the Declaration up to date throughout the tenure of your appointment. The requirement to declare interests will also be included in your Terms and Conditions of appointment. Failure to disclose an interest may, subject to the interest and the circumstances, become grounds for suspension or termination of your appointment.

Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence

If there are any issues in your personal or professional history (including any convictions or bankruptcy) that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or FSA or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue/s in your Supporting letter.

In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media and blogs and if there are any previous or pending personal conduct issues where:

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- i. a complaint/ personal conduct issue has either been upheld or partly upheld
- i. an investigation that relates at least in part to your personal conduct, is to take place but it is yet to start, or a similar such investigation is underway, but it is yet to conclude
- ii. a complaint/personal conduct issue is current, but at the time of your application it is yet to be confirmed whether or how it will be investigated further.

Due diligence may also be carried out on any publicly available information and shared with the Panel.

The Panel may explore any issues you have raised or have been identified in due Diligence checks, with you as part of assessing your application.

Failure to disclose relevant information requested could result in an appointment offer being withdrawn or the appointment being terminated, as the person appointed to this role will be expected to demonstrate the highest standards of corporate and personal conduct and in line with standards set out in the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, which includes the Nolan Principles regarding conduct in public life. As part of agreeing to the terms and conditions of appointment you will be expected to agree to meeting the standards set out in this Code. You can access this document at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/board-members-of-public-bodies-code-of-conduct>

CV

Please ensure your CV includes:

- Your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile), personal email address and details of any Twitter accounts and LinkedIn accounts, including your Twitter handle/username.
- Contact details for at least two referees. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you. References will be requested for short-listed candidates prior to interview
- Brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role, and any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Monitoring form

Please complete the monitoring form. Diversity monitoring information will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application.

Political activity information is primarily for monitoring purposes only, however if you are shortlisted for interview, this information will be shared with the selection panel. The reason for this, is that it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision-making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should also take the opportunity to include it separately in your supporting statement. If possible, you should not, however, identify the relevant political party in your statement.

If you are appointed to this role, please note that any political activity you declare will be published in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Disability Confident Scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity for all and to the appointment of disabled people. As part of the Disability Confident Scheme, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability who applies under the Scheme and whose application meets the essential criteria for the post.

What do we mean by a disability?

To be eligible for the Disability Confident Scheme you must have a disability or long-term health condition, which could be physical, sensory or mental and must be expected to last for at least 12 months. You do not have to be registered as a disabled person to apply under this scheme.

If you wish to apply under the Disability Confident Scheme please ensure you complete Section E of the Monitoring form and return it with your application.

Governance Code on Public Appointments and the Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Governance Code on Public Appointments, published by the Cabinet Office, sets out the principles that should underpin all public appointments. The Governance Code can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>

The regulation of public appointments against the requirements of the Governance Code is carried out by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Commissioner provides independent assurance that public appointments are made in accordance with the principles set out in the Code. The Commissioner is appointed by the Queen and is independent of the Government and the Civil Service. Further information about the role of the Commissioner is available from:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk>

2.2 The Assessment Process

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

Planned timetable

- Closing date: Midday on 11 April 2022
- Shortlisting: 9th May 2022
- Interviews: 23rd & 30th May 2022

Advisory Assessment Panel

The panel will include:

- Panel Chair, Tamsin Cooper, Deputy Director for Strategy and New Priorities
- Susan Jebb, the Chair of the Food Standard Agency
- Haider Husain, an Associate NED on the Board of MHRA as the Independent Panel Member.

Assessment

- The Panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet all the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the Disability Confident Scheme and you meet all the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for interview.
- If you apply under the Disability Confident Scheme and you are not shortlisted for interview, we can provide a summary of the assessment of your written application, if you choose to request feedback. However, please note that due to the volume of applications that are received it is not possible to routinely provide feedback to all other applicants not shortlisted for interview
- We will email you to let you know whether you have been invited to be interviewed. Interviews will be conducted either face-to-face, in central London or by video/teleconference. We will confirm arrangements to shortlisted candidates in due course.
- Please note that it is not always possible to routinely provide feedback to those not shortlisted for interview

- If you are invited to interview and are unable to attend on the set date, then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the Panel.
- If invited to interview, the Panel may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post
- The Panel will also explore with you any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from your personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details).
- Candidates whom the Panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to Ministers who will make the final decision. Ministers may choose to meet with candidates before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.
- If following interviews your application is unsuccessful, we will notify you. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles, and prepare for and attend an interview, and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. Following interviews, the letter which confirms the outcome of the appointment process will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish.

Offer of appointment

If you are successful, you will be contacted by Officials to inform you of the offer and to confirm if you would be willing to accept. If you would, then you will receive a letter from Ministers appointing you as a member of FSA, which will confirm the terms and conditions on which the appointment is offered.

Announcement

All public appointments are announced on GOV.UK. The announcement is required to include the length of your appointment, the remuneration for the role and whether you have declared any political activity. We will share the draft announcement with you before it is made.

Queries

For any queries about your application status or the selection process, please contact Kully Kanda in DHSC's Public Appointments and Honours Unit:

Email: Kuldeep.Kanda@dhsc.gov.uk

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.

All applications will be acknowledged by email after the closing date. Please quote reference VAC-1808 on all correspondence.

If you are not completely satisfied

The Department of Health and Social Care will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Zubeda Seedat by emailing zubeda.seedat@dhsc.gov.uk

If after receiving a comprehensive response from the Department you are still concerned, you can write to the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Please contact:

The Commissioner for Public Appointments
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ
Tel: 0207 271 8938
Email: publicappointments@csc.gov.uk

2.3 How we will manage your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail because of sending the Department of Health and Social Care any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Ensure you know why we need it
- Protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary
- Only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- Provide us with accurate information
- Inform us as soon as possible of any changes or if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you

If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the selection panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The diversity information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage. However, panels may review the political activity response at the interview stage. This in no way acts as a bar to appointment. Further information on this is provided in the attached Monitoring form.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure procedures are fair. The Department of Health and Social Care is required by the Commissioner for Public Appointments to retain information about the people who apply for public appointments within his remit and make this information available to him for audit purposes, if requested to do so. Information you provide in your application may therefore be made available to the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Commissioner's auditors on a confidential basis to help fulfil either the Commissioner's formal complaints investigation role or for audit purposes.

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