

Candidate briefing notes

Equality of opportunity

Safefood is committed to Equality of Opportunity in its employment practices and aims to ensure that no actual or potential job applicant or Staff Member is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on

the grounds of gender, marital / civil status, disability, race, religion, community background or political persuasion, age, family status and dependants, sexual orientation, members of the Traveller Community or Trade Union membership.

Each person shall have equal opportunity for employment, training and advancement in Safefood on the basis of ability, qualifications and performance. This maximises the effective use of human resources in the best interests of both the organisation and the individual.

To facilitate Equality of Opportunity we offer a range of family friendly policies which reduce barriers to combining work and family commitments.

Safefood is an equal opportunities employer.

More information about Safefood

One of the major developments of the Northern Ireland peace process was the Good Friday or Belfast Agreement which was signed by both Britain and Ireland on 10 August 1998. Part of this agreement was the establishment of an all-island policy development body, the North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC). The NSMC is responsible for co-ordinating and managing a number of all-island policy areas, six of which are delegated to corresponding North-South Implementation Bodies. These bodies are:

- The Languages Body (Foras na Gaeilge and Ulster Scots)
- Special European Programmes Body
- Waterways Ireland
- Intertrade Ireland
- The Loughs Agency
- The Food Safety Promotion Board (Safefood)

Another body, Tourism Ireland, whilst not an Implementation Body, was later also established for the whole of the island.

These bodies were set up under the North South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (NI) Order 1999 and the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999. The Food Safety Promotion Board (An Bord um Chur Chun Cinn Sabháilteachta Bia) was formally established on 2 December 1999. Safefood was adopted as our brand name.

Our role

Our role is determined by the above legislation which can be found on our website. To summarise, our key functions are to promote food safety and healthy eating on the island of Ireland. We achieve this through the commissioning and funding of research, the co-ordination and development of scientific co-operation through networks and promoting consumer knowledge, education and awareness through the media.

Safefood receives funding as approved by the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and by the Northern Ireland Assembly and Dáil Eireann. Safefood is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Houses of the Oireachtas. Departmental responsibility for Safefood rests with the Department of Health in Northern Ireland and the Department of Health in the Republic of Ireland.

Our functions are carried out by the Chief Executive Officer under the policy of the NSMC. There is a twelve member Advisory Board and a twelve member Advisory Committee to advise the Chief Executive in the discharge of Safefood's functions.

Safefood's mission, vision and values

Our name and brand defines us and we want to ensure that we communicate in such a manner that people perceive Safefood as trustworthy, friendly and knowledgeable.

Our vision is:

People on the island of Ireland are supported and empowered to consume healthy and safe food.

Our mission statement is:

To improve public health and well-being, by promoting food safety and healthy eating on the island of Ireland.

In order to fulfil our strategy, we recognise that there must be strong values that embody the vision and mission statements of the organisation. These values are fundamental and underpin the overall culture at the core of the organisation.

In achieving our vision and mission and delivering our strategy, we aim to demonstrate the following core values and behaviours:

Respect – We value everyone within and outside the organisation for their time, views and contribution in achieving safefood's strategy.

Integrity – We are passionate about working for public good. We do the right things, with an evidence-based approach underpinning our strategy and implementation.

Impact – We do the right things, and we do things right. We are passionate about delivering our work to the highest standards and we use best practice and place emphasis on measuring our performance.

Partnership – We are a diverse group of professionals who achieve more by working together and working with others across the island of Ireland who share common goals.

Person-centred – We care about our audiences and hold them in unconditional, positive regard. We place the understanding of our audience at the centre of our work and aim to support and empower them.

Location

Our headquarters are in Cork with an office in Dublin.

Selection of successful candidate

The selection process will cover the following stages:

- Stage One CV, covering letter and Personal Details Form
- Stage Two Skills Evaluation Testing / Psychometric Assessment (if required)
- Stage Three Competency based Interview
- Stage Four Final Interview (if required)

Applicants will be judged solely on the following information:

- Information on the CV and covering letter
- Test scores (where applicable)
- Information provided at Interview

Timescale

All candidates will receive a letter or an e-mail acknowledging receipt of their application within two weeks of the closing date. Safefood will endeavour to hold all interviews within two months of the closing date.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the interview within two weeks. The selection panel will score all applicants and the person achieving the highest score will be offered a position. (At its discretion, Safefood may form a panel of successful applicants, who may be offered a position should a future vacancy arise).

Criteria-based selection

Background

Criteria-based selection was introduced into Safefood as a means of selecting the best candidates on the basis of their ability to do the job. This method of selection requires individuals to give evidence, in their CV and Cover Letter, and at a structured interview, to demonstrate their ability or competence to do the job.

Purpose of the CV and cover letter

The purpose of the CV and Cover Letter is for you to demonstrate your ability to meet the specific core selection criteria that are necessary for effective work at the required level. These provides a source of information and evidence about you for panel members who may ask you for clarification or provide further details on some of the points you have covered in order to obtain a deeper understanding of your experience and abilities.

What is criteria-based interviewing?

Criteria based interviewing tests candidates against a set of selection criteria which have been drawn up and agreed as being appropriate to a specific post/grade. The selection criteria detail what an individual will need to possess to be effective in the job. Most interview questions will be about your experience, but if you have limited experience in a certain area, the Interview Panel may ask you to describe how you would do something, to give you an opportunity to demonstrate your ability. You may also use examples of experience gained from your outside interests.

All applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Shortlisting for interview

The information given in the covering letter and CV will be measured against the Job Description and Person Specification and only those candidates who can meet all of the Essential Criteria will be considered for interview. In the event of a large number of candidates meeting all of the Essential Criteria, a shortlisting process may be initiated by applying the Desirable Criteria (where stated) progressively in the order they appear on the person specification.

Candidates who meet the Desirable Criteria to a lesser extent should not be deterred from applying as long as they can meet the Essential Criteria.

In the event of very large numbers of applicants for any post advertised, Safefood reserves the right to use skills evaluation testing / psychometric assessment. Candidates will be notified should this happen.

Competency-based questions for interview

Competency-based interviews are based on the premise that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. The interview will seek to obtain information about the applicant with questions that relate directly to the essential criteria and competencies outlined in the job description and person specification.

Questions will focus on past situations and the applicant's behaviour in those situations. Safefood will be looking for specific examples describing exactly what the applicant did in certain situations, not what the team's role was as a whole or what the applicant would do in a hypothetical situation. The applicant can choose to use relevant examples for their current job, a previous job or a situation outside of work. In order to answer the questions fully you should use the S.T.A.R method. This means you should think about your example in terms of the Situation, your Task, the Action you took and the Result.

Data Protection

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 governs how we process your personal data and gives you (data subject) a range of rights. You can access our data protection statement in this link:

[Data protection statement | Safefood](#)

To consider the candidate's suitability for recruitment, personal data will be processed. This includes but is not limited to the job application form, references, interview notes, and psychometric tests.

Under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2015, Safefood is required to retain your data for 12 months. This is required to ensure that the recruitment process is transparent and that no applicants are discriminated against.

Such information held is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 to 2018. To make an access request under the Data Protection Acts, please submit a request in writing to:

The Data Protection Officer, Safefood, 7 Eastgate Avenue, Eastgate, Little Island, Co Cork, T45 RX01

DPO@safefood.net