Applicant Information pack for appointment to the Board of Food Standards Scotland

The Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport is seeking to appoint two non-executive members to the public body of Food Standards Scotland. The Cabinet Secretary values highly the benefits of having different points of view on the public body and welcomes applications from people from all walks of life. The priority criteria for the first of these appointments is Financial Leadership and Governance; and for the second we are seeking experience at a national or international level in Strategic Transformation and Regulatory Reform.

The appointments process for these public body vacancies follows the Code of Practice for Public Appointments and is regulated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.

Key dates for this appointment round

Closing date	17:00 on 4 December 2026
Sift of applications	10 December 2026
Date applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	w/c 14 December 2026
Interviews	12 & 13 January 2027 - In person in Edinburgh.

	NB – In case of bad weather interviews may be held online if necessary. **It is expected that all applicants are available for interview on both dates and it is unlikely that we will be able to accommodate requests for alternative interview dates. Interview slots are allocated through our online self-service system, where you will be invited to select from the available dates and times.**
Ministerial decision	w/c 8 February 2027
Start date	1 April 2027

Welcome letter

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Non-Executive Member of the Board of Food Standards Scotland (FSS). Our Board looks forward to welcoming fresh perspectives and experience and would like to expand the diversity of individuals within our team; therefore, we particularly welcome applications from men and people aged under 50, who are currently underrepresented on the Board.

Since establishment in April 2015, FSS has delivered regulation and independent advice on food and animal feed safety and standards, food labelling and public health nutrition Our mission is to protect the public from health risks associated with food consumption, improve diets to support good health and safeguard consumer interests in relation to food. We are an evidence-based organisation providing independent policy advice to both consumers and the Scottish Government.

Our remit spans the entire food chain, ensuring food safety and promoting healthier eating. Our vision is clear: *a safe authentic, and healthier food environment that Scotland can trust.*

FSS relishes the significant challenge of ensuring that Scotland maintains its reputation for the highest levels of food standards and safety in the rapidly changing social, technological and geopolitical landscape that we work within and at a time of significant reform in the delivery of public services in Scotland. Since founding, FSS has evolved significantly, and to meet the challenges ahead we need to lead change in the food environment, remain responsive, dynamic and ready to act quickly and above all else, retain the confidence of consumers.

Past experience on a public body is not essential, but experience of contributing to strategic decision making at national or international level in the public, private or not for profit sectors is sought.

Full details are in this pack and I hope you will give full consideration to applying for the role. More information about FSS can be found at www.foodstandards.gov.scot.

Heather Kelman
Chair

Information about the role

Remuneration	The appointments are remunerated at the rate of £250.92 per day. You would also receive allowances at rates set by Scottish Government for relevant travel and subsistence costs. All reasonable expenses, will be paid to help you focus on your work with the Board.
Time commitment	Minimum 24 days per year up to a maximum of 48 days per year (non-pensionable). By the nature of a non-executive member role, the time commitment will vary week to week, but you must be able to make a firm commitment to spend on average a minimum of two days per month. This time will be a mix of daytime board meetings (which board members are required to attend), committee meetings, working groups, some stakeholder engagement (may include evenings), as well as development and strategy days and reading documents.
Length of appointment term	Appointments to these roles will be made for a term of **up to four years**. These appointments are being made during a period of significant Public Service Reform in Scotland. During this period, and depending on the implementation of future

	reforms, appointments may end earlier than anticipated or may be extended, subject to Ministerial decisions and legislative requirements. The successful candidates will, of course, be kept informed of any likely or actual changes to the term length as a result of the changing landscape. Applicants should be aware that as public appointments, these positions are held at the discretion of Scottish Ministers and do not constitute a contract of employment. Reappointment is subject to evidence of effective performance and having regard to the skills, knowledge, understanding and experience required by the Board at the time and there is no automatic right to reappointment. A non-executive member's total period of appointment will not exceed eight years. Applicants who have previously served on this public body should refer to the Q&A section on previous service and term limits.
Location of meetings	There are four open Board Meetings per year - in normal circumstances these are held in person at the organisation's headquarters in Aberdeen. A virtual Extraordinary Open Board Meeting may be held in November to approve the Annual Report and Account. The Board meets in seminar mode 4 times per year, these can be a virtual or in person meetings, depending on the topic. There are two sub-committees of the Board – The Audit and Risk Committee, and the Finance and Business Committee. Each

	Board Member sits on **one** of these Committees, which will meet 4 times per year.
Disqualifications	A member of the Scottish Parliament cannot also hold a public appointment for public bodies listed in the Schedule to the Scottish Parliament (Disqualification) Order 2025. Former Ministers and senior civil servants (Director General level and above) should ensure they comply with any applicable business appointment rules.

Food Standards Scotland

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) is the public sector food body for Scotland. We are here to ensure that information and advice on food safety and standards, nutrition and labelling is independent, consistent, evidence-based and consumer-focused.

Established as a non-ministerial office to protect the health and wellbeing of consumers through three statutory objectives set under the Food Scotland Act 2015

- to protect the public from risks to health which may arise in connection with the consumption of food,
- to improve the extent to which members of the public have diets which are conducive to good health, and
- to protect the other interests of consumers in relation to food.

We work closely with the Scottish Government – especially the Population Health Directorate and Food and Drink Division – but are independent from Ministers and directly accountable to the Scottish Parliament.

Our primary concern is consumer protection - making sure that food is safe to eat, ensuring consumers know what they are eating and improving nutrition. With that in mind, our vision is to deliver a food and drink environment in Scotland that benefits, protects and is trusted by consumers.

We do this by developing policies, providing advice, keeping consumers informed, and ensuring the enforcement of food regulations.

Collaboration is key to our work and we work closely with many organisations, government departments and stakeholders both within and beyond Scotland.

Online Engagement Event

An online engagement event will be held on MS Teams on Wednesday 18 November 2026 from 18.00-18.45. Potential applicants are encouraged to join to learn more about Food Standards Scotland and the role of a Board Member at the organisation. To join the event, please click on the link below:

Food Standards Scotland Board Member Recruitment Webinar | Food Standards Scotland

The role of the Public Body Member

As a body corporate, FSS is governed by the Board comprising the Chair and seven non-executive members, which is responsible for setting strategic direction. The Board papers, our policy recommendations and decisions are published on our website.

As a Member of Food Standards Scotland you will be expected to:

- ensure the Board acts in the best interests of the people of Scotland in the delivery of our statutory functions, and maintains public confidence in the organisation as a public body;
- ensure the Board develops vision, strategies and clear objectives to deliver organisational purpose in the context of Scottish Government policies and priorities;
- account individually and collectively for the effectiveness of the Board as it governs the organisation;
- provide purposeful scrutiny and assurance on the decisions the Board makes, ensuring the appropriate systems are in place to monitor organisation performance and impact, and effectively hold the executives to account;
- chair or participate as a member of sub-committees and working groups as part of deeper oversight, scrutiny and accountability process within the Board, ensuring all organisational functions are aligned with strategy and purpose;
- foster and champion a healthy organisational culture, modelling expected behaviours and values, and contribute to effective governance through the provision of support, scrutiny, and constructive challenge; and
- uphold the highest ethical standards of integrity and probity - being honest and trustworthy - and comply with the Board's Code of Conduct and the nine principles of

public life in Scotland, derived from those set out by the Committee of Standards in Public Life.

In doing this you will:

- attend Board meetings regularly;
- attend, or as appropriate Chair, committee or sub-group meetings as required;
- maintain a focus on strategy and performance (the Board should not be involved in the detail of day-to-day management);
- ensure that you are sufficiently informed to hold management to account for the implementation of Board decisions;
- promote a consumer focus, ensuring consumer interests are central to policy making;
- be impartial (Board members are not appointed on a representative basis for any sector or group);
- actively participate in collective decision making, and uphold collective decisions made by the Board; and
- be an ambassador for FSS, representing it positively and raising its profile as the organisation in Scotland responsible for food safety, standards and nutrition.

The selection panel

Chair	Fiona Quinn Head of Surveillance Unit, Scottish Government Population Health Directorate
Panel member	Heather Kelman, Chair, Food Standards Scotland

Please note that applicants will be asked to declare if they know any members of the selection panel who are named in this pack. The panel will also declare if they know any applicants. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed in line with the Ethical Standards Commissioners Code of Practice for Public Appointments.

Person specification

The Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Tourism and Transport is looking for two non-executive members who can put their experience to good use on the Board. The table below sets out the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that we are seeking and explains how the criteria will be tested. You may have gained your experience through work, in a voluntary capacity or through your own lived experience.

We are seeking to strengthen skills and experience on the board in relation to:

- Financial Leadership and Governance – this successful candidate will, in due course, be appointed to the role of the FSS Audit and Risk Committee, and
- Strategic Transformation and Regulatory Reform – to help navigate the organisation through the significant changes ahead, including the potential reshaping of our regulatory delivery model, within the context of a global food market.

In addition to <u>one</u> of these priority criteria, both successful candidates will also meet <u>all</u> of the essential criteria.

It is expected that the evidence you provide against the requirements sought at each of the assessment stages, as set out on the following pages, will also explicitly draw out how your behaviours and approach have been guided by these values; and this will be assessed throughout the process.

The priority criteria are weighted over the essential criteria, and the candidates who provide the strongest evidence against the priority criteria will be considered most able to fulfil the roles. In an event that candidates provide evidence of equal merit against the priority criteria, the panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the essential criteria in determining the candidate(s) most able to fulfil the roles.

Please note that you are required to choose <u>one</u> of the two priority criteria listed below at Section A and provide evidence of this. You must also demonstrate evidence against <u>all</u> of the Essential Criteria at Section B.

Criterion	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
A. Priority		
1. Financial leadership and governance experience at a strategic level	• Experience of financial management, audit and risk in a large organisation in the public, private or voluntary sector applying insight to support strategic decision-making, evidenced by appropriate qualification(s) in financial management. • Provides constructive challenge and scrutiny on financial performance, risk and assurance, supporting effective governance and accountability in a public sector context. • Applies financial expertise in a way that reflects an understanding of organisational purpose, public value and the wider operating environment, not solely technical compliance • Demonstrates experience in audit and risk, with the capability to lead an Audit and Risk Committee.	This will be assessed at application stage and at interview stage. **In your online application:** Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 500 words. **If you do not wish to apply for this role please enter n/a in your application.**
2. Experience in strategic transformation and regulatory reform in the public or private sector at national and/or international level	• Significant experience of leading or providing independent assurance over complex organisational or system-wide transformation, including restructuring, integration or fundamental changes to delivery models, with measurable outcomes and legislative change	This will be assessed at application stage and at interview stage. **In your online application:** Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 500 words.

	• Experience of navigation of complex regulatory or legislative environments, balancing independence, public interest, economic considerations and the consequences of policy decisions • Able to demonstrate influence across complex systems with a track record of securing outcomes across organisational boundaries, including working with government, regulators or other major stakeholders where interests or priorities may differ • Ability to contribute to oversight of change programmes and as a member of the Finance and Business or Audit and Risk Committees.	**If you do not wish to apply for this role please enter n/a in your application.**

Criterion	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
B. Essential		
1. Motivation and demonstrates FSS Values • Consumer and health focussed • Evidence based • Fair, proportionate and trusted • Independent • Inclusive, collaborative and open	• Able to clearly state reasons for becoming a board member of FSS and your ambitions within the role. • Able to draw on your life experience and behaviours to demonstrate how you meet and use these values to inform decisions and other activities • Able to identify and deal with behaviours that do not live up to our expectations • Able to represent effectively the interests of consumers or the public; respecting the diversity of our population • Aligns personal values with the organisation's purpose	This will be assessed at application stage and throughout the interview stage. **In your online application:** Please demonstrate how you meet the values. Your response should be no more than 400 words.
2. Ability to operate at a strategic level in change management and see the bigger picture	• Understanding the information required to make timely, evidence-based decisions • Future focused with an ability to contribute to the development of competent strategy that addresses future challenges and opportunities • Experience of horizon scanning and anticipating the need for change • Understands the principles of effective governance and the importance of legal, financial and regulatory compliance. • Appreciates and respects the different roles and responsibilities of staff and non-executive board members.	This will be assessed at application stage and throughout the interview stage. **In your online application:** Please demonstrate how you meet the values. Your response should be no more than400 words.

3. Ability to analyse and challenge constructively on complex information or issues, including assessing risks and opportunities	• Ability to offer challenge that supports effective decision making • Demonstrates independence of thought • Able to analyse and review complex issues, weighing up conflicting information and opinions, appreciate strategic implications including priorities, opportunities and risks. • Ability to question proposals constructively and enable others to question their own position.	This will be assessed at application stage and throughout the interview stage. **In your online application:** Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 400 words. We will ask you to complete a practical exercise **at interview** if you are shortlisted.
4. Ability to work co-operatively in a team setting, or in a group towards a common goal, and take collective responsibility for decisions	• Ability to listen to diverse voices and respect views that are different to your own • Ability to put your view across clearly and respectfully, and influence group decision making • Interpersonal skills to communicate and engage, building relationships, influencing and working collaboratively • Confidence and self-awareness to chair, or participate as a member of, committees that support good governance.	This will be assessed at application stage and throughout the interview stage. **In your online application:** Please demonstrate how you meet this criterion. Your response should be no more than 400 words. We will ask you to deliver a short **presentation at interview** if you are shortlisted.

Finally, you should provide a tailored CV/career history setting out your experience. This should be **no more than one two A4 pages** and show how the roles/positions you have held, and/or activities you have undertaken, are relevant to this role. **Please ensure you check the 'How to Apply' section for further details on how to upload this.**

How to apply online

1. Download and save this applicant information pack to refer to.
2. Read the 'person specification' section in this pack, and write your responses and tailored career history, noting the absolute word and page limits.
3. Save a copy of your responses and tailored career history to your device ready for upload.
4. Navigate back to the job advert and click 'apply'.
5. Complete the personal information and conflict of interest questions.
6. Attach your tailored career history as **one PDF document**. Your PDF should be uploaded using the 'Drop Resume Here' box that appears on the Supporting Documents and URLs section, or you can use the link function.
7. When prompted, provide evidence against the relevant boxes for the Priority Criteria and Essential Criteria. Please note that each response must not exceed 500 words for the Priority Criteria and must not exceed 400 words for each of the Essential Criteria.
8. Submit your online application by 17:00 on 4 December 2026.
9. **Please Note:** you do not have the option to edit your application once you click 'submit'. If you have submitted previous applications the online system will prepopulate your previous responses so please ensure that these are not included with your application. You must have all your information and attachments to hand before submitting your application.

We strongly recommend that you draft your answers in a word document and check that you are happy with them before copying and pasting your answers in the relevant sections of the online application.

Please note that any content exceeding the stated word limits will not be considered by the selection panel.

Late applications will not be accepted by the selection panel.

The online system has been extensively tested for compatibility with a range of assistive technologies. However, should you experience any difficulties accessing or using the system, please contact the Public Appointments Team at: Public.appointments@gov.scot

Application Advice

The selection panel will not make assumptions – for example from a job title – as to the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes you have gained. The Panel will review the evidence provided and invite to the second and final assessment stage those applicants who most closely meet the criteria being tested at this first stage of assessment. By the end of the selection process, you must have demonstrated that you have met the essential criteria to the satisfaction of the selection panel to be considered for appointment.

You should provide clear and succinct information about yourself and how you meet the criteria that are being tested at this application stage. When being asked to demonstrate knowledge, understanding or experience, you should describe how you gained this, the breadth and depth of this knowledge, understanding or experience and any situations where you have used this.

Please use specific evidence to support your answers that is relevant to the requirements being tested. Draw on evidence from your working and/or personal life, or through your participation with a private, public, voluntary, charity or community organisation. Please note that there are word limits at each of the sections.

Suggested preparation

- Take time to think about each of the criteria and think about the situations you have recently been involved in.
- Think how your actions and experiences led to results that demonstrate the criteria.
- Prepare your answers.

Your evidence

- Please be clear and succinct. You may be asked to expand on your answers at interview.
- Draw on evidence which best demonstrates your skills, knowledge or abilities in that area.

In providing your evidence, it would be helpful if you could explain your personal contribution, what you did and how you did it – use "I" not "we." Give the outcome – what happened? How effective was the result? How influential were your role, actions and interventions? What impact did you have?

Using the STARR method

When providing evidence against the criteria, you may find it helpful to structure your responses using the STARR method. This helps you present clear, concise, and relevant evidence and allows the selection panel to understand your individual contribution and impact.

- **Situation** – Briefly describe the context or background.
- **Task** – Explain your specific role or responsibility.
- **Action** – Describe what you did (use "I", not "we"), including how and why you took those actions.
- **Result** – Set out the outcome of your actions and what was achieved.
- **Reflection** – Where appropriate, reflect on what you learned, what you would do differently, or how this experience is relevant to the role of a Non-Executive Public body Member.

Using this approach will help you demonstrate not only what you did, but how you applied your skills, judgement, and values, and the impact of your contribution.

The assessment process

The assessment process will happen as follows:

1. The selection panel will assess all applications against the criteria for appointment (see the person specification). Those who demonstrate evidence that most closely meet the criteria tested at this stage will be shortlisted for interview.
2. The selection panel will interview candidates, the questions they ask will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. If you are invited to interview, you will be asked to complete a short practical exercise on the day of the interview.
3. The selection panel will also ask questions relevant to the fit and proper person test (see below) which will include questions about the Principles of Public life in Scotland.
4. The selection panel will review the evidence provided and agree on which candidates have most closely met the criteria for selection and should be recommended to the appointing Minister.

5. The appointing Minister will make a decision about whom to appoint based on evidence from the selection panel. The appointing Minister may request to meet with candidates before making a final decision.
6. Appointees will be asked to complete pre-appointment checks which will include a Disclosure Check (there is no charge for this). Appointment is conditional on satisfactory completion of these.

Guaranteed interviews

This appointment round will provide guaranteed interviews for disabled people who meet the criteria for the role being tested at the application stage. The selection panel will not know which applicants have requested a guaranteed interview until the shortlisting is complete.

Fit and proper person checks

In the context of public appointments, a fit and proper person is someone who is suitable because they meet the requirements of the role, and their past or present activities and behaviour means they are suitable. Tests are built into different stages of the appointment process to ensure that:

- Conduct to date has been compatible with the public appointment
- Membership is not barred by the body's constitution e.g., criminal record or bankruptcy (see disqualifications)
- There are no unmanageable conflicts of interest
- Political activity is declared
- There is agreement to abide by the Principles of Public life in Scotland
- There is confirmation that the time commitment required for the role can be met.

Media checks for candidates invited to interview

The selection panel may consider publicly available information about candidates, including posts on social media platforms. Any findings that the selection panel agree are pertinent to the role or that may call into question suitability for the appointment, credibility of the appointments process or the public body will be discussed with candidates at interview. Consideration of any issues will take place openly and transparently to establish the facts. Candidates will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns. This information will be handled in line with the Privacy Notice for public appointments.

Gender Representation on Public Body Boards (Scotland) Act 2018

The Gender Representation on Public Body Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 sets a gender representation objective that 50% of non-executive members of public body boards should be women.

Where two or more candidates are assessed as equally qualified for appointment, and at least one candidate is a woman and one is not, section 4(3) of the Act requires the appointing Minister to appoint the woman where this would help the public body achieve, or make progress towards achieving, the gender representation objective*.

Once you apply, the Scottish Government will write to you to collect the required information regarding your sex.

*To note, under section 4(4) of the Act, the appointing Minister may instead appoint a candidate who is not a woman where another characteristic or circumstance appropriately justifies doing so.

Common questions and answers

Who can I contact to speak about this role?	Please contact Christine Hill, Head of Private Office, Food Standards Scotland at christine.hill@fss.scot or on 07818 562905.
Who can I speak to about a disability related reasonable adjustment?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team Email: Public.appointments@gov.scot Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via contactSCOTLAND-BSL
I am having a problem with the application process who can I speak with?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team (see contact details above).
Do you have any advice for candidates attending interviews?	Yes. More information is provided here: Introduction - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
I can't attend the interview in person, can I attend remotely?	Yes. You can request to attend the interview using MS teams as a reasonable adjustment, or in case of bad weather. Please contact the Public Appointments Team. Email: Public.appointments@gov.scot

Will you reimburse expenses for attending an interview?	Yes. You can claim reasonable expenses. A claim form will be issued with your invitation to interview, along with instructions.
What does 'appointed on merit' mean?	Appointed on merit means that the people who are appointed most closely meet the criteria that is sought for the public body vacancy at a point in time. People are assessed on the evidence that they present in the appointments process and the findings of the fit and proper person test.
What role does the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC) have in the appointments process?	The ESC regulate and monitor the public appointments process. The Commissioner plays a role in ensuring appointments are made on merit and use fair methods. More information about the Commissioner's role is provided here: Public appointments Information leaflet | Ethical Standards Commissioner
Can I apply if I am not a British citizen?	Yes. You can apply if you are not a British citizen. However you must be legally entitled to work in the UK.
Would remuneration for a public appointment impact on my benefits?	Possibly. Taking up a remunerated public appointment may affect benefits payments. This will depend on individual circumstances and you should seek advice from your benefits provider. More information is provided here: Public appointments and welfare benefits: information - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Do the selection panel see information from the diversity monitoring form?	No. Diversity monitoring information provided by applicants is not shared with the selection panel. If applicants opt for a guaranteed interview this information will be shared with the selection panel. Information about a reasonable adjustment may be shared with the selection panel to ensure that requirements are met (e.g. if a BSL interpreter is required).
Do I need to provide an email address and contact details at application stage?	Yes. You must provide your contact details, including an email address, when submitting your application.

	This information is required so that we can contact you regarding your application and, if you are successful, to support the appointment process. As part of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) requirements, the Scottish Government may need to verify the identity and credentials of candidates who are recommended for appointment. Contact details are also needed by the public body to arrange induction. Applications submitted without the required contact information will be rejected.
How will my personal information be handled?	All personal information will be handled with great care and in line with UK GDPR and data protection requirements. Further information can be found in the Privacy Notice.
Can I get feedback on my application or interview?	Yes. You can request feedback. Candidates have 20 working days from the date of notification of the outcome of their application to make the request in writing to Public.Appointments@gov.scot.
Is any training provided if I am offered and take up an appointment?	Yes. Each public body has their own induction process and training offer, they will make contact directly should you be appointed. New appointees are also invited to attend an induction day hosted by the Public Bodies Support Unit of the Scottish Government.
Can I apply for a Chair role on a public body if I have already been a member of that public body?	Yes. Members can serve a maximum of 8 years on one public body in one role. The public body Chair is considered a different role and so current and previous members can apply.
Is it possible to hold more than one public appointment?	Yes. It is possible to have more than one public appointment. **However, please check the disqualification section in this pack for further details related to this specific public body.** You should also check that you can make the time commitment for an additional appointment and that there are no unmanageable conflicts of interest.

Are public appointments announced?	Yes. Every appointment is announced here: Public appointments: news releases - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) The public body may also announce new appointments on their own website and social media platforms. Information published will include a biography and details of any political activity within the last 5 years.
What standards are expected of public body members?	The conduct expected of public body members of Scottish public bodies is set out here: Members of devolved public bodies: model code of conduct - December 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)(this includes the Principles of Public Life)
How can I complain about the public appointments process?	Further information about the complaints process for public appointments can be found here: How to apply - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) Anyone concerned about public appointments can raise a complaint and have it independently investigated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner. Investigation process public appointments | Ethical Standards Commissioner

For further information

Please contact the Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government

Email: Public.appointments@gov.scot

Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via contactSCOTLAND-BSL

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba