



Online course

Principles of sensory science

Bridging the gap between consumer, food, and nutrition

Are you looking for an introduction in the world of sensory science with a focus on eating behaviour? Would you like to broaden and deepen your theoretical knowledge and gain the latest insights from present real world research? And are you looking for an integrated approach where food technology, consumer and nutrition science interact? Then this university-level online course is something for you!

Target group

This online course is designed for professionals with a BSc level by working experience or study. Understanding of basic statistical data analysis (e.g. T-tests, ANOVA) are pre-assumed. CEFR English level B2 'Upper intermediate' is advised, not obligatory.

Results

After successful completion of this course, you will:

- Have insight in basic theoretical principles of sensory science.
- Know how to select and apply sensory methods.
- Have an overview of functions and physiology of the flavour-related senses and how they interact.
- Have insight in design and setup of a sensory experiment.
- Know the challenges of setting up a sensory test in a scientific way.

"How do I get my user to go from "It needs to feel different." To "This feels great!?" This course has helped me with that. It offers a theoretical and practical overview of sensory science at an advanced level. The great attention to detail has lead to a high-quality progression in my understanding and skill."

Giles Catchside, Sensory Scientist at Haleon and former participant

Date	2 March - 22 May 2026
Location	Online
Duration	3 months, 85 study hours in total

Course instructor:
dr. Sanne Boesveldt, WUR, Division of Human Nutrition and Health

Outline and topics

The course includes course learning materials, practical tutorials, and knowledge clips. Students and faculty can interact on assignments. There is a course discussion platform for students to interact with each other. Additionally, there are interactive self-tests of the concepts and applications. During the programme 2 online live meetings (max 1 hour) will be scheduled to meet and interact with your fellow participants and the course experts.

Participants follow this online course at the same pace. The duration of the programme is 80-90 hours of study spread over the total period. During the course, fixed dates are set when assignments need to be handed-in, consisting of individual assignments and group discussions.



Programme

Within this 12 week programme you will be guided through the many interesting facets of sensory sciences.

Week 1 Introduction to sensory science

Fundamentals, Psychophysics and psychohedonics, Good sensory practice

Week 2-3 Discrimination sensory methods

Discrimination techniques, Signal detection theory and advanced topics

Week 4-5 Hedonic sensory methods and Threshold testing

Hedonic test methods, Context and bias in sensory science, Threshold testing

Week 6-7 The chemical senses: Smell, Taste and Trigeminal sensations

The sense of smell, The sense of taste, The trigeminal system

Week 8-9 Descriptive sensory methods

Descriptive analysis techniques, Selection and training of sensory panels

Week 10 Texture

Functions of (food) texture, perception and measurement

Week 11 Visual system

Color and appearance

Week 12 Interaction between the senses, food perception

Technical requirement

This course is available on the online learning platform of Wageningen University & Research. Professionals sign in with a personal account that gives 6 months access to the online course content.



Practical information



€ 1,495,- per person. You need to acquire the book *Sensory Evaluation of Food - Principles and Practices* by Lawless, Harry T., Heymann, Hildegarde as course reference book and for more in-depth knowledge.



Between 18 and 30 participants to secure small-scale teaching and personal involvement.



A digital micro-credentials certificate (EduBadge) with 3 study credits (ECTS) is issued upon completion. You can also receive a certificate that is designed for a business environment.

Registration

Enrollment is possible until the maximum number of participants is reached. Register via wur.eu/academy

Register

Wageningen Academy

We develop and organise courses for professionals, based on Wageningen University & Research expertise.

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tomorrow's business