



**The Royal Institute
of Public Health**

Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene

Qualification Specification

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INTRODUCTION

The RIPH Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene is designed principally for those who are, or intend to be, food handlers. A food handler is any person, in any type of food business, who handles food, whether open or packaged (food includes drinks and ice). This qualification may also be appropriate for people whose work requires them to enter food premises, e.g. equipment maintenance engineers, off-site business owners/managers and delivery personnel.

The course and qualification may be taken as a stand-alone certificate, or as part of a wider course of training.

It should be noted that in 2006 this qualification was superseded in the UK "National Qualifications Framework" by the "RIPH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering" and the equivalent qualifications pertaining to Manufacturing and Retail.

QUALIFICATION AIM

The aim of this qualification is to provide a basic knowledge of food hygiene.

OVERVIEW

Holders of this qualification will have knowledge and understanding of the importance of food hygiene, associated food hazards, good hygiene practice and controls based upon an awareness of food safety management systems. This is important to understanding and maintaining good practice in the handling, processing and preparation of safe food.

OUTCOMES SUMMARY

The candidate will know and understand the importance of food hygiene by being able to describe:

- How food hygiene contributes to food safety.
- The characteristics of food-borne illness.
- The effects of food-borne illness on consumers and food businesses.
- Legal Responsibilities.

The candidate will know and understand the nature of food hazards by being able to describe:

- Microbiological, Physical and chemical hazards
- The role of micro-organisms in food-borne illness and spoilage
- Types, sources, vehicles and routes of contamination

The candidate will know and understand good hygiene controls by being able to describe:

- HACCP-based food safety management systems
- Principles of design, layout and construction of food premises and equipment
- Methods of cleaning and disinfection
- Methods of waste control
- Pest control

- Food preservation
- Temperature control and storage
- Personal hygiene & health
- What to report to supervisors

Please see later for further details of these outcomes.

GUIDED LEARNING HOURS

6 - 9 guided learning hours are normally appropriate, depending upon the training needs of the students.

QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE

The RIPH Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene is a single unit qualification. All outcomes are assessed.

REGISTRATION OF TRAINING/EXAMINATION CENTRES

Trainers and organisations wishing to offer courses leading to the RIPH Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene should first apply for registration to RIPH.

Prospective trainers should have a minimum of an Intermediate or Level 3 food hygiene qualification at credit level, from a recognised awarding body such as RIPH, CIEH or RSPH together with relevant experience. All trainers must have a training qualification and/or experience of training.

Full details of registration procedures and application forms are available from the RIPH website.

PRE-COURSE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

There are no formal entry requirements.

ENTRY TO EXAMINATION

Candidates must have attended a full or part-time course of instruction, approved by RIPH and covering the syllabus detailed below.

Application for entry to the examination must be made through an RIPH registered centre to the **Qualifications Department, The Royal Institute of Public Health, 28 Portland Place, London, W1B 1DE**, to arrive at least two weeks before the date of the examination.

Centres may wish to make special arrangements for candidates for whom the standard examination format might present difficulties. Visit the RIPH website or contact the RIPH Qualifications Department for further information.

FORM OF ASSESSMENT

There is a single multiple-choice examination for this award consisting of one paper of 30 multiple-choice questions.

The duration of the examination is 45 minutes.

Candidates must gain a minimum of 20 marks to pass the examination.

EXAMINATION RESULTS AND CERTIFICATES

Centres will be supplied with a Results List stating whether candidates have passed or failed the examination.

Certificates for successful candidates are normally sent to Centres for distribution to candidates.

Certificates are awarded as follows:

- Pass 20-25 marks
- Credit 26-30 marks

Candidates who score 19 marks or below will fail the examination and will not be awarded a certificate.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Sample questions and answers are available upon request from the RIPH Qualifications Department.

USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Food Standards Agency (www.food.gov.uk) is the government watchdog for all food-related matters. It publishes useful information about food hygiene and safety.

Environmental health departments of local authorities may be able to offer a limited supply of leaflets regarding food hygiene.

The RIPH maintains a list of approved training packs and training courses.

PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES

Successful candidates may progress to the following food hygiene and safety qualifications:

- The RIPH Foundation Certificate in HACCP Principles
- The RIPH Intermediate Certificate in Food Safety
- The RIPH Intermediate Certificate in Applied HACCP Principles
- The RIPH Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering
- The RIPH Level 3 Award in Food Safety Supervision for Manufacturing
- The RIPH Level 3 Award in Food Safety Supervision for Retail

KEY SKILLS

The outcomes of the RIPH Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene provide opportunities for developing and assessing certain Key Skills. The examination does not directly assess Key Skills, but the knowledge required, if put into practice during a course, would require the application of Key Skills which might be independently assessed at the same time in line with published guidance. The sign-posting throughout the outcomes below direct teachers/trainers to areas that provide opportunities for independent assessment of Key Skills.

OUTCOMES DETAIL

1: THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD HYGIENE

The candidate will know and understand:

1.1 How food hygiene contributes to food safety.

1.1.1 What is meant by the term 'food hygiene'.

1.1.2 Why food hygiene is an integral part of a food safety management system.

1.2 The characteristics of food-borne illness.

1.2.1 The principal causes of food-borne illnesses.

1.2.2 The principal symptoms of food-borne illness.

1.3 The effects of food-borne illness on consumers and food businesses.

1.3.1 How good food hygiene practices benefit food businesses

1.3.2 How poor hygiene affects food businesses.

1.4 Legal Responsibilities.

- 1.4.1 The legal responsibilities of food handlers and food businesses.
- 1.4.2 The types of penalties applicable if a food handler or business contravenes legislation.
- 1.4.3 The hand washing facilities that must be provided for food handlers.
- 1.4.4 Appropriate First Aid materials that should be used by food handlers at work.
- 1.4.5 The correct procedure for food handlers to follow in cases of illness.
- 1.4.6 The role of the environmental health officer and other authorised officers.
- 1.4.7 The role and general enforcement powers of the food authorities.

Key Skills:

Outcome 1 may provide opportunities for demonstrating activities testing Key Skills in Working with Others

2: THE NATURE OF FOOD HAZARDS

The candidate will know and understand:

2.1 Microbiological, Physical and chemical hazards.

- 2.1.1 What is meant by a 'food hazard'.
- 2.1.2 How to recognise the three main types of hazard and their sources:
 - Microbiological
 - Physical
 - Chemical
- 2.1.3 The possible consequences of each type of hazard if not controlled.

2.2 The role of micro-organisms in food-borne illness and spoilage.

- 2.2.1 Categories and examples of pathogenic micro-organisms.
- 2.2.2 Common types of pathogenic bacteria, their sources and how they get into food.
- 2.2.3 The basic conditions affecting the growth, survival and death of micro-organisms.
- 2.2.4 The meaning of the terms 'bacterial spore' and 'toxin', the conditions for their formation and the consequences for food safety.
- 2.2.5 How to identify high-risk foods, and give examples of high-risk foods.
- 2.2.6 The effect of applying heat to toxins produced by micro-organisms and naturally occurring toxins (e.g. red kidney beans), sporing bacteria and non-sporing bacteria.

2.3 Types, sources, vehicles and routes of contamination.

- 2.3.1 The meaning of contamination and cross-contamination.
- 2.3.2 The principal sources, vehicles and routes of contamination and cross-contamination.
- 2.3.3 The dangers associated with food allergens.
- 2.3.4 The most hazardous areas for possible cross-contamination.
- 2.3.5 How to prevent contamination and cross-contamination.

Key Skills:

Outcome 2 of the syllabus may provide opportunities for demonstrating activities testing Key Skills in Problem Solving

3: GOOD HYGIENE CONTROLS

The candidate will know and understand:

3.1 HACCP-based food safety management systems.

- 3.1.1 What the acronym 'HACCP' stands for.
- 3.1.2 The purpose of HACCP.
- 3.1.3 The meaning of 'Hazard Analysis' and examples.
- 3.1.4 What a Critical Control Point (CCP) is.
- 3.1.5 The purpose of a control measure.
- 3.1.6 Examples of monitoring Critical Control Points.

3.2 Principles of design, layout and construction of food premises and equipment.

- 3.2.1 The appropriate characteristics of a food preparation area with respect to food preparation surfaces.
- 3.2.2 The appropriate characteristics of a food preparation area with respect to walls, floors and ceilings.
- 3.2.3 The appropriate characteristics of a food preparation area with respect to equipment and protective clothing.
- 3.2.4 How the design of food premises plays an important role in food safety.

3.3 Methods of cleaning and disinfection.

- 3.3.1 The functions of cleaning chemicals and when they should be used.
- 3.3.2 The correct types of product for use in a cleaning operation.
- 3.3.3 Procedures for the safe use of cleaning chemicals.
- 3.3.4 The practices to be observed when storing cleaning chemicals.
- 3.3.5 The purpose of cleaning schedules for premises and equipment.
- 3.3.6 Common difficulties in cleaning premises and equipment, including 'Clean In Place (CIP).'

3.4 Methods of waste control.

- 3.4.1 The correct storage and disposal of unsound/unfit foods.
- 3.4.2. How and why waste food and refuse should be stored and disposed of properly.

3.5 Pest control.

- 3.5.1 Why food safety hazards from pests must be prevented or controlled.
- 3.5.2 How to detect evidence of pest infestation.
- 3.5.3 The main hygienic methods for preventing infestations.
- 3.5.4 The action that must be taken if pests are suspected in the workplace.

3.6 Food preservation.

- 3.6.1 The main reasons for preserving food.
- 3.6.2 Explain the main methods of preserving foods and what they are used for.

3.7 Temperature control and storage.

- 3.7.1 What is meant by temperature control.
- 3.7.2 The temperature range of the "Danger Zone" and what it means.
- 3.7.3 The general rules to be observed when thawing, heating, cooling and re-heating foods.
- 3.7.4 The various types of temperature measuring equipment and their use.
- 3.7.5 The basic rules to be observed when storing food and using temperature control equipment.
- 3.7.6 Types of food that must be stored and handled under temperature-controlled conditions, the temperature ranges (legal and recommended) and the reasons why.
- 3.7.7 Food that may be safely stored at ambient temperatures.

3.7.8 General rules to be observed when storing foods that do not require refrigeration.

3.7.9 The differences between legal date markings on food packages.

3.8 Personal hygiene & health.

3.8.1 The principal food safety hazards associated with the human body.

3.8.2 The basic rules to be observed with regard to personal hygiene.

3.8.3 How to ensure that hands are washed and cared for correctly.

3.8.4 Unhygienic personal habits and behaviour that must be avoided in a food handling area.

3.8.5 Types of protective clothing and how they prevent contamination to food.

3.8.6 What is meant by a 'carrier'.

3.8.7 What must be done in the case of illness and medical conditions.

3.9 What to report to supervisors.

3.9.1 Matters that must be reported to supervisors:

Key Skills:

Outcome 3 of the syllabus may provide opportunities for demonstrating activities testing Key Skills in Problem Solving, Application of Number, Communication and Working With Others