

Examiner's report

CTSI Professional Competency Framework

Stage 2: Product Safety Written Examiner's Report May 2021

General

A total of seven candidates sat the product safety paper, of which six passed with marks ranging from 31 to 54.

Candidates attempted two longer questions and four shorter ones. The examination addressed a large section of the syllabus, but candidates were able to choose from a selection of questions to focus on their strengths.

It was clear that many candidates had focussed on the face-to-face materials more than the distance learning modules, which missed opportunities to gain marks.

The paper could be answered using the legislative framework which existed both before and after the UK's exit from the European Union.

Section A

Candidates were required to answer four out of six short answer questions which were written to reflect the large range of knowledge necessary to carry out product safety work. Questions carried ten marks each. Students generally addressed the question as it was phrased although occasionally the point was missed. Bullet points were used by a number of candidates, and this is perfectly acceptable.

All questions were attempted by at least one candidate, and although the marks were relatively easy to get, and many showed a good knowledge of legislation some candidates missed the focus of the question and wasted time noting down lots of information which was not relevant. If candidates consider that there are roughly ten marks to be awarded this will often equate to ten pieces of information to be supplied, and easy marks were missed while setting out unnecessary detail.

Section B

Candidates were required to choose two out of four longer questions in this section, each carrying thirty marks.

Question 7 was a relatively straightforward question which asked candidates to apply the GPSR to a tool hire business, and some scored relatively well, but marks in relation to producer's obligations were missed due to incorrect identification of the business as a distributor. It is important that candidates are clear on the obligations and definitions of the various economic operators in the product supply chain.

Question 8 was topical in that it related to respiratory masks and the Covid-19 pandemic. Good knowledge of what can be considered PPE and what requirements apply to products which claim that they can protect the user from hazards was shown by some candidates, although marks were missed by some due to a misunderstanding of the regulatory framework that applied in this case.

Question 9 related to the safety of wooden toys. The candidates that answered it correctly identified the correct conformity assessment routes although they struggled on the second part of the question in relation to manufacturer's obligations when planning for corrective actions.

Question 10 was the first time that an essay type question has been used in this examination and it was attempted by a number of candidates with varying degrees of success. It asked for a comparison between obligations of economic operators and the due diligence defence and easy marks were available for laying out what the obligations of the various economic operators are under the NLF but these were often missed. The due diligence defence was discussed in much more detail, although citing legal authorities without explaining what the decision means does not add much to the answer. Overall, the answers provided were of a reasonable standard however.