

CTSI Professional Competency Framework - Frequently Asked Questions

The Education Team have noticed an increase in similar questions being sent to us so have put together a frequently asked questions document to hopefully cover these.

Q1:	What is the structure of the CTSI Professional Competency Framework (CPCF)?
A:	<p>The CTSI Professional Competency Framework (CPCF) has three stages with three individual awards. Stage 1 is made up of Unit 1 Regulatory Environment and Enforcement, Unit 2 Business and Consumer Legal Frameworks and Unit 3 Trading Standards Law Part 1 which upon completion will obtain the Trading Standards Practitioner Certificate (TSPC).</p> <p>Stage 2 is made up of Unit 4 Weights and Measures, a Unit 4 option (Food, Feed or Product Safety), Unit 5 Investigations and Unit 6 Regulating Markets. Upon completion of Stage 2 you will obtain the Trading Standards Practitioner Diploma (TSPD).</p> <p>Stage 3 is a project-based qualification. The project is an 8,000-word document that is linked to trading standards and should be of benefit to the authority, region or the profession. Upon completion the Trading Standards Advanced Practitioner Diploma (TSAPD) will be awarded.</p> <p>You can see a visual picture and more detail of the structure via this link.</p>
Q2:	When can I register into the CPCF?
A	<p>There is one exam cycle taking place in May each year. Registration for the cycles open in the June of each year in preparation for the following cycle.</p> <p>Registration for training and for the examinations are two separate entities.</p>
Q3:	Can I book onto the training and the examinations together?
A	<p>Registration for the training and for the assessments are two separate entities. Training can be undertaken separately without going onto complete the assessments if you so wish.</p> <p>It is however recommended to complete the training as this provides knowledge for the subject area which will then support the assessments.</p>
Q4:	How much will the CPCF cost?
A	<p>Training and assessment fees are separate as mentioned above. CTSI's fee structure can be found on the website for both the examinations and training. Candidates register for the whole stage or if the candidate has exemptions, we have separate fees.</p> <p>We also offer a package for RCO candidates.</p> <p>When completing each stage, payment is for registration as well as the assessments (exams, portfolios, practical's etc). The registration option isn't at the top of the booking page but is mandatory when registering for exams.</p>

Q5:	How many portfolios will there be?
A	<p>Portfolios are elements in Stage 2 only.</p> <p>Each unit at stage 2 will have a portfolio requirement (Weights and Measures, Food, Feed, Product Safety, Investigations and Regulatory Markets).</p> <p>Please be aware that Food, Feed and Product Safety are options under Unit 4 and a minimum of one of these is to be taken. If the candidate wishes to complete more than one of the options then you can do so.</p> <p>The generic portfolio must be submitted alongside the first subject portfolio submission.</p> <p>Portfolio guidance can also be found on the CTSI website.</p>
Q6:	What will the assessment structure look like for portfolios?
A	<p>The assessment structure for portfolio's is implemented by the assessors (usually a qualified person within your local authority).</p> <p>Training for internal assessors is now online only).</p> <p>Example assessment plans are also available for guidance. Portfolios are then assessed by a regional verifier.</p>
Q7:	Where will exams be held?
A	<p>CTSI try and make the examinations as convenient as possible for all candidates by having venues across the United Kingdom and offering a hybrid approach.</p> <p>We typically have a venue in Essex (The CTSI Head Office), a Welsh venue, a Scottish venue and a Preston venue.</p> <p>Candidates do have the option to sit their exams at their offices.</p>
Q8:	The CPCF has introduced new forms of assessment like reports, case studies and reflective learning. When will these need to be completed?
A	<p>The report, case study and reflective learning are the three different types of coursework for Stage 1.</p> <p>All coursework, the report (Unit 3), case study (Unit 2) and reflective learning (Unit 1) have guidance documents available for use on the CTSI website and will need to be completed before the written examinations are undertaken.</p> <p>The coursework deadlines in order to complete the May exam cycle is the 1 March prior to the exams.</p>
Q9:	I have got prior qualifications; will these give me any exemptions from the new framework?
A	<p>A quick guide is available for TSQF holders. For DCA holders, please contact the Education Team direct for information (qualifications@tsi.org.uk).</p> <p>Our transition quick-guide is available to find out if your prior qualifications align to the CPCF.</p> <p>If the exemption the candidate wishes to obtain is over 5 years old, they will need to go through the Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) route.</p>

	Please read through the information on the website and guidance first. If you have any questions, please contact the team on 01268 582242 or qualifications@tsi.org.uk
Q10:	Can I complete Stage 1 and Stage 2 at the same time?
A	<p>As per our regulations, Stage 1 will need to be completed in full before the candidate can move onto Stage 2 of the framework.</p> <p>Stage 1 has a time-frame of one year so will need to be completed in one exam cycle.</p> <p>Stage 2 can then be undertaken under the next exam cycle but this can be broken down any way you choose to do so as the time-frame for this stage is 2 years.</p> <p>When we were working to introduce the qualification, new the QAB deemed that in order to obtain a fully competent officer, Stage 1 and Stage 2 together would therefore provide this to the candidates.</p>
Q11:	Can I complete one element only under the CPCF?
A	<p>Under the CPCF, a decision was made that units cannot be undertaken individually as it was deemed that in order for an award to be given, all aspects will need to be completed in full.</p> <p>You are able to complete a training element only to achieve the knowledge in an area but would not be able to complete a standalone exam.</p> <p>The only exemption to this rule is if you are DCATs qualified and are looking to do an additional element of Stage 2.</p>
Q12:	I have looked at the exemption information and I feel that I should be entitled to an exemption. What do I do to have this looked at?
A	<p>All effort was made by both the QAB to review all aspects relating to exemptions.</p> <p>The QAB have made available an exemptions process, to enable you to refer to them your query and to provide evidence to them that will allow them to review your exemptions.</p>
Q13:	I have had some things occur that mean I am not ready to sit my examinations or submit my coursework in time. What can I do?
A	<p>If you have had circumstances arise which means you cannot meet deadlines or are not ready for your examinations in the May cycle, you have the option to complete an extenuating circumstances form. This form will need to detail which circumstances have occurred with any proof if the circumstance is medical etc.</p> <p>The policy and form are now one editable document.</p> <p>The form is then sent to the QAB for them to review if we can accept the form.</p>
Q14:	I am a Regulatory Compliance Officer Apprenticeship (RCO) delegate. How can I enter the CPCF?
	<p>If you are currently going through or have completed the Regulatory Compliance Officer Apprenticeship (RCO) you can enter Stage 1 with exemptions from Unit 1 and Unit 2 and complete Unit 3 only.</p> <p>We offer a package which includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unit 3 examination and coursework - Unit 1 and Unit 2 exemptions - Unit 1 and Unit 2 distance learning notes - Unit 3 distance learning notes and training days

	<p>We offer this package which is inclusive of everything within Stage 1. We also provide the distance learning materials for Unit 1 and Unit 2 as mapping showed that some of our learning was not included within the RCO.</p> <p>This is to make sure your knowledge is at the same level as someone who did Stage 1 as a whole.</p>
Q15:	<p>Can I sit my examinations without submitting my portfolio beforehand?</p>
	<p>In order to sit any practical, oral and professional interviews you must first complete your corresponding portfolio. This is to ensure that the knowledge you acquire when completing your portfolio is used in your examinations.</p> <p>We also recommend you complete prior to the written examinations but there is no requirement for this in the regulations.</p>