

## CPCF Stage 2 Professional Interview guidance for candidates

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This guidance document will outline what will occur during your professional interview. Where there is a particular piece of information that we want you to pay attention to. You will see the **Information** symbol.

### Overview

#### Stage 2 assessments

This stage of the framework utilises a number of different types of assessment.

- Written exam
- Practical
- Oral
- Reflective Learning
- Professional Interview
- Portfolio

Each Unit and in particular each subject, will utilise different assessment methods. For Weights and Measures, Investigations and Regulating Markets, the professional interview will be utilised to determine the knowledge and skill of the candidate. This will be completed within a 30min exam.

### The Objective

The purpose of the professional interview is to apply your knowledge of process and requirements, to the assessment being asked.

The professional interview will recognise and identify the application of the knowledge you have learnt. You will demonstrate to the examiner (and moderator), **for example**, elements on:

- procedure, or
- effective intelligence gathering.

The examiner will have the breadth of the syllabus to draw on when setting scenarios and the associated questions they will ask you during the interview. They will utilise set assessment criteria to mark your performance against.

The following guidance sets out how this will be achieved. Please ensure you have read through this guidance sheet.

## Assessment

The examiner will ask you set questions that are linked to the scenario you were assigned. The answers you give during your interview, allows for the evaluation of your learning and knowledge. The professional interview allows for the examiner to judge first-hand how well you know the specific processes.

You will need to meet specific assessment criteria to a sufficient degree to meet a minimum of 40% to enable a pass.

Ensure you are fully aware of the entire syllabus. Use your portfolio as part of your revision preparation to ensure the linked skills requirement has an equal basis within your knowledge base to help you through your examination.

An audio/video recording will be taken during your examination to enable the examiner to refer back to the interview. They will utilise this recording during the marking process. As with written answer booklets, the audio file is not available to candidates post the results being emailed to candidates.

## Professional Interview - the basics

Assessment Medium:	Professional Interview
Format:	30 min examination (total)
Preparation time:	10 mins
Assessment:	20 mins
Pass mark:	40%



The assessment will be carried out by a 30-minute interview. You will have 10 mins preparation time before you sit with the examiner. You will be allowed to make notes during this 10-minute preparation time. You will bring these with you into the exam room.

Where a scenario may include references to particular products, for example food products, feed products, toys etc, however, the focus of the scenario will be on the process and requirements. This will not be a test of, for example, of your food knowledge. All scenarios and their associated questions asked by the examiner will be appropriate for all candidates to answer. **Any references to food, toys etc, are there for context only.**

A moderator may be present during your interview, for the odd exam. Where a moderator is present, they are there to ensure the examiner carried out the examination and marking correctly and are not assessing you. They will listen to a percentage of the audio files that will include ALL fails to ensure consistency and standardisation across the entire exam

You will be presented with a scenario that you will have a set timeframe to prepare for. The scenarios will be assessed/marked against set criteria.

No communication other than any instructions given at the start of the preparation time will be allowed. When you have been taken through to the exam room in preparation for the interview, the examiner will provide you with any final instruction at that point. This will not affect the preparation that you have completed.

All results will be confirmed during the QAB ratification meetings and you will receive your results on the published date via email.

To enable you to sit the professional interview, you will have submitted the relevant portfolio(s), (for weights and measures, you will also have submitted your reflective statement) associated to the Unit you are completing by the published deadline\*. This will be submitted to your assigned regional Verifier. If the portfolio is not submitted, you will be withdrawn from the exam.

\* unless any superseded deadline dates notified by CTSI.

## What will the professional interview demonstrate?

For the subject you are taking your professional interview in, the areas below indicate what the examiners will be looking at during the course of the examination:

- The application of knowledge.
- Width/depth of the syllabus.
- Problem solving.
- Powers.
- Communication.
- Comprehension.
- Ability to verbally relay knowledge in a confident manner.

## General tips

The subject areas that have a professional interview, each have their own process that you would undertake in the workplace. The professional interview should show the application of your knowledge to the scenario you have been presented.

Below are the examiners top tips:

- The examiner's purpose is to establish **your** knowledge level. They **will not** provide prompts to you to remind you of information/areas etc. Their job will be to directly question you using pre-set questions and record your answers.

The answers you give will show them how much you understand the processes and requirements aligned to the scenario provided during your 10-minute preparation time.

- Try to remain relaxed and calm. This will help you during your exam. This enables you to clearly communicate with the examiner and will help with ensuring you get across your answers in a concise manner.
- Make good use of the preparation time by making plenty of notes using bullet points so that your notes are easy for you to refer to during the interview. Also remember that you can refer to your notes as often as you need to, during the interview.
- During your reading time consider the scenario and the aspects you would consider if this came up at work. Resolve the problem presented Present the solutions you would do in the 'real' world.
- Listen carefully to the questions being asked and then read through the question as written, so that you fully understand what is being asked. Then tailor your responses accordingly to answer those questions.
- The questions to be asked will build on the scenario given.
- Don't just throw any answer to the question is wont give you makes – it has to be relevant to the question being asked.
- Examiners want you to identify what you are doing and why, not what you know. This is assessed elsewhere.
- Once you have answered all the questions, check how much time is remaining. If there is time left in the assessment, then you are able to go back to any previous questions to provide additional information.
- Ensure your answers to questions specifically relate to the scenario rather than answering generally.
- You will not gain any marks for quoting legislation or matters that are not being asked.
- Use all the time that is allocated for the professional interview. It is your time to use and questions can be repeated and further answers considered when marking.

## **Weight and Measures:**

### **In addition to the previous tips:**

- consider what elements are being examined by it. Knowledge is covered in the written exam, testing of equipment in the practical, and the ability to communicate technical information in the oral. So that leaves the practicalities of doing the job to be covered in the professional interview.
- scenarios are usually based on situations a newly qualified officer might find themselves in, such as the verification of a scale, a short measure complaint, discovering unverified equipment etc.
- Candidates should fully consider the scenario and respond appropriately.
- The interview would look to establish what a candidate would actually do in those situations:
  - what practical steps will you take,
  - what information do you need to gather, and
  - what advice will you give.

These are common themes across the scenarios.

- Expected answers are fairly straight forward. For example, when asked what information they would need to gather for the verification of a weighbridge, not one candidate said they would find out the address or who was paying the bill. And if asked what advice would be given, I'm expecting references to (and knowledge of) the standard guidance they could supply to a trader. Few candidates mention Business Companion, OPSS guidance, WELMEC etc
- The Examiner may not look for overly strict interpretations of the applicable regulations; there needs to be some sort of acknowledgement of the greyer areas such as borderline results.
- Also, if the scenario speaks about routine inspections, I don't expect answers to refer to initial verification, but that probably comes down to the candidates not being sufficiently exposed to weights and measures inspections in their authority and getting confused between the two.

Consequently, the most important piece of advice to give would be to get out on as many inspections as possible. This, and thorough completion of the portfolio, is the best preparation

### **The process on the day:**

- Log onto the provided link via teams
- Introduction is by CTSI staff to check room and ID and start recording
- Examiner comes into the team meeting and CTSI staff leave
- The scenario is brought onto the screen and 10 minutes reading time is started.
- Examiner will turn off camera and microphone during the reading time.
- The examiner will come back onto screen at the end of the time and work through each question with you.
- There are 5 questions with no supplementary questions asked.
- You will have 20 minutes to work through the questions
- The interview is free form and the examiner will move onto the next question as you naturally come to the end of what you are saying.
- If time allows then you may want to review the scenario and questions again and inform the examiner you want to add to your answer for a question. This is fine to do.