

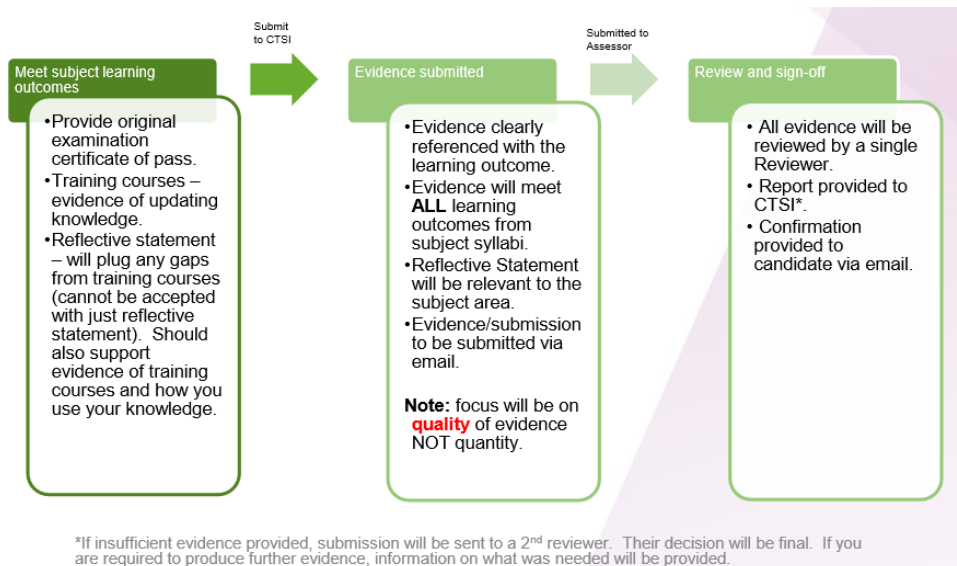
Qualification Framework Assessment of Prior Learning Guidance



This guidance document will provide you with advice on collating together your evidence for the submission of your prior learning. The symbol on the left will indicate where we feel you need to take special note of information.

Overview

The purpose of the assessment of prior learning process is to prove that since taking your exam in the subject area you are seeking an exemption from, that you have kept this knowledge up to date. The process diagram below gives an overview of that process.



The Objective

You will collate together your evidence that meets the learning outcome for the subject area you want recognition for an exemption.

“Recognition of prior learning is about using a learner’s evidence of earlier learning and achievement towards as part of a qualification”

Your evidence should meet the following criteria:

- valid;
- current;
- reliable;
- authentic; and
- sufficient.

The following guidance sets out how this will be achieved. Please ensure you have read through this guidance sheet prior to starting on your prior learning requirements.

The Qualification Panel have determined that to enable you to get an exemption against the full Unit requirement*, you will have to show both, up to date knowledge retention but also how you utilise your knowledge and the linkage with your day to day role.

Ask yourself: “how do I use my knowledge in practice?”

Showing how you use your knowledge in practice provides the reviewer with a wider evidence-basis to make a judgement on whether you have met the prior learning criteria.

You will show how you use your knowledge in practice by the completion of the reflective statement element that is part of the evidential requirements for this process.

Using the guidance on reflection, found on page 5 of this document, enables you to constructively outline how you use your knowledge. Identifies to you where you need to increase your knowledge and emphasises your strengths and weaknesses. Do not assume that if you are weaker in an area that this will go against you during the prior learning process. This actually shows the Reviewer that you are capable of identifying when your knowledge is becoming out of date and that you can take appropriate steps to ensure it is brought up to date.

You may find as you work through this process that there are areas of knowledge that are out of date. Again, this is not a problem. Make sure you indicate this as part of your evidence within your reflective statement and provide information on how you went about updating your knowledge to the Reviewer.

An active part of a Trading Standards practitioner’s role is to be pro-active and ensuring you are working at the top of your knowledge and abilities.

Indicating that you are aware of a piece of legislation, for example, is due to go out of date later in the year, again, gives the reviewer the confidence that you understand where your knowledge level is and are aware of future changes.

* An exemption against the whole unit/subject for Food, Feed and Weights and Measures is only granted if you have been awarded a certificate previously for these subjects. Please see the transition guidance information for further details. In these cases, you do not need to go through the prior learning process.

If you have not received certification in these subjects, then you will only be given an exemption if you have completed the specific assessment previously.

For example: If you have completed the Legal Metrology Technology and separately the Law papers, you will be given an exemption against the Qualification Framework Weights and Measures written exam only. If you completed the Practical and Oral, then an exemption, on the condition of providing the required evidence, will be granted against these exams.

You will not be given an exemption against the reflective statement assessment nor the professional interview assessment. These will still be required to be completed. You will also need to complete any portfolio requirement as necessary.

What do I need to do?

Evidence

Using the criteria outlined on page 1, the reviewer will want to see evidence that shows how you have met the learning outcomes of the subject/Unit you are seeking exemption from. They want to see how you have kept your knowledge up to date.

The following illustrates the steps you will need to take prior to submission to CTSI and what CTSI will carry out on your behalf.

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Step ONE | Confirming prior examination(s) | Provide a copy of your certificate and result transcripts proving you have passed an examination in the subject area. Provide a copy of the module descriptor which details what was covered if this is a non-accredited qualification. |
| Step TWO | Proof of updating | Look at the learning outcomes for your subject. Look at our evidence. Provide the most appropriate piece of evidence. It isn't about the quantity of evidence you provide, but the quality and suitability of it. |
| Step THREE | Reflective Statement | This should act as a supportive document to plug holes and to reflect on the knowledge you have gained over the years and how you use it. |
| Step FOUR | Submission | Complete submission form and submit all paperwork electronically to the CTSI Education Team. |
| Step FIVE | Review | CTSI will sent submission to the reviewer to look over your evidence. * |
| Step SIX | Sign off and confirmation | Outcome emailed to you confirming the exemption(s) you have available. |

* When a reviewer feels that a candidate has not met the above criteria and proven that they have kept their knowledge up to date, a second reviewer will be asked to look at the submission. The decision of the second reviewer is final.

In cases where you are asked to provide further evidence, an indication of what is needed will be provided by the second reviewer and passed to the candidate.

What is my main focus for submitting evidence?

The focus for your evidence will be against the learning outcomes that are found in each of the syllabi subject documents.

You can find the syllabi in the stage 1 or stage 2 tabs within the qualification's resources area.
<https://www.tradingstandards.uk/practitioners/training-development/qualifications-resources>

Look at the section within your syllabi document that says, **Learning Outcomes**. Please note, the number of learning outcomes will differ between each syllabus, you must meet **all** learning outcomes to enable the exemption to be granted.

Set out per learning outcome:

- How have you met this learning outcome?
 - Look at what courses you attended;
 - how they fit in with this subject syllabus.
 - Have they shown you have met the learning outcome?
 - Is it appropriate?

The key thing to remember is that the Reviewer **will not** look through a large quantity of copious amounts of certificates and the information on what was learnt on each course. This will be sent back to you.

Keep reminding yourself throughout the process of collating together your evidence, **it is the quality of the evidence and not the quantity that will gain you your exemption.**

The Reviewer wants to see that you have looked through your evidence properly and have filtered it down to key pieces of evidence. We have not put a maximum set number of pieces of evidence to be submitted on your submission, but the Reviewer **will not** just look at a copy of your personal development plan and certificates to see whether you have met the requirements. **This is your job to do.**

Unless we can see that you have reviewed your evidence properly and selected pieces of evidence from your personal development plan, then you will receive an email from the team to state that you are required to look at your evidence again and demonstrate that you have undergone this process.

What do I do once I have gathered my evidence together?



You will need to complete the Prior Learning **Submission form** (found in the qualifications resources; Assessment of prior learning, area of the website). We have kept this in word format so that you can type in your information, if you wish to.

You will need to number each piece of evidence and list them within the table (pg3 of the submission form). It is important that you indicate the Subject you are claiming it against and the learning outcome you believe it meets.

Write this same information on the top of your evidence. This will ensure it correlates for the Reviewer.

Check to ensure you have provided evidence for each learning outcome for each subject area you are claiming for an exemption.

If you are claiming for more than one subject, section out your list on the form so it is clear to the Reviewer.

You may find that a piece of evidence meets more than one subject area, learning outcome. This is fine. You don't need to put repeated copies of the same piece of evidence per subject exemption, just refer the Reviewer to same evidence by re-using the evidence number again on the form.

The other area that the Qualification Panel have determined is necessary to prove you have kept your knowledge up to date is the inclusion of a reflective statement. There is no set number word count, but you must ensure you have sufficiently shown you have met the requirements as detailed previously on page 2.

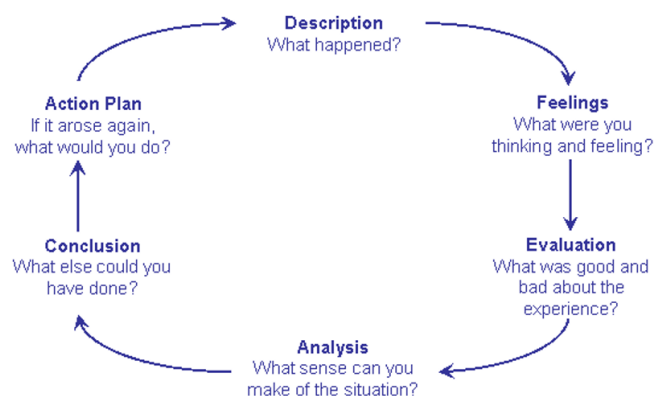
The following outlines what a reflective piece of work is.

Reflection:

Whatever you are reflecting on, the following points are important:

- Reflection is an exploration and explanation of events – not just a description.
- Reflection often involves revealing anxieties, errors and weaknesses, as well as strengths and successes.
- It is usually necessary to select just the most significant parts of the event or idea on which you're reflecting. Don't try to tell the whole story, or you will end up only describing rather than reflecting.
- It is often useful to reflect forward to the future – when you might do something differently as a result of reflecting – as well as reflecting back on the past.

Gibbs' model of reflection (1988)



Taking the points above, utilise them to show the Reviewer how you have used your knowledge in practice.

When you have finished, number your reflective work as a piece of evidence and what subject area this is relating to. If you are seeking an exemption from more than one subject area, you can have one document to cover all areas for your reflective piece of work. Make sure you clearly define each area within it so the Reviewer knows what subject area you are reflecting on. In these cases, on the form, just indicate on the form ALL the areas you have included within your reflective piece of work.

For example: If you are seeking exemption from all three Stage 1 units, within your reflective learning document, you would have a section for each Unit.

Unit 1: Regulatory Environment and Enforcement,
Unit 2: Business and Consumer Legal Frameworks.
Unit 3: Trading Standards Law Part 1.

Remember to number each paragraph. If you find that you have already shown knowledge elsewhere as they are closely linked, then reference the paragraph number for the Reviewer to look back at. Number each paragraph, they should be continuously numbered throughout the document. Don't re-start the number if you are starting your reflection on a new subject area, otherwise it will be confusing for the Reviewer if you need to refer them to a previous section/area.

To make it easier on yourself, try to keep what you are writing about succinct, to the point, but ensuring you have outlined how you are using your knowledge in practice.

It is very easy to divert from your original area you were writing up about. Keep checking back on what it is you need to convey across to make sure you haven't gone 'off topic'. If it helps, map out what you want to say to focus your mind.

You can also ask someone to proof read what you have written. Ask them to check:

- Does it make sense?
- Does it cover what you originally planned for it to cover?
- Do they feel you have missed some areas out? *
- Ask them to question you on it, this may tease out something you haven't thought about but may be important to gaining your exemption.

* This is a useful method of ensuring you have covered everything, but a cautionary note is needed here.

Whatever suggestions that are made, check to ensure you feel they fit in with what you are being asked to prove. Again, quality of the areas you cover is essential. If you are discussing something not related to the subject area learning outcome, the Reviewer cannot give you credit for these areas.

What are the pitfalls?



Describing:

The reflective statement is not an exercise in describing everything you have done since you sat and passed your exam.

The reflective statement is used to show how you have grown your knowledge, updated it and used it since you passed your exam.

Reminding yourself that you are not describing but reflecting on how you have used your knowledge and whether you feel there is more for you to learn etc, is a key element to this piece of work.

Keep reminding yourself: “reflect not describe”.

Rambling:

It is easy to fall into a rambling monologue of information. This isn't what the Reviewer needs to see.

The following are suggestions that may help you to combat this from happening:

- try breaking up what you are writing about into smaller bitesize chunks.
- Don't write it all up in one go.
- Give yourself a break and come back to it at another time.
- Re-read what you have written with a fresh pair of eyes.

All of the above points may help you to stop going off on a tangent. It is very easy to find you have inadvertently tripped into this and re-reading when you have had a break or the next day, enables you to evaluate what you have written to determine whether you are straying off the path you wanted to write about.

Ok, I've got everything together, now what?



Finally, when you have written everything you need and have collated together your evidence, double check your submission information section of the submission form is completed correctly and in full.

If it is, complete the rest of the form, if you haven't already done so.

If you haven't completed any of the form, you can download it from the website. It will be under the **Prior Learning** section.

All submissions must be submitted electronically via email to qualifications@tsi.org.uk.

No submission can be sent to the Reviewer if the purchase order number has not been provided to the team.

What happens now?



We will check the submission to ensure it meets the minimum standard for submission. Once we are happy, we will assign a reviewer to your submission and forward it to them.

They will have a maximum of 4 weeks to look at your evidence and the reflective statement and to provide an outcome to CTSI.

The more succinct of a submission provided, the quicker the reviewer can work through it and make a decision. If they agree you have met the requirements, they will provide a report to CTSI and we will confirm via email, the exemptions you have available.

If they feel that there is insufficient evidence provided, they will provide a report to CTSI that outlines where they feel there are deficiencies. We will pass this report along with your submission to a second reviewer for them to take an overview and to make a decision.

If they feel you have met the requirements, they will provide a report to CTSI and we will confirm your exemption(s). If the 2nd reviewer agrees that you have not met the requirements, they will be required to provide a report encompassing all the remedial work needed. This will be provided to CTSI and a copy of the report will be emailed to you.

The 2nd reviewer will have a total of two weeks to provide an outcome to CTSI.

You can re-submit up to 3 times. If you have not gained the exemption at this point, you can re-submit but the fee will be applicable again and CTSI will need a new purchase order number to process for an invoice.

Alternatively, you can choose to sit the assessments again, for the subject you were seeking exemption(s) against, at the next available assessment cycle.