

Examiner's report

Qualifications Framework

Stage 2: Food Oral

Oral Examiner's Report September 2024

General Feedback

The Food Oral exam is a test of the candidate's knowledge, their practical experience, knowledge of powers and their rationale in decision making.

Candidates may be asked to explain their decision making and they should be prepared to be challenged on and provide justification for the decisions they make. There may be several ways to deal with a breach of food standards legislation and the stronger candidates are able to explain why they may choose one course of action over another.

Most candidates had good knowledge of food legislation and of food information and labelling.

However, some candidates did have gaps in this knowledge required for day-to-day food enforcement.

Again, as in previous years there were a few candidates who could not demonstrate to the examiner evidence of practical experience in areas such as formal food sampling, or of taking the relevant, proportionate, enforcement actions or sanctions.

Where powers are discussed, a knowledge of where the powers can be found, and the relevant sections of legislation will demonstrate a more robust knowledge of food standards enforcement.

For sampling, it is important to detail all practical steps taken to take and secure the samples.

Those candidates who demonstrated, to the examiner, both knowledge and an ability to make decisions that were proportionate and justified scored well.

Candidates should consider the practical scenarios which they are faced with and should ask the examiner to clarify the scenarios, if necessary, in order to explain their responses.

Responses which consider the full range of methods and techniques for official controls in respect of practical scenarios are likely to score well and where formal actions may be considered, discussion about preservation of evidence and investigation techniques may also be applicable.

Candidates should utilise and look to gain experience in practical day to day food enforcement to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to score highly in this examination.