

Examiner's Report

Qualifications Framework

Stage 2: Unit 4 Food Standards Oral Examiner Report May 2025

General

Marks for the oral examination ranged from 36 to 75.

In this exam, candidates are expected to demonstrate; knowledge of legislation, sampling and powers and explain potential courses of action when faced with Food standards scenarios. Candidates are provided visual prompts of food products, labels and scenarios to prompt discussion.

In terms of knowledge of legislation, **candidates who could accurately identify legislative provisions, naming the legislation and specific sections or regulations applicable, showed a more in depth understanding of the legislation.**

Some candidates referred to the main pieces of legislation, as if it could be used interchangeably in any scenario which showed lack of understanding. Many candidates were unable to identify specific relevant sections of the legislation applicable to the scenario provided. **It is also necessary for candidates to be clear on the interactions between different pieces of legislation to show competence in Food Standards but there was limited demonstration of this.**

The Food Safety Act 1990, Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, (General Food Regulation 2004) Food Information Regulations 2014, Assimilated EU Regulation 1169/2011 and Assimilated EU Regulation 178/2002 are interlinked. **Candidates are encouraged to be fluent in the links between the legislation and clear on how they can take enforcement action via the interactions between them.**

The syllabus required a detailed knowledge of Nutrition and Health claims yet no candidate was able to provide explanation of what common nutrition claims meant in practical terms for example, candidates could identify that a claim of 'low fat' was a nutrition claim, but not what conditions the food needed to satisfy to bear the claim. While there are many nutrition claims and candidates would not be expected to know verbatim the requirements of all of them, **fundamental knowledge of the requirement of more widespread nutrition claims should be expected, so officers can identify the accuracy of such claims when out in the field.**

Similarly, a detailed knowledge of Subsidiary UK and EU legislation relating to food standards, composition and labelling of food is required by the syllabus. Candidates were provided with photo prompts of products to which specific legislation would be applicable. Knowledge in this area was very poorly demonstrated, with candidates often unable to identify the correct piece of legislation or name the legislation that applied to specific product types. Some candidates were then unable to identify the basic provisions of the legislation in relation to the products discussed.

Demonstration of knowledge of powers was limited. While officers have powers of entry these are pursuant to certain conditions which candidates often didn't identify. Other powers are then available once entry has occurred which are vital to the collection of information and evidence in a food premises, but which some candidates could not identify. **Candidates should be prepared when discussing powers to elaborate on the powers of entry, discuss the extent of these powers and any restrictions in relation to them and expand upon further provisions beyond power of entry. Identification of the specific sections of the legislation where the powers are found will also demonstrate greater knowledge.**

When providing an explanation of sampling, full information regarding the process for sampling should be given on the assumption that the examiner has no prior knowledge. Some candidates didn't explain the process in full. Many, but not all candidates referred to the Food Sampling and Qualifications Regulations 2013. **Those who explained the provisions of this Regulation showed a deeper understanding of the process of sampling.**

In the discussion around enforcement action and investigations, candidates are aware of the requirement to establish whether an FBO has exercised due diligence when being interviewed in relation to the commission of an offence, but candidates failed to discuss the importance of establishing the identity of the FBO during interview to ensure that they are interviewing the appropriate person or company representative. **Establishment from interviews as to whether any other party needs to be interviewed in relation to offences was not discussed by any candidate yet should be a consideration when interviewing for Food standards offences.**

Candidates are urged to pay close attention to the question being asked. Photographs of scenarios and labels are provided in the slides to prompt discussion but in some cases, candidates failed to answer the questions they were being specifically asked.