

Qualifications Framework Stage 2 Professional Interview guidance for candidates

Stage 2 Assessments – Overview

Stage 2 of the framework incorporates a variety of assessment methods designed to evaluate both knowledge and practical competence. These include:

- Written examinations
- Practical assessments
- Oral assessments
- Reflective learning tasks
- Professional interviews
- Portfolio submissions

Each subject area will use a different combination of these assessment methods.

For the subjects **Weights and Measures**, **Investigations**, and **Regulating Markets**, the **professional interview** is the primary method used to assess a candidate's knowledge and skills. This assessment is conducted within a **20-minute examination period**.

Objective of the Professional Interview

The purpose of the professional interview is to assess your ability to apply your knowledge of processes and requirements to the scenario presented.

This assessment is designed to evaluate how effectively you can translate your learning into practice. During the interview, you will be expected to demonstrate your understanding and application of key concepts to the examiner (and, where applicable, the moderator).

Examples of areas you may be required to demonstrate include:

- Procedural knowledge
- Effective intelligence gathering
- Application of relevant legislation or processes

Assessment Approach

Examiners will draw upon the full breadth of the syllabus when designing scenarios and formulating questions. Your performance will be assessed against established criteria, ensuring consistency and fairness in marking.

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

Professional Interview Assessment Guidance

During your professional interview, the examiner will ask a series of structured questions based on the scenario you have been assigned. Your responses will be used to assess your knowledge, understanding, and ability to apply relevant processes. This format allows the examiner to evaluate, first-hand, the depth of your understanding of the subject area.

To achieve a pass, you must meet the required assessment criteria and attain a minimum score of 40%.

It is important that you are familiar with the entire syllabus. As part of your preparation, you should review your portfolio thoroughly to ensure that all required skills are equally represented within your knowledge base, supporting you effectively during the examination.

Your assessment will be recorded via Microsoft Teams. This recording enables the examiner to review your interview before finalising marks for submission to the CTSI Education Department. Recordings may also be used for moderation purposes where necessary. Please note that, in line with written examination materials, the recording will not be available to candidates once results have been issued.

From time to time, CTSI may also use selected recordings for internal training purposes. These may be shared with CTSI staff, trainee examiners, or moderators in subject areas that include professional interview assessments.

Professional Interview – the basics

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

The assessment lasts 30 minutes in total and includes preparation time and the interview itself.

Timing

- Preparation: 10 minutes to read the scenario on screen and make notes.
- Assessment: 20 minutes to answer the examiner's questions. You may refer to your notes throughout.

Scenario focus

- Scenarios may reference products (for example, food, feed, or toys) to provide context.
- You are assessed on the **process** and **requirements**, not detailed product knowledge.
- All scenarios and questions are designed to be appropriate for all candidates.

Platform and recording

- The assessment is delivered via Microsoft Teams. A recording will be made (as detailed in the Assessments section of this document).

Pre-examination checks

A CTSI staff member will carry out checks with the candidate prior to handing over to the examiner. They will confirm when the recording has been started.

During the pre-assessment checks, you must provide the following and follow these requirements:

Video and environment

- Remove any backgrounds or blurring in Teams.
- Only one camera-enabled screen may be in use (for example, if you are using a laptop, only the laptop screen should be on). Switch off any secondary screens.
- Be prepared to show CTSI staff your entire workspace using the camera.

Photo identification

- Have photo ID ready and hold it up to the camera when requested. CTSI staff will confirm when they have seen it clearly.
- Acceptable photo ID includes:
 - driving licence
 - passport
 - local authority identification

Desk and materials

- Your work area must be clear of any materials that could assist you during the assessment.
- For professional interviews only, you may have the following items on your desk for note-taking during the 10-minute preparation time:
 - plain paper (blank)
 - pen(s) and/or pencil(s)
- CTSI staff will ask you to show that any paper is blank before the assessment begins.
- Switch off mobile phones and keep them away from your desk.

Examiner support

- The examiner cannot provide any additional information about the scenario beyond what CTSI has approved. Please do not ask questions about the scenario.

How the questions work

- The examiner will confirm when the assessment starts, display the first of the five questions on screen, and read it aloud.
- Tell the examiner when you have finished your answer.
- If an answer is taking too long and may reduce the time available for the remaining questions, the examiner will check whether you have anything else to add and whether you are ready to move on.

Time management

- You will answer five questions in 20 minutes (around 5 minutes per question).

Communication rules

- The examiner can only repeat the information shown on screen in the question.
- No communication is permitted other than the instructions given at the start of the preparation time and any final instructions given when the assessment begins.
- These instructions will not affect the preparation you have completed.

Reviewing earlier questions

- If you have time remaining within the 20 minutes, you may return to earlier questions. Previous questions will remain on screen.

Results

- Results are confirmed at the Qualifications Panel ratification meetings and issued by email on the published results date.

Eligibility: portfolio submission

- To sit the professional interview, you must submit the relevant portfolio(s) for the unit you are completing by the published deadline.
- For Weights and Measures, you must also submit your reflective statement by the deadline.
- If this is your first subject portfolio, you must also submit your Generic Portfolio (and any other pre-exam requirements described in this guidance) by the deadline.
- Your portfolio must be complete (including sampling and paperwork) and ready for your Verifier to sign off by the published deadline.

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 for the Professional Interview

Each subject area that includes a professional interview reflects processes you would typically undertake in the workplace. The purpose of the interview is to demonstrate how you apply your knowledge to the scenario provided.

Below are key tips from examiners to help you prepare and perform effectively:

Understanding the Examiner's Role

- The examiner's objective is to assess your level of knowledge and understanding.
- They will not prompt or guide you during the interview. Instead, they will ask pre-set questions and record your responses.
- Your answers should clearly demonstrate your understanding of the relevant processes and requirements, based on the scenario provided during your **10-minute preparation time**.

Preparing for the Interview

- Remain calm and composed. A relaxed approach will help you communicate clearly and present your answers concisely.
- Use your preparation time effectively by making clear, structured notes in bullet-point format. These will support you during the interview, and you may refer to them as often as needed.
- Carefully consider the scenario provided. Think about how you would address the situation in a real workplace setting and focus on practical solutions.

During the Interview

- Listen carefully to each question. Read it again if necessary to ensure you fully understand what is being asked.
- Tailor your responses directly to the question and ensure they are relevant to the scenario. General or unrelated answers will not gain marks.
- Each question builds on the last, so maintain context throughout your responses.
- Examiners are interested in **what you would do and why**, rather than simply what you know (knowledge is assessed elsewhere).
- Avoid including unnecessary information, such as irrelevant legislation or details not asked for in the question.

Time Management

- Use the full time allocated for the interview.
- If time allows after answering all questions, revisit earlier responses to expand or clarify your answers.
- Remember that questions can be repeated, and additional detail may be considered during marking.

Subject-Specific Guidance: Weights and Measures

In addition to the general advice above, the following points specifically apply to **Weights and Measures**:

Understanding the Assessment Focus

- Different assessment methods evaluate different skills:
 - **Written exam**: knowledge
 - **Practical**: equipment testing
 - **Oral**: communication of technical information
- The professional interview focuses on the **practical application of the role in real-life scenarios**.

Nature of the Scenarios

- Scenarios typically reflect situations a newly qualified officer may encounter, such as:
 - Verification of weighing equipment (e.g. scales, weighbridges)
 - Handling short measure complaints
 - Identifying unverified equipment

What Examiners Are Looking For

- Your responses should clearly outline:
 - The **practical steps** you would take
 - The **information you need to gather**
 - The **advice you would provide**

These themes are common across most scenarios.

Strengthening Your Responses

- Provide realistic and complete answers. For example:
 - When discussing information gathering, include fundamental details such as location, responsible parties, and context.
 - When giving advice, reference relevant guidance sources where appropriate (e.g. Business Companion, OPSS guidance, WELMEC).
- Demonstrate awareness of real-world complexities:
 - Recognise that not all situations are clear-cut (e.g. borderline results).
 - Avoid confusing routine inspections with initial verification unless explicitly relevant to the scenario.

Preparation Advice

- Gain as much practical experience as possible by participating in workplace inspections.
- Thoroughly complete your portfolio, ensuring it reflects a wide range of relevant activities and experiences.

This combination of practical exposure and structured learning is the most effective preparation for success in the professional interview.

The process on the day:

- Log onto the provided link via teams
- Introduction is by CTSI staff to carry out checks
- Examiner comes into the call and CTSI staff leave
- The scenario is displayed on the screen and 10 minutes reading time is started.
- Examiner will turn off camera and microphone during the preparation 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, or if you indicate you have finished your answer.
- 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.