Qualifications Framework Handbook

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Meet the Qualifications Team:

Any questions or queries you have relating to your training or exams, can be directed to the Education Team, who will be happy to help:

Sue Steward	Head of Education and Training
Richard Cowles	Education and Training Manager
Rebecca Taylor	Education Co-ordinator
Marianne Rickwood	Education Co-ordinator
Sophia Robinson	Education Assistant
Sophie Brand	Education Assistant

Contact details:

Telephone: 01268 582242

Email: qualifications@tsi.org.uk

Qualification Framework Stages

Stage 1: Trading Standards Practitioner Certificate (TSPC)

Stage 2: Trading Standards Practitioner Diploma (TSPD)*

Stage 3: Trading Standards Advanced Practitioner (TSAP)*

*Candidates cannot progress to stage 2 or 3 without completion of the previous qualification or its equivalent exemption

DCAT's Candidates

If you are a DCAT's qualified candidate, you can register into the Qualifications Framework to complete an additional unit.

DCAT's candidates can complete any Unit they wish to do within the Qualifications Framework.

Registration can be completed using the additional unit link found on the Qualifications Resources area of the website, under Qualification Registration click here.

Training

Training is delivered from September to April by our dedicated team of Trainers each year operating both face-to-face and virtually to optimise flexibility around your schedule.

Candidates who enrol on to the Training cohorts will be guaranteed to receive the most up to date information regarding latest legislation and fully preparation to complete the Examinations successfully.

Training courses include access to our Learner Management System (LMS) which will include Distance Learning Notes relevant to your chosen subject area to supplement and support your learning.

It is recommended to ensure you are getting the most out of your learning that Candidates study and revise at least 3 hours per week throughout the training timeline to optimise knowledge and continuity to progress in the Qualification Framework.

Please note: Training and Exam Registration bookings are to be booked separately, and it is advisable to book your training as far in advance as possible. All cohorts are available to book onto from March each year.

If you would like to find out more about available training cohorts, please click on the link provided below, alternatively contact the Qualifications Team for assistance.

Qualification Framework Training

Registration

Once you have successfully registered for your Examinations, you will receive a registration confirmation email with an attached letter confirming your enrolment to sit in your selected examinations.

Inside this letter it will contain your Candidate ID number, this number will remain the same throughout your Qualification Framework enrolment and will be used to identify you as a candidate when sitting examinations and submitting coursework and portfolios.

You will also receive access to your SharePoint folder; this will be a secure way to submit coursework and portfolios for marking.

Please note: Registration is for examinations only and do not include training.

CTSI Membership

All Candidates who register in the Qualification Framework can enrol into the CTSI Membership programme. Benefits of this include discounted rates for training and exams, specialist support and advice and much more. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact the membership team.

Timeline of the Qualification Framework Academic Year

September
01 September – Stage 1 coursework, Stage 2 weights and measures reflective statement feedback submission deadline
Training begins and LMS access to subject distance learning materials are provided to candidates enrolled onto the training programmes
October
01 October – Stage 1 coursework, Stage 2 weights and measures reflective Statement submission deadline without feedback
01 October – Portfolio deadline – all portfolios are required to be at a point of final sign off from regional verifiers by this date
01 October – Exam registration closes for November exam cycle
November
November Exam cycle for Stage 1 and 2, additional units held
Written examinations, professional interviews, practical and oral exams
December
Exam registration opens for May and November exam cycles for the following year
January
Qualification Panel (QP) ratification meeting to review and confirm results
February
Exam results provided via email to candidates who sat in the November examination cycle
Candidate award confirmation letters emailed to candidates where all elements completed
March
01 March – Stage 1 Coursework, L6 coursework and Stage 2 weights and measures reflective statement feedback submission deadline
Appeals submission deadline date following release of examination results
Certificates sent out to candidates via post following completion of Stages 1 and 2 and additional units
Training bookings open for the following years examinations
April
01 April – Stage 1 coursework, Stage 2 weights and measures reflective statement submission deadline without feedback
01 April – Portfolio deadline – All Portfolios are required to be at a point of final sign off from Regional Verifiers by this date
01 April – Exam registration closes for May Exam cycle
May
May exam cycle for Stage 1 & 2 and additional units held
Written examinations, professional interviews, practical and oral exams
June
Exam registration opens for May and November exam cycles for the following year
July
Qualification Panel (QP) ratification meeting to review and confirm results and awards
Exam results provided via email to candidates who sat in the May examination cycle
Candidate award confirmation letters emailed to candidates where all elements completed.
August
Certificates sent out via post to Candidates following completion of Stage 1 and 2 and additional units

Stage 1 Information

To achieve the Trading Standards Practitioner Certificate (TSPC) qualification, completion of Stage 1 is required.

The qualification is made up of 3 units as listed below:

Unit 1: Regulatory Environment and Enforcement

Unit 2: Business and Consumer Legal Frameworks

Unit 3: Trading Standards Law Part 1

To achieve the TSPC award, candidates are required to complete a 2000-word coursework submission and written examination for each unit.

Coursework for all units is required for submission by the dates listed below:

01 March for May exam cycle / **01 September** for November exam cycle

Candidates who are able to submit coursework by the dates above will be entitled to receive **feedback** and given a chance to resubmit should their coursework not meet the required standard.

Candidates of Stage 1 also have the option of submitting their coursework by 01 **April** for May exam cycle / **01 October** for November exam cycle, however they will not receive feedback should the coursework not meet the required standards to be deemed competent.

Coursework must be uploaded to your dedicated SharePoint folder, a link to your SharePoint folder will be sent to you in your registration confirmation email. If the link expires, please email the Qualifications team prior to any deadlines for submission to regain access.

Written examinations are usually held in the first week of the exam cycle month, however this is subject to change and candidates are advised to confirm exam cycle schedules via the Qualifications Resources page or by contacting the Education Team.

Stage 2 Information

To achieve the Trading Standards Practitioner Diploma (TSPD) qualification, completion of Stage 2 is required.

The Stage 2 qualification is made up of 3 units plus 1 option as listed below:

Unit 4: Weights and Measures

Unit 4 Option: Food / Feed / Product Safety / NI Metrology Laboratory equipment

Unit 5: Investigations

Unit 6: Regulating Markets

Unit 4: Weights and Measures

The Weights and Measures unit is the largest of the modules and requires more assessments to be completed than the remaining elements. The examinations are as follows:

- Weights and Measures 2-hour written examination
- Weights and Measures 30-minute professional interview (10mins reading time + 20 min exam)
- Weights and Measures portfolio
- Weights and Measures reflective statement (2,000 word)
- Weights and Measures practical exam
- Weights and Measures oral exam

The completion and submission of the weights and measures portfolio along with the reflective statement is required, to enable you to take part in the professional interview, oral and practical examinations. Candidates are responsible for contacting their regional verifier prior to starting the portfolio. Your authority will need to provide a suitably qualified assessor to assess the portfolio. Assessors need to have completed the assessor CPPD course, which is delivered by CTSI, details of this course can be found here. The portfolio needs to be verified at least 3 times prior by the regional verifier. Please look at the document linked below to identify the verifier for your region:

QF Regional Verifier Information

For more Information on portfolios and guidance please click here

Portfolio submission dates are 01 October for November exam cycles / 01 April for May exam cycles.

A weights and measures reflective statement is required for submission by 01 September for feedback or 01 October for November exam cycles and 01 March for feedback or 01 April for May exam cycles.

The examinations in Stage 2 can be split into 2-3 exam cycles and Candidates have up to 3 years to complete the Stage as a whole.

Unit 4: Option Laboratory Equipment (Northern Ireland candidates only)

If you are a candidate from Northern Ireland, you will be required to sit a 1 ½ hour written examination for Laboratory Equipment and complete the Laboratory Equipment portfolio. More information on this can be found on our website link below:

Stage 2 Information

Unit 4: Option Feed/Food/Product Safety/Laboratory Equipment-Metrology (NI)

Candidates in Stage 2 are required to complete 1 of the 3 options titled above, the examinations for each exam are as follows:

Food: 1 ½ hour written examination, 15-minute Oral exam held virtually and a Food portfolio

Feed: 1 ½ hour written examination, 15-minute Oral exam held virtually and a Feed portfolio

Laboratory Equipment: 1 ½ hour written examination and a Laboratory Equipment portfolio

Product Safety: 1 ½ hour written examination and a Product Safety portfolio

Unit 5: Investigations

The Investigations Unit requires Candidates to complete a portfolio and sit 30-minute Professional Interview exam. You will have 10-minute reading time and 20-minute assessment.

Unit 6: Regulating Markets

The Regulating Markets Unit requires Candidates to complete a portfolio and sit 30-minute Professional Interview exam. You will have 10-minute reading time and 20-minute assessment.

Apprenticeship Information

Regulatory Compliance Officer Candidates (RCO)

If you are a RCO candidate transitioning into the Qualifications Framework, you are exempt from completing Unit 1 and 2 and potentially the Unit 3 coursework, if you completed a Trading Standards related project within your apprenticeship.

As part of the RCO Package you will have access to Units 1 and 2 distance learning materials for information purposes and Unit 3 training will be inclusive of your RCO package fee.

Once you have completed in full your RCO qualification and the Unit 3 written examination with CTSI, you can then progress onto Stage 2 of the Qualifications Framework.

For information on fees please click here

CSA Level 6 Apprenticeship Candidates

We now offer Level 6 apprenticeship transition packages for candidates looking to become TSPD qualified or to have CSA module recognition in Food, Feed and Weights and Measures. Please click here for more information on the Level 6 Apprenticeship Transition packages.

Confirmation of completion of RCO/L6 apprenticeship is required prior to certification.

Portfolio Information

To benefit you whilst you build your portfolio, we recommend you start your portfolio as soon as possible, to maximise your experience within each subject area and building on your knowledge and practice in each subject. For the weights and measures portfolio, the earlier you start on this portfolio to work through the equipment list, the better.

Please ensure you contact your verifier before you begin putting together your portfolio as they will need to be notified of your assessment plan.

CTSI is delighted to deliver portfolio building days to candidates at the beginning of the academic year, if you would like to book on to one of these, please click here.

Please note: All Units which include a practical, oral or professional interview require a completed portfolio before entry into the examinations. Written examinations can be sat without the completion of the subject portfolio.

Examination Cycle Information

Qualifications Framework Exam cycles take place twice a year in the months of May and November.

The Education Team will contact each Candidate who is enrolled to sit an exam prior to the exam cycle via email to ensure plenty of notice is given regarding timetables.

Individual Microsoft Team invites will be sent out 2-weeks prior to the professional interviews and food / feed orals. Candidates are required to accept the invite and attend the online examination 5-minutes prior to the start time, to complete pre-examination checks with a member of the Education Team. For more information regarding the professional interviews and food / feed orals, please click here.

All written examinations can be completed at the candidate's local authority / workplace or at a CTSI Main Exam Venue. If candidates wish to sit in their local authority / workplace, a nominated person, for example a manager, must be available to download and print the examination materials required, along with an appointed invigilator to ensure the examination are sat according to the rules and regulations. The person acting as the nominated person, must be in a senior position to the person sitting the exams.

All professional interviews and feed / food orals are held online via Microsoft Teams. The Education Team will be responsible for delivering the examination and will make the necessary arrangements to ensure the examination is sat accordingly.

Weights and measures practical and oral examinations take place in The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) office in Teddington. Candidates are required to attend this venue to complete their practical and oral elements of the unit 4 weights and measures unit.

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

CTSI will provide reasonable adjustments where applicable to minimise challenges for candidates requiring additional support for examinations. This is subject to evidence being provided whether medical or other forms of evidence.

If you feel that you would be eligible to receive reasonable adjustments during your examinations, please ensure you make the Education Team aware as soon as possible and by completing the form linked below:

Reasonable Adjustments for Examinations

Please note: Candidates who are completing examinations will be instructed to complete a form prior to each examination cycle, even if they have previously requested this in past examinations.

Candidates must complete the form and have provided their evidence (if requesting for the first time) no later than **01 March** (for May exams) and **01 September** (for November exams). Requests received after these dates may not be accommodated.

Extenuating Circumstances Policy

At CTSI we understand things don't always go according to plan, and life events can occur which may disrupt your ability to take part in examinations. In this instance, candidates are able to apply for an extenuating circumstances request, to extend deadlines on coursework / portfolio submissions and to defer examinations into the following exam cycle.

The request will need to be considered and reviewed for approval by the Qualifications Panel before the Education Team can provide an outcome to your request. It is advised that candidates provide as much information as possible in these circumstances to provide clarity to the Panel when considering your request.

Please note: All applications should be made at the earliest opportunity. Applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The Qualification Panel will not accept Extenuating Circumstance Applications for extensions after **01 February** for the May exam cycle and **01 August** for the November exam cycle.

For more information on the Extenuating Circumstances Policy, please click here.

Ratification and Certification Process

Outcomes of all assessments are taken to the Examinations Panel (EP) to be reviewed and confirmed, this process is known as the Ratification meeting.

Ratification meetings take place once all marking has concluded; here the Examinations Panel will review each mark to ratify results.

Once the ratification of the examinations are completed, the Qualifications Panel will meet to finalise and ratify the results and qualification awards. Once this has occurred, the Education Team will send out an email to candidates to advise of their examination outcomes.

Certificates to candidates will be sent 12 weeks after the examination's outcomes have been communicated.

Re-sit Information

Candidates who did not meet the pass mark on examinations will be required to resit the exam(s) in the following exam cycle. All re-sit examinations need to be registered and paid for to be timetabled into the following exam cycle. Failure to do this without an extenuating circumstance application in place, will result in a failed attempt on your record.

The resit information and where to book is found in the result letter emailed to candidates.

Appeals Process

If a candidate is not content with the outcome of their examination(s) due to factors out of their control in the lead up to or during an examination, an appeal can be requested within 20 Calendar days of the date stated on the outcome letter.

Appeals must be emailed to the Education Team and addressed to the **Head of Education and Training** and **marked Private & Confidential**. Candidates are advised to include as much information as necessary when applying for an appeal to be processed.

If the Head of Education and Training deems there are reasonable grounds for an appeal to be made, the candidate will be contacted and asked to register and pay for the appeal and once this is processed, a meeting will be held to make a final decision. Candidates are not required to attend the appeals meeting; however the outcome will be communicated to them at the earliest opportunity.

Please note: Appeals will not be considered if they are based on academic judgement.

For more information on the Appeals process please click here

Past Papers and Examiner Reports

After the completion of the examination cycle, past exam papers and examiner reports are published on CTSI's website within the qualifications resource area, to aide future candidates in revision and training.

Examiners reports are a collation of feedback following marking, reports are anonymised and will not display any personal information. The reports are particularly helpful to candidates who need to complete a resit of an examination as feedback is not provided following a failed attempt.

Conclusion

If you have any questions relating to your registration or training, please contact the Education Team using the contact information found on Page 2. We hope you have a successful journey within the Qualifications Framework and will endeavour to support you every step of the way.